

The Early Learning Council has directed the Early Learning Council Equity Subcommittee to align all early learning policy and practice with the Oregon Equity Lens through the development of an early learning equity toolkit. The report includes recommendations that fall in three categories; culturally responsive practice, operating systems and data & resource allocation.

# **Early Learning Council Equity Subcommittee Report & Toolkit**

**February 2, 2015**

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The creation of this report and toolkit was a collaborative effort. Through this acknowledgement, we express our deepest appreciation and gratitude for each participant's insight, feedback, input and words of wisdom.

Prepared for the Early Learning Council

Prepared by the Early Learning Council Equity Subcommittee

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under Governor Kitzhaber's leadership, Oregon has initiated a cradle to career educational transformation process. Senate Bill 909 calls for a unified, student-centered system of public education P20, prenatal to age 20. The opportunity to align Early Learning, K-12 and College and Career Readiness Systems will influence our ability to accomplish short and long-term educational outcomes. Senate Bill 253 sets the bar high for high school and college completion rates. It states that by 2025, 40% of adults have earned a bachelor's degree or higher, 40% have an associates degree or post-secondary credential and that the remaining 20% have earned a high school diploma or its equivalent. The 40/40/20 goal positions Oregon for success in increasing both the educational and occupational attainment of all Oregonians. It positions Oregon for success in an increasingly diverse society and full participation in a global economy.

The Early Learning Council adopted the Oregon Equity Lens in July 2013 to guide policy recommendations and community engagement as we took on the ambitious task of concurrent state system transformations to better support each and every child. The purpose for the Oregon Equity Lens is to clearly articulate the shared goals of our state, the intentional investments we will make to reach our goals of an equitable educational system, and to create clear accountability structures to ensure that we are actively making progress and correcting where there is no progress. The collection of core beliefs around equity, an essential part of the Equity Lens was created to recognize the institutional and systemic barriers and discriminatory practices that have limited access for many children in the Oregon educational system.

The Early Learning Council has directed the Early Learning Council Equity Subcommittee to align all early learning policy and practice with the Oregon Equity Lens through the development of an early learning equity toolkit. Early learning policy and practice includes the Early Learning Council, Division, Hubs, and Providers. After \_\_\_\_\_ meetings, \_\_\_\_\_ work sessions, stakeholder input and a review of existing research, the ELC Equity subcommittee developed comprehensive recommendations that fall into three categories:

1. Culturally Responsive Practice
2. Early Learning Operating Systems
3. Data & Resource Allocation

**Culturally responsive practice** is a strategy to increase the level of responsiveness to the interests of children, families and providers of color, staff of color and leaders of color. It comprehensively addresses power relationships on multiple levels and is an approach to addressing gaps that contribute to opportunity and achievement. **Early Learning Operating Systems** is a category dedicated to establishing equity-informed systems that will sustain Oregon's early learning organizations and their abilities to produce positive outcomes for all Oregon children, with a special focus on our most historically underserved. The Tool for Organizational Self-Assessment Related to Racial Equity created by The Coalition of Communities of Color and the All Hands Raised partnership will be used to assess current policy and practice as they relate to racial equity. The recommendations outlined in the

**Data & Resource Allocation** category provide the standards, metrics and plans for continuous improvement. The Protocol for Culturally Responsive Organizations developed by the Coalition of Communities of Color and the Center to Advance Racial Equity will guide us throughout the implementation process. This is crucial in ensuring ongoing assessment and essential for determining progress and success.

The Early Learning Equity Report & Toolkit will guide our work toward an envisioned future where all children receive the educational supports, family stability and coordinated care necessary to reach beyond their fullest potential.

Insert Oregon Child ages 0-5 here  
Graphs, charts, maps, visuals

Insert Goals, Outcomes & Indicators here

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## DEFINITIONS

**Beliefs:** Beliefs are the convictions that we hold to be true. Beliefs grow from what we see, hear, experience, read and think about.

### **Bias**

**Disconfirmation Bias:** Refers to expending disproportionate energy trying to disprove ideas that contradict our current beliefs.

**Confirmation Bias:** Refers to paying more attention and assigning greater credence to ideas that support our current beliefs.

**Implicit Bias:** Refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, action, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control.

**Disproportionality:** Over-representation of students of color in areas that impact their access to educational attainment. This term is a statistical concept that actualizes the disparities across student groups.

**Cultural Humility:** The ability to maintain a high level of self-awareness; interpersonal stance, that is difference-oriented; an openness/receptiveness to difference, in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the individual one is interacting with.

**Cultural Responsiveness:** The capacity to respond to the issues of diverse communities requiring knowledge and capacity at systemic, organizational, professional and individual levels.

**Culturally Responsive Organizations:** An organization that comprehensively addresses power relationships throughout the organization and that is responsive to the interests of communities of color, service users of color, and staff of color.

**Culturally Responsive Services:** Services that are respectful of, and relevant to, the beliefs, practices, culture and linguistic needs of diverse consumer/client populations and communities whose members identify as having particular cultural and linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home.

**Culturally Responsive Teaching:** A recognition of the diverse cultural characteristics of learners as assets. Culturally responsive teaching empowers children intellectually, socially, emotionally and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes.

**Embedded racial inequity:** Embedded racial inequities are also easily produced and reproduced - usually without the intention of doing so and without even a reference to race. These can be policies and practices that intentionally and unintentionally enable white privilege to be reinforced.

**Ethnicity:** Cultural factors such as nationality, place of origin, ancestry and beliefs. Ethnicity is often characterized by cultural features such as dress, language, religion and social organization.

**Equity:** in education is the notion that EACH and EVERY learner will receive the necessary resources they need individually to thrive in Oregon's schools no matter what their national origin, race, gender, sexual orientation, differently abled, first language, or other distinguishing characteristics.

**40-40-20: Senate Bill 253:** states that by 2025 all adult Oregonians will hold a high school diploma or equivalent, 40% of them will have an associates degree or a meaningful postsecondary certificate, and 40% will hold a bachelor's degree or advanced degree. 40-40-20 means representation of every student in Oregon, including students of color.

### **Gaps**

**Achievement Gap:** Refers to the observed and persistent disparity on a number of educational measures between the performance of groups of students, especially groups defined by gender, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

**Opportunity Gap:** The lack of opportunity that many social groups face in our common quest for educational attainment and the shift of attention from the current overwhelming emphasis on schools in discussion of the achievement gap to more fundamental questions about social and educational opportunity.

**Belief Gap:** Refers to the beliefs and expectations of students, parents, teachers and the community influenced by implicit bias and that contributes to the achievement gap.

### **Mindset**

**Fixed Mindset:** The belief that basic qualities, like intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. The belief that intelligence and talent alone create success.

**Growth Mindset:** The belief that one's most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. Brains and talents are points of departure. A love of learning and resilience are essential for great accomplishment.

**P-20: Cradle to Career:** The creation of a more seamless and integrated education experience from prenatal to graduate school; from cradle to career.

**Poverty:** An experience in which a person or community lacks resources and essentials to enjoy a minimum standard of life and well-being. This is a result from multiple adverse risk factors that effect both the mind and body such as emotional and social challenges, acute and chronic stressors, and health and safety issues.

**Situational:** A period of living in poverty caused by situational factors such as divorce, death of a spouse, unexpected health expenses, and the loss of a job that lead to loss of income and material possessions.

**Generational:** A family living in poverty for at least two generations that lack the economic or social resources to break the cycle of poverty.

**Race:** Race is a social - not biological - construct. We understand the term "race" to mean a racial or ethnic group that is generally recognized in society and often, by government. When referring to those groups, we often use the terminology "people of

color” or “communities of color” (or a name of the specific racial and/or ethnic group) and “white.”

**Underserved students:** Students whom systems have placed at risk because of their race, ethnicity, English proficiency, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, differently abled and geographic location. Many students are not served well in our education system because of the conscious and unconscious bias, stereotyping, and racism that is embedded within our current inequitable education system.

**Values:** Values derive from what we believe. Values are concepts that we deem important such as integrity, honesty, humility, effort, education, perseverance and equity.

**White Privilege:** A term used to identify the privileges, opportunities, and gratuities offered by society to those who are white.

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## OVERVIEW

Align all early learning policy and practice with the Oregon Equity Lens through the development of an early learning equity toolkit.		
<b>Culturally Responsive Practice</b> Comprehensively address power relationships through the acknowledgement that culture informs how we communicate, shapes the way we receive information, and frames the thinking process of groups and individuals.	<b>Early Learning Operating Systems</b> Establish equity-informed systems that will sustain Oregon’s early learning organizations and their abilities to produce positive outcomes for all Oregon children, with a special focus on our most historically underserved.	<b>Data &amp; Resource Allocation</b> Data is used to inform decision-making about how and where funding is allocated to close gaps in achievement and ensure quality of care for all Oregon children, with a special focus on our most historically underserved.
<b>Recommendations</b> Insert here	<b>Recommendations</b> Insert here	<b>Recommendations</b> Insert here
<b>Toolkit Resources</b> Insert here	<b>Toolkit Resources</b> Insert here	<b>Toolkit Resources</b> Insert here

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# 1. CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICE

## a. Background

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### i. Culturally Responsive Leadership

#### 1. Organizational Climate, Culture & Communications

- a. Create positive and anti-racist/[anti-bias/anti-privilege](#) environments within the Early Learning Council, Early Learning Division, Early Learning Hubs and provider organizations that promote knowledge, acceptance, inclusion and respect.
- b. Individuals throughout the system are trained and supported to identify and become aware of how racism [and privilege](#) plays out in the workplace, early learning spaces, and community. Individuals are protected from retaliation if they bring up issues of racism, bigotry or prejudice.
- c. Identify, select and pilot anti-racism [and anti-privilege](#) training and coordinate efforts with Oregon Department of Education management team equity training process.
- d. Create an Early Learning Division ~~an~~ [System](#) equity team that will pilot anti-racism [and anti-privilege](#) training and evaluate their relevance to operationalizing the Oregon Equity Lens.
- e. Once identified, ensure funding and release time for all staff to attend the ongoing training. [\(Develop an implementation timeline and 18 month roll-out. Consider including in the timeline in addendum\)](#)
- f. Follow-up and integrate training by allocating time and space for dialogue, discussion and reflection on [privilege and](#) racial equity through bi-weekly Communities of Practice sessions. This will also be an opportunity to problem-solve issues in a safe space.
- g. Create affinity groups ~~for~~ staff to build mutual support, address workplace concerns, talk about pressing inequities, think about systems transformation and identify action steps [for implementation and clear outcomes](#).

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- h. Establish equity teams to assess current levels of cultural responsiveness, track progress and hold the organization accountable for real change. [SA1]
- i. Disaggregate annual Oregon Department of Education data on organizational climate and culture to inform and strengthen the Early Learning Division equity plan.
- j. Encourage Early Learning Hubs to complete annual surveys on organizational climate and culture among staff and subcontractors to identify areas of strength and areas for growth. Partner with and support Hubs to prioritize and act on findings.
- k. Establish a Community Advisory Group or alternate governance structure to advise and monitor the Early Learning Council & Early Learning Division. The Community Advisory Group will include parents, community members and organizations, and the early learning sector

2. Service Based Equity

- a. Services are driven by the needs of historically underserved communities who are prioritized in funding processes.
- b. Oregon Equity Lens Essential Questions are applied prior to implementing new service policy or practice.
- c. Routinely evaluate data related to the utilization of early education to surface on-going issues in access, service delivery, and barriers
- d. Use the service based equity standards from the Protocol for Culturally Responsive Organizations to develop a plan for funding, professional development, service revisions, and policy and practice review, revision and implementation.
- e. Children's languages and cultures are honored and reflected in early learning contexts and physical environments. Curriculum, instruction and activities affirm children's language and culture. Interactions with children and families are culturally informed and culturally sensitive. The Early Learning Division and the Early Learning Hubs set standards for these practices that are routinely reported on by providers.
- f. Staff have time and opportunity to learn about emerging and longstanding cultural groups in their

community so that children and families are welcomed and engaged.

- g. Staff acknowledge and respect the culture of children, families and providers. Staff learn and demonstrate understanding of cultural norms, [values, everyday practices and routines.](#) -including food, greetings, and family conventions.
- h. [Too specific/too broad/could be an example](#) Adapt USDA guidelines recognize culturally familiar/[preferred](#) food. Have the availability of culturally specific foods in a responsive, sensitive and appropriate manner. [Include as a text box example](#)
- i. Develop and implement a language access plan for all Early Learning Division public communications including Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS) documents, Developmental Screening documents, licensing and subsidy documents, and request for proposals. Include forms, policies, instructions, and publicity materials.
  - i. Prioritize funding for translation and interpretation services
  - ii. Establish cross-sector language teams
  - iii. Develop early learning specific bilingual glossaries
- j. Align early learning approaches to language acquisition, English language development, and dual language to K-3. Refer to the English Language Learner (ELL) strategic plan, goal 8.

## **ii. Culturally Responsive Community Engagement**

- 1. Family Provider Influence & Voice
  - a. Create a process for how the Early Learning System will include families and providers in the decision-making process.
  - b. Include an engagement plan that shift roles so that state agencies go to families and providers as opposed to families and providers coming into state structures & spaces.
  - c. Through community based partners, engage families in state level policy-making, funding decisions, Early Learning Hub governance and decision-making.
  - d. Providers partner deeply with parents of children in their programs, developing strong partnerships

between educators and parents. Parents hopes and dreams for their children are prominent in the design of early learning experiences

- e. Ensure that parents have resources and supports to be successful at supporting child learning outcomes. Some examples of literacy strategies are StORytime and VROOM. Led by the Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB), StORytime is an Oregon literacy campaign that sheds light on parent-child interactions that promote literacy development. VROOM is a similar campaign founded on the latest early childhood development and brain research.

## 2. Community Collaboration

- a. Use asset-mapping tools to identify the strengths and contributions of families, providers, hubs, the Early Learning Division, the Early Learning Council and public and private stakeholders and partners.
- b. Identify primary, secondary and community assets of each stakeholder and partner and establish an understanding of historical and sociocultural context specific to each one.
- c. Develop a plan for leveraging assets to accomplish mutually agreed upon goals, strategies and initiatives.
- d. Engage community-based organizations in state level policy-making, funding decisions, Early Learning Hub governance and decision-making.
- e. Partner with community-based organizations to engage families and providers in a similar process.
- f. Identify culturally specific community-based organizations that can provide equity-informed support for hub implementation.
- g. Provide resources and support for culturally specific community-based organizations who want to engage with and navigate state systems.
- h. Deepen accountability and continue to ask questions: How does the Early Learning Division hear from the community about progress and maintain authenticity in the work? How can the Early Learning Division remain authentically engaged with community through the process? What are the

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feedback loops that have been created and what are the ones that need to be created?

iii. Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

1. Professional Development System

- a. Require recommendations around culturally responsive teaching, multilingual and multicultural education in the professional development report currently being crafted by the Early Learning Division Professional Development Workgroup. Chartered by Acting Early Learning Division Director, Megan Irwin; the work is being led by QRIS Director, Dawn Woods and educational consultant, Heidi McGowan.

2. Communities of Practice

- a. Teachers have access to communities of practice that allow them to reflect on culturally responsive practice with young children. This includes communities of practice in the areas of:

i. Culturally Responsive Teaching

- 1. Develop and strengthen skills and abilities to acknowledge the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect children's dispositions, attitudes and approaches to learning. Strengthen the ability to communicate a strong image of the child as inherently capable and competent.
- 2. Strengthen abilities to build bridges of meaningfulness between varying cultural contexts as well as between academic abstractions and lived socio-cultural realities.
- 3. Increase the use of a wide variety of engagement strategies that are meaningful to different learning styles.

ii. Language acquisition, dual language learning, bilingualism and multilingualism.

- 1. Convene an educator panel to review the relevance of the following approaches:

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- a. Pre-school GLAD: Guided Language Acquisition Development
    - b. Plain Language Approach (PLA)
  - iii. Cultural Knowledge & Multicultural Education
    - 1. Expand understanding of emerging and longstanding cultural groups in Oregon and in the United States. Require the understanding of historical and sociocultural context of emerging and longstanding cultural groups in Oregon and in the United States.
    - 2. Build abilities to incorporate multicultural information, resources and materials.
    - 3. Teach children to know and praise their own and each other's cultural heritages.
- 3. Early Learning Assessment
  - a. Acknowledging Historical Trauma
  - b. Assessments & Cultural Relevance
  - c. Culturally Responsive Assessment Administration
    - i. Kindergarten Assessment
    - ii. Developmental Screening

## 2. EARLY LEARNING OPERATING SYSTEMS

### a. Background

#### i. Organizational Self-Assessment

1. Establish a multi-level Early Learning Division Equity Team to complete the Tool for Organizational Self-Assessment Related to Racial Equity created by the Coalition of Communities of Color and the All Hands Raised Partnership.
2. Collaborate with state education agencies in developing a process for completing the Tool for Organizational Self-Assessment Related to Racial Equity. State education agencies include:
  - a. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE)
  - b. The Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB)
  - c. The Youth Development Division
  - d. The Higher Education Coordinating Council
3. Imbed ongoing professional development throughout the self-assessment process to explore and expand understanding of:
  - a. Implicit Bias
  - b. Courageous Leadership
  - c. Institutional & Systemic Racism
4. Use the results of the assessment to establish priorities for the development of an Early Learning Division Equity Plan. Equity Plan contents will include:
  - a. Mission Statement
  - b. Racial Equity Policy
  - c. Racial Diversity Reporting
  - d. Language Access Plan
  - e. Annual Assessment
  - f. Annual Improvement Plan

#### ii. Organizational Commitment, Leadership & Governance

1. Create an organizational map of the Early Learning Division to clearly communicate ELD staff roles.
2. Create an Early Learning Division Directory to clearly communicate ELD staff responsibilities.
3. Communicate the goal, purpose and membership of all ELD teams so that there is a shared understanding of alignment and coordination. Teams include but are not limited to:
  - a. Subcommittees
  - b. Workgroups
  - c. Advisory Councils & Panels



4. Publicly express commitment to equity through ELD mission and value statements.
  5. Facilitate group conversations across units on each section of the Oregon Equity Lens to consider what it means for each unit.
  6. In collaboration with equity leaders, develop a Community Advisory Group (CAG) to review ELD policy and practice and to communicate ELD efforts on a bi-monthly basis.
  7. Establish the Early Learning Council Equity Subcommittee as a permanent advisory council to ensure full implementation of the Early Learning Division Equity Plan.
- iii. Racial Equity Policies & Implementation Practices
1. Use the standards in the Protocol for Culturally Responsive Organizations to develop an Early Learning Division Equity Plan to include:
    - a. Mission Statement
    - b. Racial Equity Policy
    - c. Racial Diversity Reporting
    - d. Language Access Plan
    - e. Annual Assessment
    - f. Annual Improvement Plan
  2. Establish a multi-level Early Learning Division Equity Team to provide guidance, council and leadership in the development of an Early Learning Division Equity Plan.
  3. Apply the Oregon Equity Lens Essential Questions prior to implementation of any new policy.
- iv. Workforce Composition & Quality
1. Collaborate with the Oregon Department of Education Human Resources Department to ensure that Early Learning Division policy and procedures related to hiring are aligned and coordinated.
  2. Create a written policy emphasizing the value of a diverse early learning workforce.
  3. Ensure staff reflects early childhood population.
    - a. Create a demographic profile of the current staff at ELD, hubs and early education workforce.
    - b. Compare workforce demographics to the demographics of children served by state funding and develop a plan for hiring to better reflect the demographics of children being served.

4. Ensure that there is diverse hiring across the range of job opportunities counting the tendency to hire people of color at lower-pay, lower-skilled jobs.
5. Ensure all job descriptions and job announcements reference the Equity Lens and Early Learning Division commitment to infusing the Oregon Equity Lens into all ELD efforts.
6. Incorporate the Oregon Equity Lens philosophy into all elements of the hiring process, including job descriptions, announcements, interview processes, materials and hiring criteria.
  - a. Require descriptions of experience with communities of color in cover letters or resume.
  - b. Ask applicants to reflect on the Equity Lens and it's meaning for the job they are applying for.
7. Culturally Responsive Recruitment
  - a. Ensure abundant application pool from communities of color.
  - b. Conduct targeted outreach to communities of color for job announcements and hiring processes.
  - c. Advertise heavily to communities of color
  - d. Encourage word of mouth recruitment among staff and community members to people of color they know.
  - e. Extend application submission time windows if the applicant pools do not contain enough highly qualified people of color.
8. Hiring Panels, Rubrics and Criteria for Hiring
  - a. Include bilingual as a strongly valued element of hiring criteria.
  - b. Include a lived history in a community of color as a strongly valued element of hiring criteria.
  - c. Require knowledge of cultural assets that contribute to early childhood development.
  - d. Include people of color representing a cross-section of all ethnic groups on all hiring panels.
  - e. Include equity subcommittee members, early childhood providers, community members, and the ODE equity unit members on all hiring panels.
  - f. Create a hiring decision rubric that reflects the Oregon Equity Lens.
9. New Employee Orientation

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- a. Create a new employee orientation that communicates the Early Learning Division's commitment to the Oregon Equity Lens and shows how this commitment is reflected in the day-to-day operations of the division.
  - b. Coordinate the ELD new employee orientation with the Oregon Department of Education new employee orientation.
10. Ongoing Professional Development
- a. Create ongoing racial equity professional development opportunities in:
    - i. Program Leaders Meetings
    - ii. Program Managers Meetings
    - iii. Executive Leadership Meetings
    - iv. Early Learning Division All-Staff Meetings
    - v. Early Learning Hub Collaboratives
    - vi. Monthly Early Learning Hub Calls & Webinars
    - vii. Equity Team Meetings
    - viii. Language Team Meetings
    - ix. Affinity Groups
    - x. Conferences
11. Performance Evaluations
- a. Create performance evaluations based on the Oregon Equity Lens Essential Questions.
  - b. Use the Protocol for Culturally Responsive Organizations for tips on how to include racial equity in performance evaluations.
12. Project Evaluations
- a. Create project evaluations based on the Oregon Equity Lens Essential Questions.
  - b. Require all grant project leads to include equity updates for the projects they manage.

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### 3. DATA & RESOURCE ALLOCATION

#### a. Background

##### i. Data Collection

1. Align demographic data across funding sources so that providers and Early Learning Hubs do not have to report one family in different demographic categories for different funders.
2. Gather data at the point of contact easiest for families. For example, upon initial enrollment.
  - a. Create opportunities for families to self identify.
3. Develop a process to generate regular data on racial diversity in the Early Learning System for the following:
  - a. The Early Learning Provider Workforce
  - b. The Early Learning Division Workforce
  - c. Early Learning Governing Bodies
  - d. Minority Women-owned and Emerging Small Business Utilization
4. Disaggregate data by race, ethnicity, home language and poverty for the following:
  - a. Oregon children ages 0-5
    - i. Include the number of children served by star-rated QRIS providers
      1. Consult with Georgia State in developing a sophisticated system to collect this information.
      2. Create an extended implementation plan to initiate this process.
      3. Add data when providers are renewing.
    - ii. Include the number of children served in early learning settings. i.e. Head Start, subsidized child care, private pay, family friend and neighbor care, family child care and center care.
  - b. Collect data on the number of families that participate in community engagement activities initiated by the Early Learning System.
  - c. Kindergarten Assessment Data
    - i. Clearly communicate the purpose of the assessment.
    - ii. Clearly describe each component of the assessment and explain what it measures.

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- iii. Provide family/parent-friendly strategies for supporting young children with literacy development in the early years.

## ii. Metrics

1. Use the Tool for Organization Self Assessment Related to Racial Equity to assess Early Learning Division Policy and Practice in nine domains:
  - a. Organizational Commitment, Leadership & Governance
  - b. Racial Equity Policies & Implementation Practices
  - c. Organizational Climate, Culture & Communications
  - d. Service-Based Equity
  - e. Service-User Voice & Influence
  - f. Workforce Composition & Quality
  - g. Community Collaboration
  - h. Resource Allocation & Contracting Practice
  - i. Data, Metrics & Continuous Improvement
2. Led by the Early Learning Division Equity Team, use self-assessment data to establish priorities for the development of an Early Learning Division Equity Plan.
  - a. Use the action options, exemplars, standards metrics and rating system outlined in the Protocol for Culturally Responsive Organizations to build an equity-informed accountability structure.
3. Use Outcome Mapping as a monitoring and evaluation tool to understand the changes in the behavior, relationships, activities and actions of the individuals, groups and organizations in the early learning sector.

## iii. Resource Allocation

1. Review funding allocations by category and in total to ensure that resources are directed to eliminate disparities in outcomes and access.
2. Use target outreach to address any gaps identified in funding allocation review.
3. Fund projects that increase cultural responsiveness of Early Learning Hubs and Providers.
4. Require Early Learning Hubs to report on funding by race and ethnicity by service area compared to their population to ensure funding is directed proportionately.

## iv. Contracting Practice

1. Request for Proposals (RFP)

- a.** Include in RFP announcements a rationale for how the funding opportunity furthers the goals set forth in the Oregon Equity Lens.
- b.** RFP Application
- i.** Require that all RFP's include responses to the Oregon Equity Lens Essential Questions and an explanation of specific belief statements that are addressed in the proposal.
  - ii.** Require that applicants describe how the staff hired with the funding match the race and cultural background of the children they serve.
  - iii.** Require that applicants describe how members of the governing board match the race and cultural background of the children they serve.
  - iv.** Demonstrate an awareness of data regarding children most affected by the opportunity gap and have a plan for addressing any disparities upon funding.
  - v.** Describe their plan to improve the cultural responsiveness of the organization using the Protocol or an equivalent tool.
- c.** Ensure comprehensive outreach to organizations that have historically served communities of color.
- d.** Ensure that RFP processes include opportunities for site visits and interviews for a wide range of applicants. Prioritize organizations that have been successful in effectively serving children of color.
- e.** Include equity-informed leaders i.e. ODE Equity Unit, communities of color leaders, on RFP decision panels. Ensure that community members receive stipends for participation to cover time off of work to participate in the process.
- f.** Ensure scoring rubrics place high value on serving historically underserved communities.
- g.** Regular reports include responses to:
- i.** How are you serving racial and ethnic communities effectively?

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- ii. Give an example of how families have driven program, policy or resource decisions in your program this quarter.
      - iii. How are families involved in decision-making and hiring processes for positions funded with state money?
    - 2. Early Learning Hubs
      - a. Ensure Early Learning Hubs regularly report on how funding is addressing disparities.
      - b. Ensure Early Learning Hubs Metric System supports the operationalization of the Oregon Equity Lens.
  - v. Continuous Quality Improvement
    - 1. Review the components of Early Learning Division Equity Plan on a regular basis.
      - a. Mission Statement
      - b. Racial Equity Policy
      - c. Racial Diversity Reporting
      - d. Language Access Plan
      - e. Annual Assessment
      - f. Annual Improvement Plan
    - 2. Have the ELD Equity Plan and all new policy and practice reviewed by:
      - a. The Community Advisory Group
      - b. The ELD Equity Team
      - c. The ELC Equity Subcommittee
    - 3. Develop an implementation plan and allocate resources to operationalize the Early Learning Council Equity Subcommittee Report

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## **4. QUALITY RATING & IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM: A CROSS-CATEGORY EXAMPLE**

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## 5. EQUITY TOOLKIT

### a. Selection Process

- i. Resources Related to Culturally Responsive Practice
- ii. Resources Related to Early Learning Operating Systems
- iii. Resources Related to Data & Resource Allocation
- iv. Web Resources

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## 6. APPENDIX

- a. The Oregon Equity Lens
- b. Qualified Training Registry for Diversity, Inclusion & Health
- c. Oregon Department of Education Organizational Maps
- d. Organizational Self-Assessment Data
- e. Organizational Self-Assessment Timeline for Completion
- f. Equity Teams
- g. Interview Materials for Engagement Coordinator Position
- h. Language Access Plan
- i. National Governor's Association QRIS Analysis
- j. Equity Resource Guide Aligned to Early Learning Core Competencies

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