

April 25, 2019

Board of Commissioners
Clackamas County

Approval of a Resolution Promoting Investments in
Young Children and Families for Early Childhood Education

Purpose/Outcomes	This resolution is an opportunity to demonstrate the county's leadership and commitment to strengthening services, programs, policies and systems vital to the success of all infants and toddlers. The resolution aligns with the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers (NCIT) and National Association of Counties (NACo) effort to ensure families have the support they need to give their infants and toddlers the foundation for a strong start in life.
Dollar Amount and Fiscal Impact	No fiscal impact to the County – County receives funds from the State of Oregon to coordinate the Clackamas County Early Learning Hub.
Funding Source	N/A
Duration	This is an on-going resolution to support the work of the Early Learning Hub to coordinate with community partners to deliver equitable, comprehensive, and complex programming that, together, are critical to the success of young children, families and communities.
Previous Board Action	The Board has supported the County's role in being the backbone organization for the Early Learning Hub and its associated initiatives and programs.
Strategic Plan Alignment	Individuals and families in need are healthy and safe Ensure safe, healthy and secure communities
Contact Person	Rodney A. Cook, Director Children, Youth & Families Division 503-650-5677

BACKGROUND:

Recent brain science shows that the most rapid period of brain development occurs within the first three years of life - developing faster from birth to age three than at any later period, building the foundation for all future learning, behavior and health. Although there are opportunities to intervene later, there is a potential for large gains if investments in quality programs and services are made early.

Counties play pivotal role in the development of their youngest residents, often working in coordination with community partners to deliver equitable, comprehensive, and complex programming that, together, are critical to the success of young children, families and communities. These programs and services:

* Ensure children have a healthy start in life providing access to prenatal care, immunizations, developmental and behavioral health screenings and consultation, and early intervention services.

Healthy Families. Strong Communities.

* Support families through child welfare and court models, parent education classes, home visiting, and federally mandated programs like WIC, CHIP and Medicaid.

* Provide access to affordable, high-quality child care and early learning through Early Head Start, child care subsidies, and professional development and training opportunities for caregivers.

Counties are not only responsible for service delivery, but many times are also the catalyst for national, state and local systems change - coordinating intake and referral to a continuum of supports; building data systems that allow agencies to share information and measure progress; coordinating planning and financing to target resources most in need; fostering community and political will to enhance support for investing in infants and toddlers; and creating continuous quality improvement processes to sustain improvements.

This resolution is an opportunity to demonstrate our county's leadership and commitment to strengthening services, programs, policies and systems vital to the success of all infants and toddlers. Please join the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers (NCIT) and National Association of Counties (NACo) in this national effort to ensure families have the support they need to give their infants and toddlers the foundation for a strong start in life by passing this resolution today.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board approve the Resolution Promoting Investments in Young Children and Families for Early Childhood Education.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Swift, Director
Health, Housing & Human Services

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF CLACKAMAS COUNTY, STATE OF OREGON**

Resolution to Promote Investments
in Early Childhood Services for Young
Children and Families



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WHEREAS, Counties routinely provide an array programs and services to an estimated 16 million children ages birth to three in the United States; and in 2017 about 29 percent of counties had more than a quarter of all children living in poverty; and

WHEREAS, The most rapid period of brain development occurs within the first years of life with the brain developing faster from birth to age three than at any later period in life, building the foundation for all future learning, behavior and health; and toddlers receive what their growing brains need, they become healthy children who are confident, empathetic and ready for school and life; and

WHEREAS, Research shows that when we invest in the first three years of a child's life the returns for the community are the highest, and we can reduce the need for more expensive interventions later; and research also shows that high-quality early childhood development programs can deliver an annual return of up to 13 percent per child on upfront costs through better outcomes in education, health, employment and social behavior in the decades that follow; and economists attribute local economic growth and prosperity to high-quality early child care programs; and

WHEREAS, Parents are a child's most important caregivers and play the lead role in their child's healthy development; at the same time, communities and governments can effectively provide families with an array of comprehensive support at an especially critical time; and

WHEREAS, Programs and policies should start early to ensure healthy beginnings at birth, support families with infants and toddlers and make high-quality child care and learning environments more accessible and affordable to all; and

WHEREAS, High-quality child care is often unavailable or unaffordable for parents who need it, and many families are not connected to networks or early childhood supports that can offer guidance and confidence to navigate the earliest months and years of their children's lives; and

WHEREAS, Clackamas County and all counties take pride in protecting and enhancing the health, welfare and safety of residents in cost-effective ways, especially for the 13,000 children under the age of three in our area; and

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WHEREAS, Clackamas County lacks a supply of quality, affordable child care options for our youngest children. The price of infant toddler child care is 1.5 times that of tuition at Oregon’s Public Universities and families bear the burden of the cost.

WHEREAS, The Early Learning Hub of Clackamas County is working with partners in health, education, social services and other sectors to assure that all children and families have the resources and support they need to be successful in school and life by facilitating readiness for Kindergarten, safe, stable and attached Families, and an aligned, coordinated and family-centered early learning system; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties (NACo) and other national organizations joined the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers (NCIT), a project of the Pritzker Children’s Initiative (PCI), in a groundbreaking partnership to work with communities and states across the country to focus on early childhood development for young children from birth to three, and;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners, do hereby resolve to prioritize and invest in Early Childhood efforts that promote a healthy start at birth, support for families with infants and toddlers, high-quality care and learning environments, and utilize the resources available through NACo and the NCIT to:

- Be a champion for change by prioritizing and investing in high-quality early childhood programs so children, families and communities can thrive;
- Designate authority to the Early Learning Hub of Clackamas County to coordinate and maximize county services to optimize child and family outcomes and leverage additional resources;
- Support the Early Learning Hub to convene a diverse team of leaders, decision-makers and community stakeholders committed to early childhood investments;
- Support the Early Learning Hub to inventory local programs and services for children and families, create a plan with in alignment with Performance Clackamas goals, implement evidence-based approaches that promote a comprehensive and equitable continuum of care that begins before birth and spans into adulthood, with specific recommendations for children under three and their families;
- Support the Early Learning Hub to leverage local, state and federal investments and explore innovative funding strategies and revenue streams to support early childhood programming; and
- Support the Early Learning Hub to promote prenatal-to-three policies, best practices and cross coordination to improve child and family outcomes as well as service delivery and efficacy in government through streamlined processes.

DATED this 25th day of April, 2019

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chair

Recording Secretary