



Early Learning Hub Monitoring Report

2017 – 2019

I. Executive Summary

Early Learning Hubs

In 2013, the Oregon Legislature passed [House Bill 2013](#), authorizing the Early Learning Council to create 16 regional and community-based Early Learning Hubs. The Hubs are charged with making supports more available, accessible, and effective for young children and families, particularly those from historically underserved communities. By statute, Early Learning Hubs were founded to make progress in their respective counties or regions toward the three early learning system goals:

System Goal 1: Children arrive ready for kindergarten.

System Goal 2: Children are raised in healthy, stable, and attached families.

System Goal 3: The early learning system is aligned, coordinated, and family-centered.

Early Learning Hubs are statutorily mandated to work with the following five sectors: Early Care and Education, Health (including public health and mental health), Social and Human Services, K-12, and Business, to break down barriers and work across systems to achieve the early learning system goals.

Early Learning Hubs convene cross-sector partners, engage their regions to determine early learning priorities and investments, gather and utilize data in decision-making, infuse equity practices, and build public will in support of early childhood.

Through a contract with the Early Learning Division (ELD), each Early Learning Hub's Governance Council has access to four state or federal funding streams to invest locally: Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation (KPI), School Readiness, Stable and Attached Families, and Family Support funds. Early Learning Hubs are required by their ELD contract to engage parents in Early Learning Hub Governance and to bring diverse parent voice and input into their decision-making processes.

The Early Learning Hub Monitoring Process

The monitoring process for the Early Learning Hubs has three parts:

1. **An Accountability Review:** Determines the extent to which each Early Learning Hub is effectively carrying out its essential functions, including contractual requirements and those outlined in statute.
2. **Documentation of Progress toward System Goals and Indicators of Success:** Documents the progress each Hub is making toward Oregon's three early learning system goals and the Early Learning Hub Indicators of Success.
3. **Continuous Quality Improvement Planning:** Findings from the Accountability Review and the Documentation of Progress inform the creation of a continuous quality improvement plan by each Hub, to be implemented during the 2019-2021 biennium.

Each part of the monitoring process is data-based; qualitative and quantitative data is collected from Early Learning Hub staff, Governance Council members, and community partners. Data sources include:

survey responses from Early Learning Hub partners, written responses to narrative questions, and review of Early Learning Hub operational documents.

Overall Findings

The Accountability Review

As a part of the Accountability Review, all Hubs underwent a rigorous financial review. This review included an assessment of Hubs' budgets, expenditures, and financial recordkeeping. All Hubs were found to have all required fiscal processes in order. Each Hub has a working relationship with their backbone organization and key policies in place related to assuring transparent, accountable decision-making by Hub Governance Councils. Individually, Hubs continue to make refinements and strengthen their governance policies and practices, as needed.

All Hub Governance Councils have members from the required sectors participating, though the ongoing engagement of members representing the business sector and parents remains a challenge for some Hubs. Five of the 16 Hubs had a vacancy in the business position on their Governance Council at the time of their monitoring. During the monitoring process, Hubs described various strategies they are currently using or might try using for engaging parents, including the formation of a dedicated parent council or advisory committee, the appointment of a parent representative(s) to the Governance body, utilization of another local parent group (such as Head Start), parent surveys, focus groups and events, and/or having a dedicated parent engagement coordinator. Business sector participation is also an area of continued growth. The recent formation of child care task forces around the state provides an excellent opportunity to engage business, as the urgency around child care as a work force issue is growing.

Hubs with large geographic regions and small populations noted limited staff capacity (e.g., one to three staff managing all the operational and collaborative functions of the Hub across large geographic areas) as a significant, ongoing challenge. Hubs with large and diverse populations identified the lack of staff capacity to engage many communities with different languages and cultures as their most significant challenge.

Documentation of Progress toward System Goals and Indicators of Success

Early Learning Hubs focus on the achievement of System Goal 3: Creating an aligned, coordinated and family-centered early learning system – to realize improvements in Goals 1 and 2. To align with this reality, the monitoring process also focuses primarily on System Goal 3.

In December of 2019, a partner survey was sent to all Early Learning Hub stakeholders as part of the monitoring process. Overall, respondents were satisfied with the way Early Learning Hub partners mutually supported each other to achieve shared goals and identified their Early Learning Hub as supportive in that work. Respondents also expressed that their Early Learning Hub made positive impacts for early childhood in their region. Respondents specifically identified that Early Learning Hubs increased collaboration; increased the availability of resources; expanded early learning programming, training and overall knowledge about early childhood education; and increased family engagement and equity-focused activities. Importantly, numerous K-12 respondents noted that engaging with Early Learning Hubs has increased their knowledge and understanding about what young children need to be ready for kindergarten.

Partner Survey respondents also noted areas for continued growth for the Early Learning Hub system. Respondents echoed Early Learning Hub staff and Governance Council members in identifying the need to engage more parents and business sector members. Respondents also identified the need for their Early Learning Hub to engage more directly with early learning providers and K-12 school districts. Some respondents did not identify their Early Learning Hub as a key venue to discuss and resolve early-childhood-related challenges and barriers, though at site visits many Governance Councils shared examples of their region coming together to increase access to early learning services and supports for young children and families.

In all of the data collected from partner surveys, through the site visits, and in documents submitted by Early Learning Hubs prior to their site visits, all Hubs had numerous examples of collaborative activities under development and/or being implemented. This was a result of the Early Learning Hub facilitating a community response to identified needs.

Continuous Quality Improvement Planning

Based on their monitoring findings, each Early Learning Hub chose two to four focus areas for quality improvement. Almost all Hubs chose parent engagement as one of their focus areas. Over half the Hubs will focus on improving their ability to evaluate their various activities to strengthen the overall impact of the Hub's investments. Over a third of the Hubs will focus on strengthening their cross-sector Governance processes.

Overall, Early Learning Hubs expressed the need for increased access to reliable, accessible data and ELD-identified metrics to guide and measure their impact. Hubs also expressed the need for more capacity building to increase their impact, particularly resources to support the expansion of staffing. Lastly, there was appreciation shared for the investment the ELD has made in technical assistance to date and a request by a number of Hub staff for additional topic-focused communities of practice.

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II. Introduction

Early Learning Hubs

In 2013, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2013, authorizing the Early Learning Council to create 16 regional and community-based Early Learning Hubs. The Hubs are charged with making supports more available, accessible, and effective for young children and families, particularly those from historically underserved communities. By statute, Early Learning Hubs were founded to make progress in their respective counties or regions toward the three early learning system goals:

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Early Learning Hubs convene cross-sector partners, engage their regions to determine early learning priorities and investments, gather and utilize data in decision-making, infuse equity practices, and build public will in support of early childhood.

Through a contract with the Early Learning Division, each Early Learning Hub's Governance Council has access to four state or federal funding streams to invest locally: Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation (KPI), School Readiness, Stable and Attached Family, and Family Support funds. Early Learning Hubs are required by their ELD contract to engage parents in Early Learning Hub Governance and to bring diverse parent voice and input into their decision-making processes.

Hub Monitoring Process

The Early Learning Hub Monitoring Process

The monitoring process for the Early Learning Hubs was developed in 2016 and has three parts:

1. **An Accountability Review:** Determines the extent to which each Early Learning Hub is effectively carrying out its essential functions including contractual obligations and those outlined in statute.
2. **Documentation of Progress Toward the Three System Goals and the Early Learning Hub Indicators of Success:** Documents the progress each Hub is making toward Oregon's three early learning system goals and the Hub Indicators of Success.
3. **Continuous Quality Improvement Planning:** Findings from the Accountability Review and the Documentation of Progress inform the creation of a continuous quality improvement plan by each Hub.

Each part of the Early Learning Hub Monitoring process is data-based; qualitative and quantitative data is collected from Hub staff, Governance Council members, and community partners. Data sources include: responses to a survey of Early Learning Hub partners, written responses to narrative questions, Early Learning Hub operational documents – such as Hub work plans, strategic plans and budgets, partnership agreements, as well as their equity demographic analysis – and a full-day, on-site monitoring meeting.

Both ELD staff and Hubs independently reviewed these data and information to generate a quantitative score and qualitative comments related to the Hub’s performance on each of seven key “indicators of success¹”

- Effective and engaged governance
- Collaborative partnerships
- Utilization of data
- Parent engagement and family voice
- Evaluation and quality improvement
- Equity
- Fulfillment of contractual obligations

ELD staff then conducted a full-day, on-site monitoring visit to review the evidence, and compare and discuss findings with the staff of each Hub and its Governance Council.



Partner Survey

Each Hub sent the partner survey link to required partners in each of the five sectors. See Appendix A, pp. 10-11, for the list of required partners.

Respondents’ answers were collated and provided to the Hub Governance Council prior to the on-site monitoring visit. See Appendix B for a sample of partner survey findings for a Hub.

Following the site visit, ELD staff combined their scores and comments with the Hub’s, and provided the combined information, referred to as “rubrics,” back to the Hub for a review of accuracy. Based on findings, ELD staff identified one area for quality improvement for each Hub. Each Hub incorporated this area for improvement, along with the two to three others they identified, into their Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) plan. A CQI plan for the implementation of these improvements during the 2019-2021 biennium was then submitted to ELD.

2017-2019 Early Learning Hub Monitoring Process Timeline

November 2018 – January 2019	Partner survey data collected. Narrative and other pre-site visit documents submitted to ELD by each Hub.
Pre-site visit	ELD staff reviewed evidence and filled out rubric. Hub staff and Governance Councils filled out rubric.
January – May 2019	On-site visits conducted.
June – August 2019	Final rubrics reviewed for accuracy by Hubs. CQI Plans submitted to ELD.

¹ See Appendix A for monitoring packet; p. 5 for more information on indicators of success.

The findings shared in this report were generated from the final rubrics, CQI plans, and Hub partner survey results. To review the rubric and CQI templates, please see Appendix A, pp. 25-30. To review the partner survey template, please see Appendix A, pp. 12-21.

III. Partner Survey Results

Background

The partner survey provides local, external feedback for the Governance Council and its Early Learning Hub staff and is a key piece of data collected during the monitoring process.

Between the 2015-2017 Early Learning Hub monitoring process and the 2017-2019 process, there was significant input gathered, from Hubs and ELD, about how to strengthen the validity and utility of the partner survey data. As a result, a number of changes were made to the partner survey between the 2017 and 2019 monitoring processes.

Definitions of Early Hub Partners

- **Community Partner:** Any community stakeholder who shares an interest in the Hub's mission and considers themselves in relation to, and engaged with, the Hub. This could take numerous forms: participating in a work group or advisory committee of the Hub, occasional communication, and/or having a financial relationship.
- **Governance Member:** Members are actively involved in decision-making for the Hub, either as a leader of the backbone organization, or as a member of the Governance Council or committee with some kind of decision-making authority.
- **Parent:** For the purpose of this survey, parents are engaged in a Hub Parent Council or Advisory Committee designed to build parent leadership and voice in Hub decision-making. Parents on Hub Governance Councils usually chose to take the Governance survey.
- **Sector Partner:** This refers to the five sectors Hubs are required to have engaged in governance. This includes K-12, Health (including Coordinated Care Organizations, CCOs), Early Care and Education (ECE), Human/Social Services (including Department of Human Services, DHS) and Business.

Significant changes made to the partner survey

Multiple Versions of Partner Survey

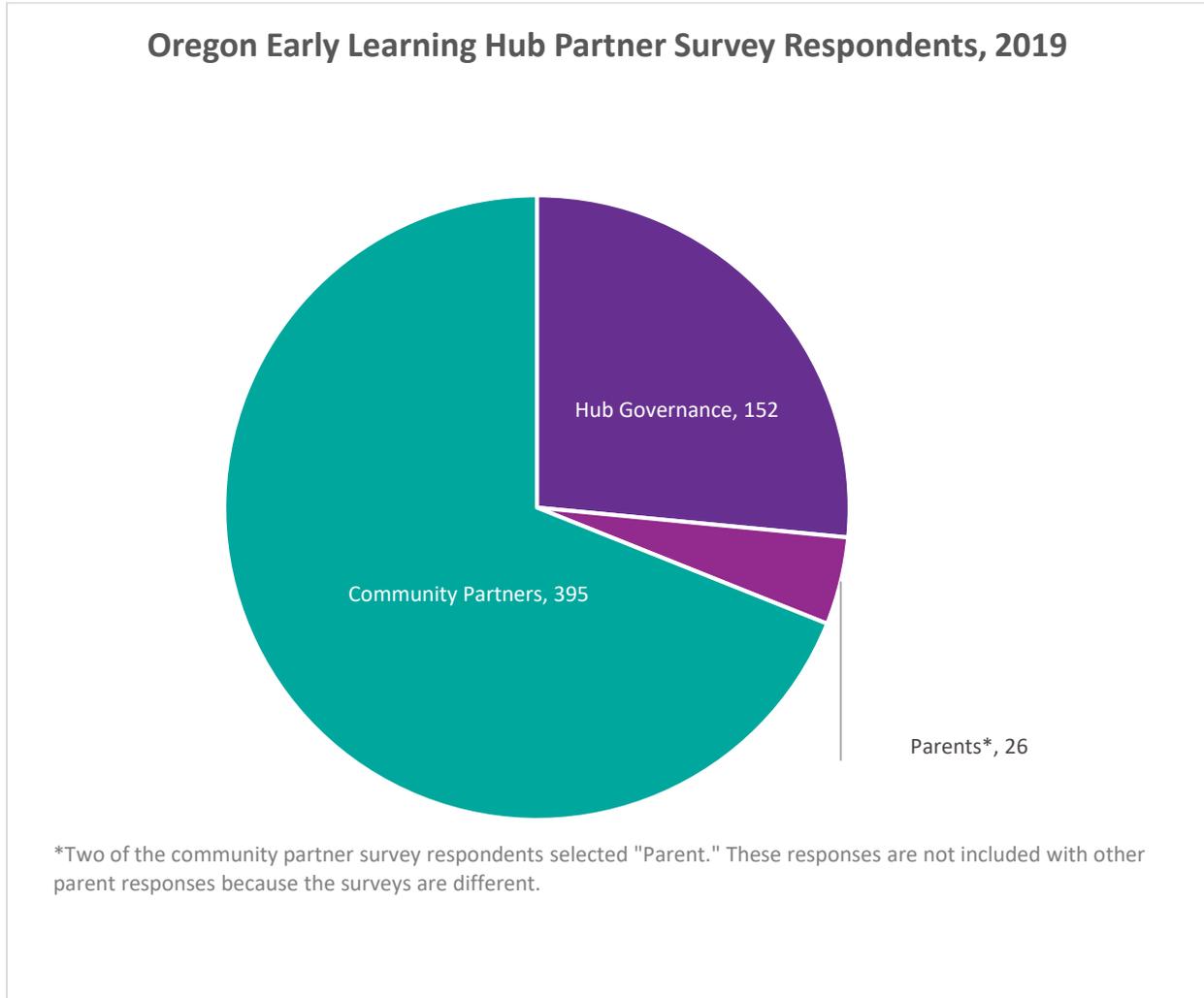
In 2017, all Early Learning Hub partners including staff and leadership from K-12, Health Care, Early Learning programs, DHS, Business, Head Start, and Governance Council members took the same partner survey. As some of the questions were about participating in decision-making, many respondents scored these questions quite low or skipped them, because they were not directly involved in decision-making. In 2019, Early Learning Hub Governance Council members responded to their own survey, which included these questions. A third survey was developed for parents involved in governance, which was tailored to gain the unique perspective of parents.

More Specific Sub-sector Choices for Stakeholders

In the 2019 version of the partner survey, the various sectors have more sub-sector choices by which they can specifically identify themselves. This enables ELD to develop more specific data about

stakeholders within the various sectors. For example, for Early Care and Education (ECE), respondents could identify themselves as being from Head Start or a Relief Nursery, or a CCR&R, etc.

Across all 16 Hubs, over 500 responses were generated over the six-week period during which the survey was open, from December 2018 to January 2019. Early Learning Hub staff sent an invitation (with a link to the appropriate survey version) to all required partners (see Appendix A for Monitoring Packet, pp. 9-10). The breakdown of responses follows:

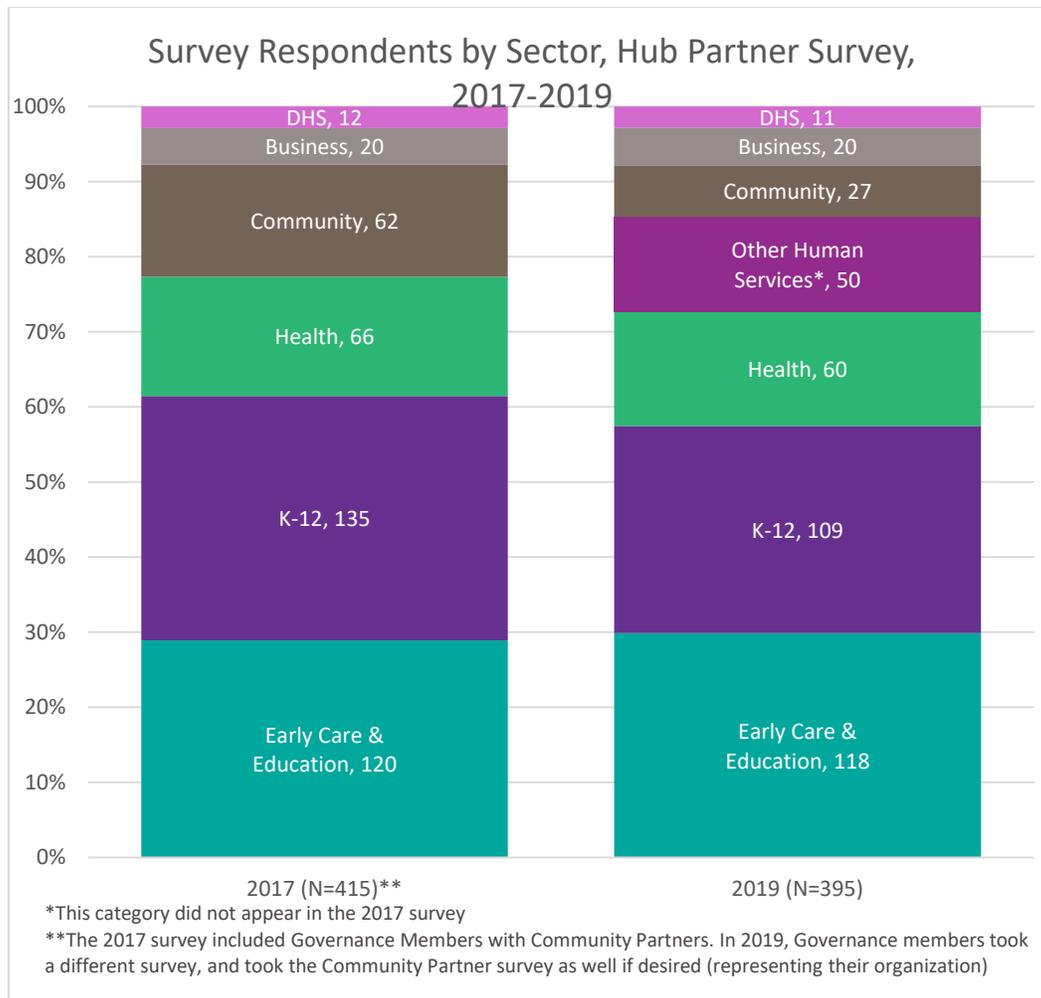


Community Partner and Governance Member Survey Results

Sector Representation

Each respondent of the community partner survey identified which sector they were representing.² The following charts compare participation by sector from 2017 to 2019:

² For a breakdown of the particular sub-sectors identified under each sector, please see Appendix A, pp. 12-13 (survey question #3). Data by sub-sector is available upon request (ex – DHS, Relief Nurseries, Public Health, etc).

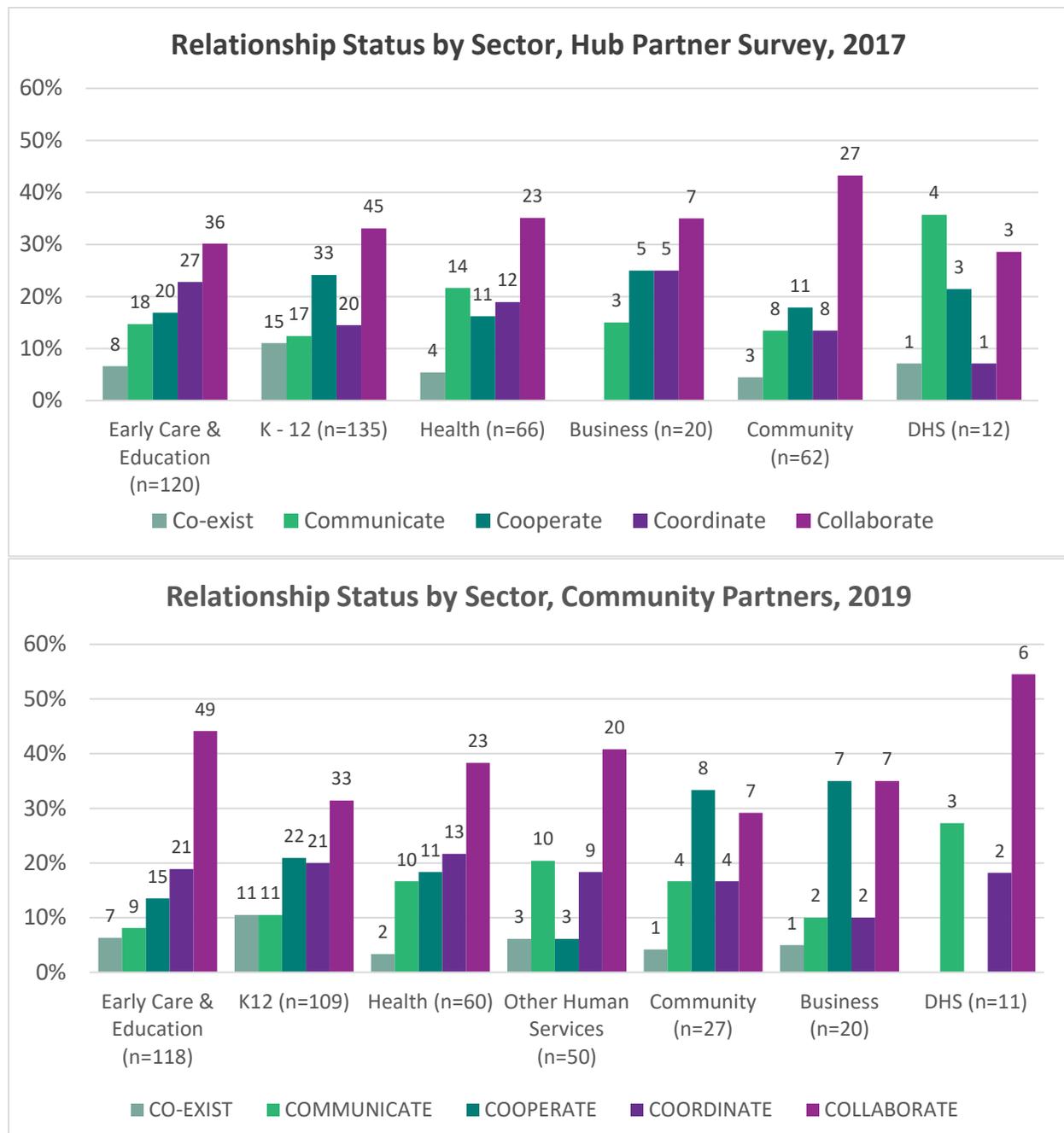


Community Partner Relationship Status by Sector³

In the community partner survey, partners were also asked their perceived level of collaboration with the Hub, using the Collaboration Continuum⁴ (see Appendix A for Monitoring Packet, p. 15). From 2017 to 2019, partners saw themselves as collaborating more intensively with their Hub, particularly amongst partners in the ECE and K-12 sectors. Although it may make sense for a partner not to be actively collaborating with their Hub on projects (for instance, if they don't serve a Hub's current priority populations), the general trend toward more collaboration is indicative of increased regional collaboration amongst the Hubs' sector partners:

³ This question was only asked of Community Partners, not Governance Members. Governance Members are assumed to be a part of the Hub, and have no need to define level of partnership.

⁴ The Collaboration Continuum utilized in the Partner Survey was developed by the Tamarack Institute.



Note: The 2017 Hub Partner Survey did not include the category of “Other Human Services.”

Partners’ experience of engaging and participating in the activities of the Early Learning Hub

The following table compares the average responses across all 16 Hubs (all respondents) to each partnership statement from 2017 to 2019. In general, there are few changes from 2017 to 2019 in partners’ experience of the Hub. For the questions that were taken out of the community partner survey in 2019 and only asked of Governance members, responses were noticeably higher. This is not surprising, as Governance members do have more influence over, and understanding of, their Hub’s cross-sector governance and decision-making.

Item Rating Scale			
<i>Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Strongly Agree = 4</i>			
Item Averages:	0-2.6	2.7-3.2	3.3 - 4.0

Statement	2017	2019	
	All Sectors & Governance	Governance	All Sectors
Number of Respondents	420	153	384
The mission of our Early Learning Hub is clear to me.	3.3	3.5	3.3
The Hub’s decision-making process, and my role in it, are clear to me.	3.0	3.3	3.0
The partners involved in our Hub mutually support each other toward common outcomes.	3.2	3.3	3.4
As community barriers arise, I take them to our Hub as a community resource for systems alignment and problem-solving.	2.9	3.1	3.0
As community opportunities arise, I take them to our Hub as a resource for nurturing collaborative community efforts.	3.0	3.2	3.1
The Hub’s success in implementing its strategies will improve the success of my work.	3.4	3.4	3.4
The way our Hub is organized provides appropriate opportunities for sharing among partners.	3.2	3.3	3.3
Parents' and families’ voices are heard and affect my EL hub’s strategies and decision-making.	2.9	3.0	3.2
My Hub is raising awareness about racial equity in our region.	3.4	3.2	3.2
My Hub raises awareness about early childhood and early learning in our region.	3.3	3.4	3.5
Our Hub’s leadership fosters regional collaboration.	3.3	3.3	3.5
<i>The statements below were only given to Governance members in 2019.</i>			
I have influence over decision-making within the Hub.	2.8	3.3	n/a
K-12, human services, health care, and early learning partners all participate in the governance of my Hub.	3.3	3.5	n/a
I am able to make productive contributions to our Hub.	3.2	3.4	n/a
My Hub invests in priority populations (the children you’ve identified as furthest from opportunity in your region).	3.4	3.5	n/a
My Hub utilizes the data available to them to develop strategies and guide their decisions.	3.3	3.4	n/a

Sector Partners' experience of engaging and participating in the activities of their Early Learning Hub:

Average responses by sector were similar from 2017 to 2019 as well. Sectors that did show changes in responses are shown below.⁵ Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) in particular, though still showing a small number of respondents, reported significant improvements in their experience of the Hub, particularly related to understanding the Hub's mission and decision-making process. ODHS, K-12 and ECE partners all observed a small increase in parents' and families' voice in decision-making.

Item Rating Scale

Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Strongly Agree = 4

Item Averages: 0-2.6 2.7-3.2 3.3 - 4.0

Statement	ECE - 2017	ECE - 2019	K-12 - 2017	K-12 - 2019	ODHS - 2017	ODHS - 2019
Number of Respondents	120	118	135	109	12	11
The mission of our Early Learning Hub is clear to me.	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.7
The Hub's decision-making process, and my role in it, are clear to me.	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.6
The partners involved in our Hub mutually support each other toward common outcomes.	3.3	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.5	3.5
As community barriers arise, I take them to our Hub as a community resource for systems alignment and problem-solving.	3.0	3.1	2.7	2.8	3.1	3.0
As community opportunities arise, I take them to our Hub as a resource for nurturing collaborative community efforts.	3.0	3.2	2.8	2.8	3.1	3.2
The Hub's success in implementing its strategies will improve the success of my work.	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.6
The way our Hub is organized provides appropriate opportunities for sharing among partners.	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.3	3.7
Parents' and families' voices are heard and affect my EL hub's strategies and decision-making.	2.8	3.0	2.7	3.0	2.9	3.4
My Hub is raising awareness about racial equity in our region.	3.1	3.2	3.0	2.9	3.4	3.1
My Hub raises awareness about early childhood and early learning in our region.	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.6	3.6
Our Hub's leadership fosters regional collaboration.	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.3	3.5	3.6

⁵ This chart does not include a broader set of community partners, but focuses on Hubs' required sector partners. Health responses weren't included here as there were no significant differences. The full charts of average responses to partner statements from each sector in both 2017 and 2019 are available in Appendix C.

Responses to Open-Ended Partner Survey Questions:

Community partners and Governance members were also asked in a narrative format:

- Please describe your sense of your Hub’s community engagement process, and how it has begun to address disparities in your region?
- Does your Hub have all relevant early learning and system partners at the table? Who is missing? If there are partners missing – what needs to happen to engage them?
- What changes, lessons, or reactions have happened as a result of your Hub’s efforts?
- What supports does your Hub need from internal staff, community partners, or the Early Learning Division (ELD) that will help move the Hub to the next phase in its development?

The themes that emerged in these responses are summarized here.

Question from Partner Survey: Does the Early Learning Hub have all relevant early learning and system partners at the table? Who is missing⁶?

There were clear themes that emerged from this question. The responses, from most to least common, follow:

- a) **Parents, child care providers, the business sector, and people from K-12/school districts:** These responses were prevalent for the community partner and Governance Council surveys. Respondents who identified “K-12” had varied ideas about what roles/positions from K-12 were missing. Some identified school-based staff, like teachers or principals; others identified school district leaders and administrative staff.
- b) **Mental health providers, ODHS, Head Start, homeless representatives, Spanish-speaking representatives, and tribal voices** were also mentioned as missing from the Hub table numerous times.
- c) **State legislators, pediatricians/medical providers or libraries** were infrequently mentioned as missing.

Though Governance members and community partners generally had similar responses to who was missing from the Hub table, there were some differences. Responses from Governance members consistently identified the need to engage parents and business more in governance. Governance members also often mentioned the need to increase the diversity of their Council, as well as the need to more actively engage school teachers and administrators, who struggle to attend meetings during school hours.

⁶ For the purposes of this question, Hub “table” refers to the stakeholders who are involved in governance discussions, whether that be a Hub committee or the Governance Council itself.

Question from Partner Survey: What changes, lessons or reactions have happened as a result of your Hub?

Respondents identified many positive changes, lessons or reactions as a result of the activities of their Early Learning Hub. Below are the most commonly identified positive changes, lessons or reactions.

- a) **Increased Collaboration:** By far the most common positive change identified by respondents across all sectors, and the Hub Governance Councils, was increased collaboration and/or alignment and/or coordination between partners and sectors that occurred as a result of the Early Learning Hub.

There is more collaboration between all systems and partners who serve the same population. We do not compete for the same families and have better communication on events. – Oregon Department of Human Services

I am a new member of the Hub Governance Council but have been delivering early learning services in the region for over 10 years. I have seen more coordination, relationship building and joint planning among community agencies, the County, and educational entities than ever before. Meeting agendas are well planned and presenters are relevant. – Governance

- b) **Increased Availability of Resources Leading to the Expansion of Programs:** Increased availability of resources leading to the expansion of programs was less commonly identified as an accomplishment than collaboration, but was it noted as a success by respondents representing all sectors and Hub Governance Councils. Sector responses tended to mention the expansion of specific programs in their sectors.
- c) **Increased Awareness of Early Learning Hub Efforts and Resources Available from the Hub:** Increased awareness of Early Learning Hub efforts and resources available from the Hub was an accomplishment identified by many respondents from the ECE sector. Respondents from other sectors as well as Early Learning Hub Governance Council members also identified this accomplishment. Examples of this included the work of the Hub and partners to bring about the expansion of a relief nursery in their region as well as helping to increase knowledge of and access to parent education.
- d) **Increased Availability of Professional Development and Increased Knowledge of Early Childhood Issues:** Respondents who identified that Early Learning Hubs increased professional development, training, and education for parents, as well as for providers, are included in this accomplishment. Also included are respondents who identified increased awareness of the importance of the early childhood years and best practices as an accomplishment. These accomplishments were most commonly identified by respondents from the ECE sector; ECE respondents also noted they were more able to incorporate what they were learning from these opportunities into their practice. Some respondents from other sectors and Hub Governance Council members also noted this accomplishment.

We have seen a generally raised awareness of the importance of early learning in our local decision makers and the public. – Governance

- e) **Increased Kindergarten Readiness:** Increased Kindergarten readiness was identified as an Early Learning Hub accomplishment by most K-12 sector respondents. It appeared less often in the other sectors. This can likely be attributed to the fact that K-12, along with the Hubs, are tracking the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) data and have a unique perspective of readiness from professional observation in the classroom.
- f) **Increased Family Engagement:** Increased family engagement was noted as an Early Learning Hub accomplishment by many K-12 respondents. Some Human Services and Governance Council respondents noted it as well.

I am most proud of the role parent voice has in funding decisions via the Oversight group and PAC. This is truly shifting power to communities. – Governance

- g) **Increased Equity Work:** Improvements in equity or increased work towards equity was identified as an Early Learning Hub accomplishment by some K-12 and Human Services respondents. Governance members also noted equity accomplishments. Few early childhood education and health sector respondents noted equity accomplishments.

It is important to note a surprising number of respondents stated that they were unsure of their Early Learning Hub's accomplishments or left the question blank.

A few respondents identified gaps and areas for improvement and issues they believed the Hub should address. One major theme was the need for more tangible data and statistics on the impact of the work. The kindergarten assessment scores were noted as one place to see positive impact but still lacking in the overall picture of how the Hub is definitively changing the lives of children and families. There is a desire for tangible metrics associated directly with the work of Hubs that can be tracked over time.

I don't have hard evidence in front of me but I know there is an increase of numbers of children in high quality early learning programs and parenting classes.

I have not heard any data by which to measure this. I believe, strongly, that the hub is taking the right steps and including the right partners. Their projects and initiatives certainly support this goal – I am just, personally, unaware of any means by which this has been measured.

Emerging Successes and Continuing Challenges

Emerging Successes

In the monitoring that took place in both 2017 and 2019, all partners who responded to the survey identified that collaborating with the Early Learning Hub is of high value for them. Respondents tended to “agree” or “strongly agree” that participating in their Hub made their work more successful, that partners mutually support each other, and that the Hub is organized in a way that supports sharing among partners.

In 2019, more community partner respondents indicated that they understood the Hub's mission and its decision-making processes than in 2017. The 2019 Governance Council respondents expressed confidence in Hubs' focus on equity and data to drive decision-making and their ability to contribute productively as Governance Council members.

Other responses remained consistent despite there being turnover in Hub leadership in four out of 16 Hubs, which may indicate that Governance Councils and backbone organizations are providing stable, effective leadership for Hubs.

Continuing Challenges

Although there were small improvements in partners' perception of the Early Learning Hub as a place to bring community challenges and barriers for resolution, and new opportunities to collectively pursue, these statements were scored noticeably lower than other statements in both 2017 and 2019.

Many respondents identified parent voice and participation in governance as a continuing challenge for Early Learning Hubs. Identified barriers included: lack of knowledge about how to recruit parent members, meeting times of Governance Councils, lack of support or financial stipends for parent members (many of whom would need to take time off work to attend), and a lack of knowledge on the part of many Early Learning Hubs regarding how to build parent leadership for their region.

Challenges by Sector

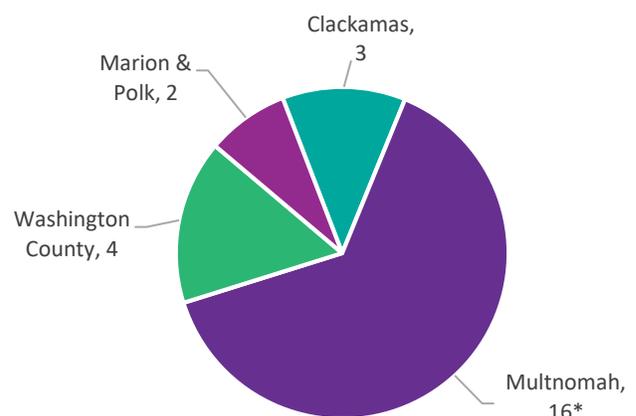
Though the patterns noted above were consistent across sectors, there were also some differences in sector responses on the partner survey. K-12 continued to score Early Learning Hubs somewhat lower in all areas than other sectors. At the same time, K-12 and Early Care and Education had the most responses to the survey in both 2017 and 2019, indicating their involvement with the Early Learning Hub. How K-12 and Early Learning Hubs might best collaborate appears to still be developing in most regions in the state.

Additionally, ODHS continued to have low levels of participation in the survey. Those who did respond to the survey gave significantly higher scores for the Hub in 2019 than they did in 2017. There was improvement in ODHS understanding of their Hub's mission, decision-making processes, and overall structure.

Results of Parent Survey

The parent survey was created shortly before the launch of the partner survey at the request of Early Learning Multnomah (ELM), which has a parent council as part of their governance structure. The parent council was not well represented in the 2017 monitoring process. The parent partner survey was tailored to gain the unique perspective of parents. It focused on asking parents about their experience as members of Governance and the voice parents bring to the governance process.

Hub Parent Survey Responses by Hub, 2019



*Parents in Multnomah responded to the survey during an in-person meeting of the Parent Advisory Council, increasing response rate.

Parents were asked in the survey to rate statements on the same rating scale used for community partners and Governance members. The parents surveyed had an ongoing relationship with the Hub, participating in either a Parent Advisory Council or Committee, or as a parent representative to their governance structure. Their satisfaction with this experience was overall quite high.

Item Rating Scale		
<i>Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Strongly Agree = 4</i>		
Item Averages:	0-2.6	2.7-3.2
		3.3 - 4.0

Statement	Parent Average
Number of Respondents	26
I know how I help my Early Learning Hub make decisions.	3.6
My voice and experience as a parent is important to my Early Learning Hub.	3.7
My voice and experience as a parent influences how my Early Learning Hub serves my community.	3.7
I see how my Early Learning Hub is helping improve the lives of children and families in my community.	3.7
My Early Learning Hub raises awareness about honoring every child’s culture and needs.	3.8
My Early Learning Hub raises awareness about early childhood and early learning.	3.7
All Statements Average	3.7

Parents were also asked a few open-ended questions and a couple of common themes emerged from the responses:

38% of parents expressed the importance of having parent voice heard in their Hub, illustrated by one respondent, who wrote: “When I first started with PAC [Parent Advisory Committee]... I wasn't sure it was my place to call out systems for not meeting all or most of their communities but now I am sure it is my place and needs to happen. And it feels good to do so.”

26% of parents expressed gratitude for the positive impact that participation in the PAC has had on their family, such as: “Many parents then and now that participated on ELM [Early Learning Multnomah]... PAC experienced such on-going support it has effected them and it shows in the success of their children.”

Five Hubs currently have a council or other group particularly for parents. The majority of Hubs have a parent representative on their Governance Council. Additional data gathered during the Hub monitoring process by the ELD’s Parent Engagement Coordinator found that about 2/3 of the Hubs engaged groups

of parents to gather information, utilizing them as consultants. These Hubs still lacked a two-way communication loop that would enable the parents consulted to stay informed and actively engaged in Hub decision-making. Six Hubs reported having part or all of a dedicated staff position to engage with parents and support the development of parent leadership in the Hub. Strategies currently identified for engaging parent voice included the following:

Types of Strategies	Examples of Activities	Number of Hubs engaged in these types of strategies
Actively participating in Hub Governance as parents	Parent representative(s) on Hub governance council (7), and/or Parent Advisory Committee or Council (5)	9
Providing in-person engagements with parents to inform decision-making	Focus groups, listening sessions, Parent Cafes, family picnics, and/or 1:1 conversations with parents	10
Leveraging partner organizations' parent groups to engage with parents and gain their perspective on Hub related strategies and activities	Head Start Parent Councils, parent groups in CSOs, Housing complexes, and /or K-12 parent events	7
Surveying parents to inform decision-making	Surveys to parents; surveys to professionals who work with parents, i.e., district superintendents	10
Providing events or activities to build relationships with parents	Community baby showers, family picnics, family nights and /or resource fairs	10
Supporting services and programming to parents as an engagement method	Library story times, facilitated parent play groups, navigator to help with individualized referrals and/or culturally responsive supports, OPEC within the Hub, VROOM	16

During site visits, all of the Hubs identified the need to actively engage parent voice in decision-making. When asked about barriers to building parent voice in governance, the top challenge reported was financial, that the Early Learning Division has not provided dedicated funding for parent engagement in governance. Hubs also expressed a need for training around building parent leadership capacity, creating governance processes that are parent-friendly, and engaging parents from priority populations.

IV. System Goals Findings

Hub Activities related to the three Early Learning System Goals (see page 6 for goals review)

A Hub’s charge is to actively work on System Goal 3: The early learning system is aligned, coordinated, and family-centered, in service to making progress on the other system goals. While the monitoring process is primarily designed to evaluate Hubs’ effectiveness related to progress on System Goal 3, the context for talking about their work during the monitoring process was almost always the first two goals. The number of strategies and activities being piloted in new ways with different partners to meet community needs across all Hubs was impressive.

The tables below are intended to summarize strategies and activities found across the Hub system related to the first two goals. A Hub’s role in a community partnership varies in response to the needs of their partners, but includes supports such as identification of need (data), convening partners, developing processes or systems to support collaboration, funding, program coordination, community engagement, working with families, etc.

System Goal 1: Children arrive ready for kindergarten.

Note: Strategies or activities with an asterisk are offered by all Hubs.

Hub Strategy	Hub Activities	Hubs
Building parent capacity as child’s first teachers	Dialogic reading; Imagination Library; Kaleidoscope; Waterford Upstart; Play and Learn Groups; *VROOM	Central, Clackamas, Four Rivers, South Central, Southern
Providing Pre-Kindergarten experiences in partnership with K-12	KITs; Kindercamps; Ready for K; Jumpstart	Blue Mountain, Four Rivers, Frontier, Lane, Linn-Benton-Lincoln, NW Regional; South Central
Coordinating enrollment for child care and preschool	Sharing wait lists; shared outreach materials; staff person working directly with families and programs on placements	Lane, Marion-Polk
Providing behavioral health supports to prevent suspension/expulsion (and to keep children in preschool programs)	Conscious Discipline, Mental Health Warm Line, in-classroom coaching; anti-bias training; PAX Good Behavior Game	Blue Mountain, Eastern, Frontier, Lane, Marion-Polk, Southern, Washington, Yamhill
Conducting community campaigns or initiatives to impact kindergarten readiness	Preschool for All; Campaign for Grade Level Reading; Trauma Informed Care; Attendance in Life	Clackamas, Lane, Multnomah, South-Central, Yamhill
Aligning Pre-K through 3 rd grade data	Early Education Questionnaire; Regional Data Book; Annual Data Report	Blue Mountain, Lane, Linn-Benton-Lincoln, Multnomah
Developing public-private child care partnerships that build capacity for the child care system	Business planning and needs assessments; addressing community barriers (cost of space, zoning, etc.); identifying community champions and convening stakeholders	Blue Mountain, Central, Linn-Benton-Lincoln, NW Regional, South Coast

Hub Strategy	Hub Activities	Hubs
Coordinating shared professional development between early learning and K-12	Professional Learning Teams; Hub Preschool-3 rd grade subcommittee; Shared work plans with ESD (backbone); Kindergarten Guidelines trainings	Blue Mountain, Central, Eastern, Frontier, Lane, Linn-Benton-Lincoln, NW Regional, Southern

System_Goal 2: Children are raised in healthy, stable, and attached families.

Note: Strategies or activities with an asterisk are offered by all Hubs.

Hub Strategy	Kinds of activities	Hubs
Assuring developmental screenings for priority populations*	Working with pediatric clinics and CCOs to increase developmental screening and the referral process. Joint work with EI/ECSE	Lane, Frontier, Blue Mountain, all Hubs as this was a previously measured metric for Hubs
Developing closed-loop referrals and service navigation	Universal referral forms; shared data portals; family resource managers/navigators; cross-agency service coordination teams; streamlining referral processes between pediatric practices and/or other ECE services; Pollywog	Central, Clackamas, Four Rivers, Lane, Linn-Benton-Lincoln, South Central, Yamhill
Implementing home visiting strategies	Family Connect Pilots; Shared data portal to identify families to visit; including home visiting as Coordinated Enrollment support for families on waiting lists; Community UpLift; Pollywog	Central, Eastern, Four Rivers, Lane, Linn-Benton-Lincoln, Marion-Polk, NW Regional, South Central, Washington

V. Hub Governance and Community System Conditions

When Hubs were formed, regions around Oregon went through a community process to self-identify their service area, as well as an appropriate regional backbone organization/agency. They also developed local decision-making processes designed to be transparent and accountable to the community, and autonomous from their backbone organization. The following information summarizes what these processes look like now and areas of focus for the next biennium.

Backbone Organizations

Each Early Learning Hub has a backbone organization that provides sound fiscal management, operational support, and leadership for the Hub. The backbone organizations have remained relatively stable over the last five years, with only one Hub changing backbone organizations to date. The types of backbone agencies and the number of Hubs with each type of backbone are as follows:

Backbone Organizations Supporting Hubs	
Type of Organization	Number of Hubs
Education Service District (ESD)	7
Non-Profit Organization	4
County Government	3
Coordinated Care Organization (CCO)	1
Community College	1

The monitoring process did not discern that any one type of backbone agency proved to be more capable nor better strategically positioned to support a Hub's success. In both the 2017 and 2019 site visits, conversations were held with the Hubs and their backbone organizations, in which the following key elements of their mutually supportive working relationship were identified:

Key Elements of Mutually Supportive Working Relationship

- Shared mission and values.
- High integration exists between backbone entity and Hub priorities, i.e., work and strategic plans, with Hub engaged in leadership of backbone governance.
- Backbone organization is strengthened by Hub success and leader engaged in Hub governance.
- Hub decision-making processes are clearly autonomous.
- Hub is understood not to be a program or a grant by its backbone, but rather a convener and facilitative leader for regional early learning system development and implementation.
- Backbone entity has the infrastructure and community standing needed to support the wide range of partnerships, contracts, and investments, which are necessary to a Hub's success.

Early Learning Hub Governance

All 16 Hub Governance Councils have governance processes in place. In 2017, there were a few Hubs whose governance structures were still developing. This work is now successfully completed.

All Hubs have the required sector partners participating in their Hub Governance. These include Health Care, K-12, Oregon Department of Human Services, Early Care and Education, Business, Parents, Health and Human Services, and where appropriate, local tribal representation. Similar to 2017's findings, the required sector that was least engaged was business, with five out of 16 Hub Governance Councils, as of spring 2019, with vacant business positions.

Many Hubs expressed finding it easier to engage the business sector on specific projects with concrete outcomes with an immediate shared goal, rather than on the Governance Council and its ongoing work on behalf of the region. One area of shared interest between business and early learning emerging around the state is public-private child care partnerships, a response to Oregon's child care crisis and its effect on employee recruitment and retention. In Central Oregon, a child care task force has been established to identify creative and diverse ways to address the lack of child care in those communities. Membership represents a wide variety of regional interests including the Chamber of Commerce, employers, non-profits, business developers, child care providers, the financial sector, the Governor's Regional Solutions Office, early childhood organizations, health care providers, academia, city staff, and other community members. Early work includes a subcommittee to focus on increasing/expanding quality child care facilities, with the intent to increase the actual number of child care openings for children 0-5 in the region. Other regions are following suit will similar strategies.

Beyond the five required sector partners, Hubs are finding certain other partners particularly valuable. Libraries are represented on numerous Hub Governance Councils, and were mentioned on almost all of the monitoring site visits as key partners in community collaborations around both literacy and kindergarten readiness.

WIC and/or public health were mentioned by most Hubs as a key partner for data gathering/sharing, family engagement, outreach, and distribution of resources/information to families in priority populations. Community mental and behavioral health partners in all Hubs have been active partners in Hub community collaborations, with most participating in Hub governance as well.

With their basic governance functions now in place, many Hubs are refining the committee structure/functions of their Governance Councils as they move into deeper implementation of the regional priorities. A few of them are refining their conflict of interest policy for Governance Council members to ensure their decision-making processes remain transparent and accountable.

VI. Monitoring Summaries by Hub

The Hub summaries, one for each Hub, were generated from the evidence gathered throughout the monitoring process. The number of promising practices, creative partnerships, and challenges each Hub is working with far exceed the scope of this report. These summaries are intended to provide a brief snapshot into the workings of each Hub. See appendix D.

VII. Next Steps

Continuous Quality Improvement Plans

Across Hubs, the following themes emerged as focus areas for quality improvement:

Early Learning Hubs' Priority Areas for Continuous Quality Improvement (Jointly determined by Hubs and ELD) (CQI)	# Hubs/2017	# Hubs/2019
Strengthen parent voice in Hub governance.	8	15
Improve utilization of Hub program/initiative evaluation data for the CQI of the Hub as a whole.	3	9
Refine and strengthen cross-sector governance processes	7	6
Strengthen communication across Hub initiatives and/or with larger community.	5	4

Hubs almost universally stated the need to focus on strengthening parent voice in governance and to more actively engage parents in the Hub's many activities. Hubs described numerous next steps, varying from launching a parent advisory council, to offering various supports (including financial) for parent representatives on Governance Councils, to hiring a parent engagement coordinator. Geographically larger, more remote regions identified the need to better leverage existing parent groups or resources to link more closely to the governance structure.

Hubs will continue to implement evidence-based programs that have undergone evaluation in their creation process, such as Kids in Transition to School (KITS) in Lane County. Over half the Hubs also identified the goal of taking deeper dives into the evaluation processes and outcomes of the programs they fund. Hubs also anticipate the data gathered by Portland State University on Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation (KPI). They will continue to implement community-driven, culturally-appropriate practices, using evaluation data to inform their investments.

The six Hubs focusing on governance processes are anticipating increasing business engagement, strengthening conflict of interest policies and/or continuing to diversify board representation to better reflect their community's demographics. Numerous Hubs expressed the need to "tell their story", strengthen communication across the various pieces of work underway, or communicate with their stakeholders in a regular and compelling manner. These needs speak to the overall goal of raising awareness of Hub work in the community, as well as each Hub's role in elevating understanding of the importance of early learning across the state.

Support for Early Learning Hub Success

In both their CQI planning and responses to narrative questions, Early Learning Hubs identified technical assistance or other resources needed to support their success. The most commonly identified areas of needed technical assistance or other supports were:

1. **Data:** Nearly all Hubs reported needing accessible, reliable, timely data that can be disaggregated at the local level. Individual requests included a standardized way of collecting

and tracking data, alignment with kindergarten assessment and other K-12 measures, a reporting system, and help with qualitative data analysis. Numerous Hubs noted the efficiency of data analysis at the state level and the offer to work with regions to overlay additional data with what is used locally.

2. **Performance Metrics:** Early Learning Hubs have had a few different sets of metrics since they started, most recently *Roles and Indicators* they have been incorporating into their strategies and activities. Measurements were not developed for these Roles and Indicators, as Raise Up Oregon (RUO) was being developed and would likely promulgate new metrics. Hubs expressed a desire to have specific measurements to work toward, particularly now that RUO is being implemented.
3. **Staff Capacity:** Many Hubs expressed the need for more core staffing, particularly for parent or community engagement, as well as staff with data expertise. The need for data expertise and capacity was also expressed by partners across all Hubs in the partner survey, particularly by Governance Council members.
4. **Peer Learning:** Hubs expressed appreciation for the Learning Collaborative and Hub webinars. A few Hubs asked for Communities of Practice by topic area.

Next Steps for the Early Learning Division

As mentioned at the beginning of this report, the ELD uses the information from the Early Learning Hubs' monitoring process to inform the development of training and technical assistance for Early Learning Hubs. ELD activities that support or respond to the findings follow:

- a) **Formation of the Community Systems Team (CST):** A new team has formed at the ELD with a focus on strengthening state-community connections and regional early learning systems.
- b) **Increased Capacity for Early Learning Hubs:** Targeted investments of \$3.5 million from the Oregon legislature will increase Hubs' capacity to carry out early care and education sector planning and provide regionally-coordinated enrollment for preschool in 2019-2021.
- c) **Data:** Through a federal Preschool Development grant, the ELD undertook a statewide Needs Assessment for the early learning system in preparation for preschool expansion. As part of that work, the ELD-contracted researchers are aggregating the best available data for Hubs to reference in their early care and education sector planning for their region. The Community Systems Team will provide technical assistance to Hubs and their CCR&R partners to use that data to make data-driven, equitable and evidence-based decisions.
- d) **Parent Engagement in Systems Coordinator:** A new, permanent ELD position will focus on supporting the development of parent leadership and voice. As well, the new Community SystemTeam Director has expertise in parent engagement. These resources will be used to provide technical assistance to Hubs as they focus on parent engagement for CQI in 2019-2021. The Parent Engagement Coordinator will assist Hubs in recruiting (and supporting) parents for Governance Council membership. They will also work with Hubs to bring parent voice to their convening activities and partnerships.
- e) **Technical Assistance for Governance Councils:** With the key role Governance members play in Hub success, the ELD will be offering targeted technical assistance to continue to develop their capacity to improve community conditions for young children and families across the state.

For more information about this report, or Early Learning Hubs in general, please contact:

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VII. Appendices

- **Appendix A:** [Hub Monitoring Packet](#)
- **Appendix B:** [Sample Individual Hub Partner Survey Results](#)
- **Appendix C:** [Average Sector Responses to Survey 2017 and 2019](#)
- **Appendix D:** [Individual Hub Summaries](#)