

LANE EARLY LEARNING ALLIANCE

Early Care & Education Sector Plan

Phase I
December 2019

REGIONAL
STEWARDSHIP
COMMITTEE OF THE
EARLY LEARNING HUB



**Lane Early Learning Alliance
Regional Stewardship Committee Membership Roster**

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**Lane Early Learning Alliance
Priority Populations Decision Grid**

Potential Priority Populations	Quantitative Data Analysis	Geographic Areas	Family Engagement Efforts	Findings from Family Engagement
<p>Children of color (i.e., African American/Black, Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic/Latinx, Multi-racial)</p>	<p>Estimate # eligible children (include data sources used)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total = 2,911¹</p> <p><i>Calculation: 18,196 (total children, 0-5) x 16% (Estimated percent of non-white children, countywide)</i></p>	<p>% of incoming Kinders who are non-white (by School District geographic clusters): (Metro) Bethel, Eugene, Springfield: 33.3% (North Lane) Junction City, Fern Ridge, Crow-Applegate-Lorane: 16.7% (South Lane) Creswell, South Lane, Oakridge: 18.3% (East Lane) Marcola, McKenzie, Lowell, Pleasant Hill: 19.0% (West Lane) Blachly, Mapleton, Siuslaw: 20.3%</p>	<p>Online parent survey (county-wide) in English & Spanish</p> <p>Total respondents: 1002</p> <p># of respondents who self-identified as a person of color: 249</p> <p>Of those 249, percent of respondents who self-identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African American/Black (6.8%) • Asian (17.3%) • American Indian/Alaska Native (12.4%) • Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (4.8%) • Hispanic/Latinx (44.6%) • More than one race (14.1%) <p>In-person parent groups (people of color were in attendance at each of these groups):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilas Family Literacy • Head Start Parent Council • Families Connect (English & Spanish groups) – children with special needs • Creswell/South Lane Preschool Promise parent group 	<p><u>In-person Parent Forum feedback:</u></p> <p>Parent/Caregiver of children of color concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety & security – personnel, on the bus, safe spaces & toys • Good communication needed with parents – there is a lack of trust often, and this would go a long way. • Need more bilingual staff • Need more trained teachers that are warm and kind and experienced to deal positively with difficult behaviors. <p>“<i>[We need more] good teachers that are patient, don’t get mad at the kids, and have experience.</i>”</p> <p><u>Online Parent Survey feedback:</u></p> <p>“<i>Lane County needs to invest in more diverse teaching staff.</i>”</p> <p>“<i>It would be great if Lane County starts some pre-school programs at some elementary schools, like Chinese Immersion school. The good part is that they may start to learn Chinese and get ready to go to the bilingual school.</i>”</p>
	<p>Estimate # children served (include data sources used)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total: 560² (23.7%)</p> <p><i>Calculation: 1321 (# of children served by Head Start & Preschool Promise) – 761 (# of white children served)</i></p>	<p>% of children served by school district geographic clusters: (Metro) Bethel, Eugene, Springfield: 70% (North Lane) Junction City, Fern Ridge, Crow-Applegate-Lorane: 5% (South Lane) Creswell, South Lane, Oakridge: 22% (East Lane) Marcola, McKenzie, Lowell, Pleasant Hill: <1% (West Lane) Blachly, Mapleton, Siuslaw: 3%</p>		
	<p>Discussion of quantitative disparity in service.</p>			

¹ KidsCount. Children under 18 by race/ethnicity. 2017

² Federal and State Funded Preschool Enrollment, Oregon Dept. of Education, Early Learning Division, 2017-18

	<p style="text-align: center;">Underserved = 2,351 (80.8%)</p> <p>Statewide, children of color face greater opportunity and achievement gaps as they progress through their K-12 education,³ due to historic and pervasive systemic inequities. In order for all children of color to have the greatest chance for success as they enter kindergarten, it is imperative that these children are prioritized for placement into high quality infant/toddler and pre-K education programs.</p> <p>In Lane County (and across Oregon), children of color are far more likely to live in families navigating poverty⁴ than their white peers and are therefore more likely to be income eligible for state- and federally-funded early care and education programs. This is evidenced by the percentage of non-white children enrolled in Head Start and Preschool Promise (43% and 55%, respectively) compared to the percentage of non-white children in the broader population (22%).</p> <p>Geographically, the metro area sees the highest density of children of color, largely because it has, on the whole, the highest population density in the county. However, there are still a fair number of children of color living throughout Lane County. Outside the metro area, between approximately 17-20% of incoming Kindergarteners are kids of color. In Eugene and Springfield, that number jumps to approximately 33%. The distribution of ECE slots for children of color should be more reflective of the communities in which they live.</p> <p>According to our school district partners, there are growing communities of new arrivals to the U.S. in pockets of Lane County. In South Lane, it has been reported that there are approximately 300 Guatemalan families residing in and around Cottage Grove. Additionally, this community's population is growing each year in part to a burgeoning birth rate. Another example: Eugene 4J school district received an influx of Saudi Arabian families who are here for an Inclusive Education Project at UO. In both instances, the school districts have had to mobilize additional resources, staff, and services to serve these newly arrived families.</p> <p>While these (and other) immigrant families may not be represented adequately in the available data, the needs of these children and families should be considered into any expansion plans.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Place Family Center (for families navigating homelessness) • Community-wide parent forum at Early Childhood CARES • NAACP SMART Saturday program 	<p><i>“All child care providers should be trained in trauma-informed behavior management. Punishment should be a last resort.”</i></p> <p><i>“Overall we’ve had a good experience with childcare. Cultural accommodations should be considered though, as well as access.”</i></p>
English Language Learners	Estimate # eligible children (include data sources used)	Bethel SD (12%) Eugene SD (6%)	Online parent survey (county-wide) in English &	<u>In-person Parent Forum feedback:</u>

³ [Education Equity, Oregon Dept. of Education, 201970](#)

⁴ [2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Poverty Status in the Past 12 months of Families, 2017](#)

(Emergent bilingual children)	Total = 2,002⁵	Springfield SD (12%) Junction City SD (6%) Creswell SD (6%) Siuslaw (6%) South Lane SD (7%)	<p>Spanish</p> <p>Total respondents (Eng): 954 Total respondents (Sp): 48</p> <p>Online parent survey (county-wide):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English language survey: 8% of respondents spoke a language other than, or in addition to, English 20 languages were identified as being a primary language spoken at home, including: Spanish, Cantonese, Chinuk, French, German, Hawaiian, Tagalog, Hindi, Russian, and Vietnamese Spanish language survey: 100% of respondents spoke Spanish; 12.5% of respondents also spoke English; one respondent identified Spanish, English, and American Sign Language as their primary languages. <p>In-person parent groups (Spanish speaking):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilas Family Literacy (2 groups) Head Start Parent Council Families Connect (Spanish group) – children with special needs Community-wide parent forum at Early Childhood CARES 	<p>Parent suggestion: All parent communication should be bilingual (Spanish/English). Sometimes the children speak English with more facility than their parents, so teachers might make the assumption that if the child can speak English, the parent can too. Or, one of the parents speaks English but the other does not.</p> <p><i>“We need teachers to be bilingual. My child was the only one that spoke Spanish but the teacher only spoke English. My child couldn’t understand anything. I spoke to someone about it so sometimes they had a Spanish helper every so often, but the teachers spoke only English. My daughter said she wanted to learn English but when my daughter didn’t understand, there was no support from the teachers. We need bilingual teachers.”</i></p> <p><i>“I have a child that is 3 years old. On the first day of school they called me to ask what language he spoke. I told them my child speaks both English and Spanish. He understands both. In my case, if my child only spoke Spanish, he would not have wanted to go to school because of that barrier- only English-speaking teachers.”</i></p> <p>Online Parent Survey feedback:</p> <p><i>“There is no good certified Spanish Immersion preschool in our whole town. Lane County is doing a very poor job of supporting our culture. We</i></p>
	Estimate # children served (include data sources used)	Bethel SD Eugene SD Springfield SD Junction City SD Creswell SD Siuslaw SD South Lane SD		
	Total = 236⁶ (20.0%)	<i>Calculation: 219 (# of Spanish-speaking children served by Head Start & Preschool Promise) + 17 (# of children served who speak languages other than English or Spanish)</i>		
Discussion of quantitative disparity in service		Underserved = 1766* (88.2%)*		
<p>Seven of the 16 school districts have greater than 5% emerging English language learners. They are listed above. These districts are where we will focus any ECE expansion efforts to serve bilingual children.</p> <p>While there are still many English language learners to be served by both Head Start and Preschool Promise, both programs are currently serving a higher percentage of English language learners (15% and 29%, respectively) than the general population.</p> <p>This is important because we see from the 2018-19 Oregon Kindergarten Assessment data⁷ that students with limited English proficiency score significantly lower than their peers.</p> <p>Please also see the note above in the <i>Children of Color Priority Population</i> section about the underserved Guatemalan immigrant population in South Lane county. These children come from families for whom English & Spanish are second- and third-languages. Nearly all of these children were raised speaking</p>				

⁵ [U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

⁶ Federal and State Funded Preschool Enrollment, Oregon Dept. of Education, Early Learning Division, 2017-18

⁷ Oregon Kindergarten Assessment, Lane County, 2018-19

	<p>Mam, an indigenous Mayan language spoken throughout several regions in Guatemala and Mexico. Currently, there are no licensed bilingual providers that speak Mam to serve these families.</p> <p>*The number of underserved children only counts the children not being served by Head Start and Preschool Promise. Provider data, as reported by Quality Care Connections, indicates that there are approximately 83 family- and center-based care providers throughout Lane County that are serving some of these children, so the underserved number is less, the degree to which is unknown.</p>			<p>would bend over backwards and pay a lot extra \$ to have a certified child center that is Spanish Immersion- even if it was just 50/50 English and Spanish.”</p> <p>“I am a second generation immigrant who is bilingual and while I speak and understand English fine I prefer that my daughter’s primary language be Spanish up until second grade so that she can retain her Spanish speaking roots and be fully bilingual.”</p>
<p>Children with Special Needs</p>	<p>Estimate # eligible children (include data sources used)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total = 1568⁸ 379 (0-2 EI) 1189 (3-5 ECSE)</p>	<p>Lane County – there are children with special needs that need ECE programs and services all across the county. Our local EI/ECSE agency, Early Childhood CARES, serves Lane County, as a whole</p>	<p>Online parent survey (county-wide) in English & Spanish</p> <p>Total respondents: 1002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30% of respondents identified their child as having special needs <p>In-person parent groups (parents with children with special needs were present at each of these groups):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilas Family Literacy Head Start Parent Council Families Connect (English & Spanish groups) – children with special needs Creswell/South Lane Preschool Promise parent group First Place Family Center (for families navigating homelessness) 	<p><u>In-person Parent Forum feedback:</u></p> <p>Many providers won’t take 3 year olds that aren’t potty trained yet, making it very difficult for families with children who have developmental delays to access childcare.</p> <p>Program quality & trained personnel is especially important for families with children with special needs.</p> <p><u>Online Parent Survey feedback:</u></p> <p>“More nurses or trained individuals available to support families with special medical needs... Trained personnel willing to take her at a child care center would be extremely helpful for our family.”</p> <p>“There aren’t enough state or city run preschools available for all kids with learning disabilities or low income.”</p>
	<p>Estimate # children served (include data sources used)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total = 1568⁹ (100%)</p>	<p>Lane County</p>		
	<p>Discussion of quantitative disparity in service:</p> <p>For children with identified developmental delays or disabilities, all that are eligible are served by our countywide EI/ECSE Agency, Early Childhood CARES. There is no quantitative discrepancy between identified/eligible and served.</p> <p>However, we know that not every child with a developmental delay or disability has been diagnosed or identified. According to Early Childhood CARES, the number of children they identify grows by ~5% each year at their point-in-time count and 20-30% over a service year, September 1 – August 31st.</p>			

⁸ Early Childhood CARES Eligibility and Enrollment Data, 2018-19

⁹ Early Childhood CARES Eligibility and Enrollment Data, 2018-19

	<p>The biggest disparity in services comes from the adequacy of the service level of the children that are deemed eligible.¹⁰ With the passage of the Student Success Act, there is new dedicated state funding allocated to increasing adequate service levels to students with special needs, but increasing inclusive classrooms and services remains a priority for ECE expansion plans in our county. These children need much greater access to integrated classrooms with typically developing peers and a significant increase in the days/hours of preschool available to them, in general.</p> <p>Lastly, incoming Kindergarteners with special needs scored lowest on the Oregon Kindergarten Assessment than other groups of students (i.e., economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient, and migrant education students) that were disaggregated in order to review their data compared to the total population of students in Lane County.¹⁴ This indicates that of any other student subgroup, the students with disabilities and special needs should be prioritized in receiving ECE services.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-wide parent forum at Early Childhood CARES 	
<p>Children ages 0-2</p>	<p>Estimate # eligible children (include data sources used)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total = 10,881¹¹</p>	<p>Lane County</p>	<p>Online parent survey (county-wide) in English & Spanish</p> <p>Total respondents: 1002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 92.5% Female 49% had a household income under \$50,000 76% of children live at home with their mom & dad; 19% live at home with a single mother 52% are working full-time 37.6% of respondents indicated they were parenting an infant or toddler <p>In-person parent groups: Parents of infants and toddlers were present at the following parent groups:</p>	<p><u>In-person Parent Forum feedback:</u> Teachers need to have "...to have sufficient personality to work in the infant care center."</p> <p>It is so difficult to leave my baby with a stranger. "...these are babies and when at home, they are safe and then I have to pass my child on to a stranger; I need [the provider] to be safe and welcoming."</p> <p><u>Online Parent Survey feedback:</u> "Child care is VERY hard to find for infants. With my second child I went thru a lot of stress and I was very close to quit my job due to the difficulties with childcare that wouldn't allow me to work and my work doesn't allow less than 40hrs/wk schedules. The only</p>
	<p>Estimate # children served (include data sources used)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total = 1387¹² (12.7%)</p> <p>Note: This is the number of "slots," not children served.</p>	<p>Lane County</p>		
	<p>Discussion of quantitative disparity in service:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Underserved = 9,380 (87.1%)</p> <p>According to a recent statewide childcare report,¹³ Lane County has one infant/toddler slot for every eight children. Megan Pratt, author of the report, was recently interviewed in the Eugene Register Guard newspaper and said, "Often times, a parent is forced to quit their job because it's more affordable than paying for child care. In Lane County, 55% of a minimum wage worker's</p>			

¹⁰ Early Childhood CARES Eligibility and Enrollment Data, 2018-19

¹¹ 2018 Estimating Supply, Oregon State University

¹² 2018 Estimating Supply, Oregon State University

¹³ Pratt, M., Sektnan, M., Weber, R.B., *Oregon's Child Care Deserts: Mapping Supply by Age Group, Metropolitan Status, and Percentage of Publicly Funded Slots*, 2019

	<p>annual earnings would be needed to pay the price of child care for a toddler. Because child care is often conceptualized as women’s work, it’s often the mother who takes off work,” said Pratt. “You can’t think about the solutions, especially for infant and toddler care, just in terms of we just need to add more slots, because there are other policies that are playing a huge role, like family leave and workplace flexibility for families with brand new children,” Pratt said.¹⁴</p> <p>Because infant/toddler classrooms require a higher child to adult ratio and specialized training for providers, these programs are often more expensive and much harder to get into.</p> <p>In a recent survey conducted by the Early Learning Division, 68% of providers surveyed reported they had a waitlist.¹⁵ The median # of children on the waitlist was seven. Families wait months, even years to get their child placed.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilas Family Literacy • Head Start Parent Council • Families Connect (English & Spanish groups) – children with special needs • Creswell/South Lane Preschool Promise parent group • First Place Family Center (for families navigating homelessness) • Community-wide parent forum at Early Childhood CARES 	<p><i>reason I didn't have to quit is because my husband dropped 1 day of work and reduced his schedule to 32 hrs/wk and we had a family member help while we waited in waitlists for childcare providers.”</i></p> <p><i>“Infant care is very hard to find and VERY expensive. The first month I went back to work we were paying more in childcare (baby + afterschool for son in school) than in mortgage.”</i></p>
<p>Children who live in rural communities (geographically isolated)</p>	<p>Estimate # eligible children (include data sources used)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total = 4510¹⁶</p> <p><i>Calculation: # of entering kindergarteners in each rural school district x 5 = est. # of 0-5 year olds eligible for ECE services</i></p>	<p>All communities outside the Eugene/Springfield metro area</p>	<p>Online parent survey (county-wide) in English & Spanish:</p> <p>Total respondents: 1002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 260 (25.9%) of respondents live outside the Eugene/Springfield area <p>In-person parent groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creswell/South Lane Preschool Promise parent group (6) • Community-wide parent forum at Early Childhood CARES (9) 	<p><u>In-person Parent Forum feedback:</u></p> <p>One parent from the north Lane region expressed frustration at the limited number of diverse providers from which to choose in her small community. She reported that even if she could have enrolled her child in a local preschool program, she chose not to because the programs she looked at were not in alignment with her parenting style and family values. This resulted in her child not receiving any early care and education experience prior to kindergarten, which she said made his kindergarten transition very challenging.</p> <p><u>Online Parent Survey feedback:</u></p> <p>In the online survey, at least 260 out of 1002 respondents indicated</p>
	<p>Estimate # children served (include data sources used)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total = 363¹⁷ (8.0%)</p> <p><i>Calculation: # of children served in each rural school district by Head Start and Preschool Promise</i></p>	<p>All communities outside the Eugene/Springfield metro area</p>		
	<p>Discussion of quantitative disparity in service:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Underserved = 4147 (92.0%)</p> <p>Geographically, Lane County is roughly the size of Connecticut, with one metro area that includes the cities of Eugene and Springfield. The small</p>			

¹⁴ Parafiniuk-Talesnick, T., *Child care options for toddlers and infants scarce, pricey in Lane County*, The Register Guard, Oct. 3, 2019.

¹⁵ Preschool Development Grant Director and Owner-Provider Surveys, 2019

¹⁶ Oregon Kindergarten Assessment, Lane County, 2018-19

¹⁷ Federal and State Funded Preschool Enrollment, Oregon Dept. of Education, Early Learning Division, 2017-18

communities outside this metro area are what the Lane Regional Stewardship Committee (LRSC) defines as “rural.” There are 16 school districts (13 rural) in Lane County, with approximately 3300 entering kindergarteners every year. The percentage of 2018-19 entering kindergarteners is included here to provide a sense of the population distribution across the county.

- Metro: Bethel, Eugene, Springfield school districts (72.9%)
- North Lane: Junction City, Fern Ridge, Crow-Applegate-Lorane school districts (7.4%)
- South Lane: Creswell, South Lane, Oakridge school districts (9.6%)
- East Lane: Marcola, McKenzie, Lowell, Pleasant Hill school districts (6.1%)
- West Lane: Blachly, Mapleton, Siuslaw school districts (4.0%)

While serving more children who live in rural communities is a priority of the LRSC, it will require more than just targeted outreach to families living in these small communities. The severe shortage of available ECE providers and, in some cases, adequate facilities are the two primary barriers.

A “mixed delivery” of providers will be especially important in rural communities, as quality home based programs can be an effective and efficient way for rural families to access good care for their children. On the other hand, due to the existence of established facilities, an increase in school-based preschools would also be helpful, especially with the transportation needs of families and the early connection to the school that provides. Since there may not be enough children in a rural area to support a whole Head Start or Preschool Promise classroom, it will require creativity and collaboration to find the best solution in each community across the county.

they live in rural communities (roughly 60 respondents did not list their zip code). Many parents shared that access to programs in their area is extremely limited.

“Oakridge is in DIRE need of child care but especially preschool services for families that do not meet the income requirements for head start...”

“My biggest frustration when looking for childcare was the lack of programs at all...”

“There is only one option in Cottage Grove that is not in home, and had hours before and after work and I’m a teacher it’s not like I have crazy hours. There are zero options.”

“I have been searching for affordable childcare quite a while now. Still unable to find it I’ve been relying on friends to watch my twins.”

**Lane Early Learning Alliance
Refined Priority Population List**

Priority Populations

1. Children of Color (i.e., African American/Black, Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic/Latinx, Multi-racial)

In Lane County (and across Oregon), children of color are far more likely to live in families navigating poverty¹ than their white peers. In addition, they face greater opportunity and achievement gaps as they progress through their K-12 education² due to historic and pervasive systemic inequities. In order for all children of color to have the greatest chance for success as they enter kindergarten, it is imperative that these children are prioritized for placement into high quality early care and education programs and services.

2. Children who are English Language Learners (Emerging Bilinguals)

Across Lane County, children who are learning English arrive at kindergarten with the recognition of the fewest number of letter names and sounds³, putting them at a significant disadvantage to their English-speaking peers for staying on track through school. While letter recognition is not the singular factor in determining a young child's success in school, participation in high quality early care and education settings can help ensure they have a good foundation from which to grow when they enter Kindergarten.

3. Children Living in Rural Communities

Geographically, Lane County is roughly the size of Connecticut, with one metro area that includes the cities of Eugene and Springfield. The small communities outside this metro area are what the Lane Regional Stewardship Committee defines as "rural." There are 16 school districts (13 rural) in Lane County. Approximately 27% of children in Lane County live in rural communities and increasing access to ECE programs and services is a paramount concern and priority.

4. Children with Special Needs

While children with identified developmental delays or disabilities are eligible to receive early intervention/early childhood special education services, only a very small percentage receive *adequate* services.⁴ These children need much greater access to integrated classrooms with typically developing peers, well trained teachers, and a significant increase in the days/hours of preschool available to them.

5. Children ages 0-2

There are over 73% of children ages 0-2 that are underserved in Lane County. In a recent survey conducted by the Early Learning Division, 68% of Lane County providers surveyed reported they had a waitlist for a slot in their program.⁵ Depending on where they live, families wait months, even years, to get their child placed in an ECE program.

¹ [2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Poverty Status in the Past 12 months of Families, 2017](#)

² [Education Equity, Oregon Dept. of Education, 201970](#)

³ Oregon Kindergarten Assessment, Lane County, 2018-19

⁴ Early Childhood CARES Eligibility and Enrollment Data, 2018-19

⁵ Preschool Development Grant Director and Owner-Provider Surveys, 2019

**Lane Early Learning Alliance
Family Needs & Preferences Grid**

Priority Population	Preference #1	Preference #2	Preference #3	Other Considerations
<i>Children of Color</i>	More racially and ethnically diverse providers	Flexible days and hours, to support shift work, irregular work hours, and part time	Transportation with supervision (teacher's aide in addition to the bus driver)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety, security & cleanliness • Patient and kind teachers that provide individualized attention to each child. • Clear and frequent communication with parents
<i>Children who are English Language Learners (Emerging Bilinguals)</i>	More highly qualified providers that are culturally and linguistically competent	Flexible days and hours, to support shift work, irregular work hours, and part time	Assistance with finding childcare & preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected to a school • Safety, security & cleanliness • Clear and frequent communication with parents
<i>Children with Special Needs</i>	1-on-1 care and attention and tailored support, especially during daily transitions (pick-up, drop-off, meals, outside time)	Flexible days and hours, to support shift work, irregular work hours, and part time	High quality & trained providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More integrated classrooms with typically developing peers • Safety, security & cleanliness • Patient and kind teachers that provide individualized attention to each child. • Clear and frequent communication with parents
<i>Children living in rural communities (geographically isolated)</i>	More providers & programs, especially those serving infants and toddlers	Transportation with supervision (teacher's aide in addition to the bus driver)	Connected to the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety, security & cleanliness • Patient and kind teachers that provide individualized attention to each child. • Clear and frequent communication with parents
<i>Children ages 0-2</i>	More providers to choose from; less time on waitlists	Staff with specialized training to care for infants & toddlers	Flexible pickup and drop-off times to accommodate infant and toddler sleeping and waking schedules, as much as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of exclusive breastfeeding or bottle feeding with expressed breast milk • Safety, security & cleanliness • Clear and frequent communication with parents

**Lane Early Learning Alliance
Supply Analysis & Mixed Delivery Profile**

Mixed Delivery Profile

How well is your region equipped to meet the demand and respond to the preferences of the families of your refined priority populations?

According to the latest data collected by Western Oregon University, Lane County has 391 childcare providers,¹ many of whom have a 4- or 5-star Spark rating, and we continue to have capacity to grow both the number of providers and the quality of care being delivered. Quality Care Connections (QCC), Lane County’s Childcare Resource & Referral agency works closely with prospective, new, and existing providers to start, maintain, and grow their childcare business. QCC will continue to support and train the early learning workforce across the county. They have also been integral partners in writing this report and will assist providers in meeting the needs and preferences of our priority populations.

Secondly, Lane County faces a shortage of available facilities, which is a primary impediment to ECE expansion. However, 12 of the 16 school districts have indicated a strong interest in offering preschool at one or more of their elementary schools. This includes: Bethel, Eugene, Springfield, McKenzie, Lowell, Oakridge, South Lane, Creswell, Junction City, Fern Ridge, Mapleton, and Siuslaw. This would certainly help bridge the gap for 3-5 year olds, especially in those deeply rural districts. If we could also include some Early Head Start slots at those sites, that would be ideal.

Where are the biggest gaps in service geographically?

All Lane County communities are experiencing a critical lack of ECE services, although it is particularly dire in our rural communities. Of the 391 (licensed and exempt) providers in the county, 306 are in Eugene (200) and Springfield (106).¹ Additionally, there are nine communities with only one or two providers for families to choose from. East and West Lane County, which include the following school districts: Marcola, McKenzie, Lowell, Pleasant Hill, Blachly, Mapleton, and Siuslaw, are the **most** underserved communities. According to the TRI data, only 24 providers in Lane County are based in those areas and, of those 24, only seven serve infants.¹

Where are the biggest gaps in service for priority populations?

Other than the geographical service gaps listed above, other service gaps include: inadequate integrated classrooms that can accommodate more children with special needs, inadequate number of providers serving infants and toddlers, and inadequate number of culturally and ethnically diverse providers and programs for families to choose from.

What program characteristics are necessary to meet the demand in your target communities?

Transportation is a significant need for many families across the county, especially those in rural communities. Often in these areas, if a family doesn’t have access to a reliable vehicle, there are no/very limited public transit options, no rideshare or taxi services, and families live far away from providers so are unable to walk or bike. Compounding this issue is the fact that program hours do not line up with when parents need to be at work, so even if the family could get the child to the program, they aren’t open yet so the parent would be late to work. A van or bus that picked up/dropped off the child would help solve that issue for families.

Highly qualified, diverse teaching staff: Both parents and providers expressed the need for more highly qualified and diverse childcare/preschool teaching staff. Many programs, especially in-home programs, are not operating at capacity because they cannot find enough qualified staff/substitutes or are going to preschool-only because the staff-to-child ratio is

¹ ECE Provider Supply Analysis, The Research Institute (TRI) at Western Oregon University, 2019.

much higher and therefore easier to maintain. This puts the supply of infant/toddler care at an additional disadvantage. The shortage of qualified staff has been especially difficult to address due to the tight job market. Childcare providers are leaving the profession (or never entering) to find higher paying work in other industries. In the past several years, the annual turnover rate for the ECE workforce ranged from 16 to 29 percent per year.²

Flexible days and hours of care: While the majority (55%)³ of respondents to our online survey indicated they need care 8 hours per day, 5 days per week, we also heard from many parents that scheduling flexibility would serve their family and children better. Some parents indicated that they are only working part-time, or at non-traditional work hours and could be at home with their child during some of the hours of the day. Others expressed that their child, especially as an infant or toddler, wasn't quite ready for a full 8-hour day or that their child with special needs required fewer hours away from their primary caregiver or would otherwise be overwhelmed and overstimulated.

How would small ECE providers meeting these characteristics be supported through a network model?

We know that small networks of providers coming together around shared training and practices positively impacts both the providers and the care that they offer. For the past ten years, "Focused Childcare Networks," such as in western rural Lane County, with Spanish-speaking providers, and providers that want to better support children with special needs, have been supported in Lane County through Quality Care Connections (formerly Family Care Connections of Lane and Douglas Counties). Both in-home and center-based childcare programs are small businesses competing for staff and families to serve. Participation in these childcare networks could potentially be an incentive to stay competitive or grow their business. Additionally, there are issue-specific topics that a small network of providers could collaborate on to better serve their community as a whole, such as creating a shared sub pool of highly qualified teaching staff or staggering care hours so more families could be served throughout a 24-hour day.

² [Oregon's Child Care Industry, Oregon Employment Department, November 8, 2018](#)

³ Lane County Child Care & Preschool Survey, 2019

Lane Early Learning Alliance Regional Opportunities Expansion

Regional Opportunities Expansion

Current Opportunities (to replicate or expand on):

- **Employer-subsidized childcare (on or off site)**
 - Lane County has some employers that are already doing this successfully (Oregon Social Learning Center, Oregon Research Institute, University of Oregon).
 - With replication of this model across the county, and assisting employers to figure out the best way to blend parent pay, ERDC recipients, state- and federally-funded slots, this model could potentially serve hundreds of children.
 - Large employers, especially those who have a low-paid workforce, could help support their employees by offering these services onsite. If they included bi-lingual and highly trained staff, they could serve emergent English language learners and children with special needs.
 - Creative financing options may include tax incentives and business write-offs for the facilities, partial/sliding scale parent pay, and including Head Start, Early Head Start, and Preschool Promise slots to subsidize and offset staffing costs
- **Pearl Buck Center**
 - A year-round preschool program designed for families led by parents with cognitive limitations.
 - These families are considered at risk because it can be difficult to maintain employment, housing, and/or stable relationships. The parents often lack the knowledge and means to provide the early learning experiences their children need to thrive in kindergarten and beyond. These children are also at risk of abuse and neglect, even if unintended.
 - Serving 15-24 children in small classes of children ages 2-5, separated by age. With replication of this model to one or two rural areas of Lane County, Pearl Buck could potentially serve many more children.
 - Pearl Buck services are made possible through public and private grant funding. They are the only program of their kind in the state to support parents with cognitive limitations (and their young children ages 0-6), an overlooked population that make up 3% of the population statewide. They also conduct home-visits and adapted parenting classes.
- **Area High School childcare centers**
 - Up to 20 children per high school. These are the children of parenting teens, school staff, and community families.
 - With replication, this model could serve children at every high school throughout Lane County.
 - High school students interested in pursuing a career in ECE or Education could be part of the staff and gain career/technical education (CTE) credits toward graduation.
- **Parent/Child Co-operatives**
 - Currently exists at UO, Lane Community College, Downtown Eugene, South Eugene, among other places
 - With replication of this model, parents can assist with their child's early education, gain experience and teaching credentials, offset staffing & tuition costs, and potentially serve hundreds of children countywide.

Upcoming Possibilities:

- **New Riverfront development in Eugene**
 - The City of Eugene is developing a vacant, inaccessible riverfront into 75 affordable housing units, commercial use, restaurants, and a park plaza.

- A childcare center is also a consideration in future phases of the development.
- Some costs for families could be offset through blended and braided funds, including mixing Head Start, Early Head Start, and Preschool Promise slots with those that are parent-paid, either full tuition or paid on a sliding scale.
- Preference for attending the childcare center could go to the families living in the affordable housing units, who would most likely be income eligible for Head Start or Preschool Promise.
- Tax incentives would help underwrite the costs of developing a childcare center and provide an example for other developments.
- **New affordable housing developments**
 - As new affordable housing developments are built, including space for a childcare center makes perfect sense.
 - Most of the families eligible for low income housing would be income eligible for Head Start or Preschool Promise
 - Any additional costs for families could be offset by offering a sliding scale for families that are ineligible for Head Start or Preschool Promise slots.
 - Tax incentives would help underwrite the costs of developing a childcare center and provide an example for other housing developments.