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Notice of Upcoming Grant Opportunity: P-3 Alignment

The Oregon Community Foundation is pleased to announce a three-year, \$1.5 million strategy to help ensure school readiness and future success for Oregon's young children, particularly for those most at risk of failing to thrive. The Request for Proposals will be released in early August 2013.

P-3 (prenatal through grade three) alignment brings two separate systems – early care and education and the first years of primary school – together. The purpose is to create **stronger connections between elementary schools and the providers of early childhood care and education programs in their neighborhoods – and between schools and parents of young children**. This grant program will provide implementation grants to support planning and development of P-3 alignment strategies in communities with strong leadership and motivation. Grants will be supplemented by technical assistance and training through a learning community of grantees.

Eligibility

School districts will be eligible to apply for grants of up to \$75,000 per year for three years. OCF expects to award at least eight grants, through a partnership with the Kelley Family Foundation. Implementation activities may encompass more than one elementary school within a district, and multiple districts may apply together if there is a demonstrated history of collaboration. This grant opportunity will not be limited to the 21 districts that participated in OCF's recent P-3 Alignment Planning Grant Program.

Outcomes

With this strategy, OCF anticipates seeing quantifiable and positive changes for children, families, educators, and systems. The logic model for this grant program is attached and includes lists of the outputs and short- to medium-term outcomes. Through aligned P-3 systems, OCF ultimately expects to see changes in Oregon that include:

- a more collaborative early learning-elementary school system with greater training opportunities for teachers,
- greater family engagement in learning as a core instructional strategy,
- comprehensive data systems that support teaching and learning,
- less fade-out of gains from high-quality early childhood programs,
- higher 3rd grade reading scores,
- a smaller achievement gap,
- results for children seen as a responsibility shared across early learning programs, grades K-3, families, and communities and
- more children entering school ready to learn.

Why Apply?

Districts will be able to learn about and do the following:

- Explore and build partnerships outside of the school
- Reach out to parents of young children and school-age children
- Develop joint trainings and kindergarten transition programs
- Learn more about early care and learning in your community
- Learn more about the families with children that will attend your schools
- Train teachers and administrators to better support children's success in the early years of elementary school

Characteristics of Strong Applications

- OCF will place a high priority on funding proposals from districts reaching children whose first language is not English and children from rural, low-income and/or culturally-diverse communities.
- Proposals must demonstrate commitments to collaborate from early childhood care and education programs in the applicant's area (such as a parenting education Hub, Head Start, Relief Nurseries, private preschools and family child care, social service non-profit organizations, community college early education programs, home visiting programs, Child Care Resource and Referral agencies, and after-school programs). These organizations and additional partners from other sectors (e.g., health systems and clinics, libraries, tribal and/or cultural community leaders) will be encouraged to submit letters of support with the application materials.

Expectations of Funded Projects

- Grantees will be expected to participate in evaluation activities and work with a cross-site evaluator to collect data, and commit to sharing program-related experiences and sending at least two representatives to grantee conferences sponsored by OCF.
- Grantees will be expected to participate in a learning community to share experiences, strategies, and findings among all organizations.

Use of Grant Funds

Grant funds can be used for: release time for staff of schools and early learning programs to engage in training and alignment activities; project coordination; purchase of curricula to share with the early learning community; designing, implementing and summarizing a community needs assessment, parent survey and other data collection as needed; outside speaker fees and expenses; and parent and family engagement activities.

The following expenses can NOT be covered with grant funds: start-up, staffing or slots for a preschool program, capital expenses, and support for a full-day kindergarten program.

Timeline

The Request for Proposals will be released in August 2013 and proposals will be due on November 1, 2013. Review of the proposals will take place through the end of 2013, with awards made in February 2014. Renewal applications will be required annually and districts must demonstrate significant progress made toward achieving the goals for continued support.

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P-3 Alignment Logic Model

