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**Early School Success**

**Preschool to Elementary Alignment**

**Cohort 2: Reaching Oregon’s Rural Districts**

**December 2020**

**Application Deadline**

Districts and Community-Driven Networks should download this document, complete and sign, and save it as a PDF. Email it to:

rural.applications@childinst.org by 5:00 p.m. PT on **Friday, January 15, 2021**.

**Questions?**

CI staff will host a series of virtual office hours to answer questions about the application process on the following dates/times:

Friday, December 11 from 8-10 a.m.

Zoom Meeting Link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85430124264?pwd=aTJGdDVDU2NXVW9PLzFsU21PSXl4UT09&from=addon>

Wednesday, December 16 from 3-5 p.m.

Zoom Meeting Link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82250652548?pwd=SHZPeHhhTXoxU3crYkNTZVBaMVlQZz09&from=addon>

Wednesday, January 6 from 3-5 p.m.

Zoom Meeting Link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86036133046?pwd=ZlpHTURHMHBHVEN1R2lsbytEYVgwdz09&from=addon>

For individual support or consultation, please contact Erin Lolich

erin.lolich@childinst.org or at 503-734-7233.

**Next Steps**

Applicants invited to participate in Phase II of the selection process will be notified by **February 12, 2021.**



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# **Background and History**

## About Children’s Institute

Founded in 2003, [Children’s Institute](http://childinst.org/) (CI) brings Oregonians together to support the early learning and healthy development of young children, prenatal to 8 years old. Through advocacy, research, policy, and practice, CI works to ensure that young children get the programs and services they need to nurture their love of learning and prepare them for success in school and beyond.

## Early School Success: The Need and the Opportunity

More than a century of cognitive [research](https://doi.org/10.17226/9745) has proven that young children are capable of rigorous learning, abstraction, and reasoning. Providing intentional educational opportunities to develop these skills is vital, particularly between birth and age 5 when 90 percent of brain development [occurs](https://www.ffyf.org/why-it-matters/brain-development/.). Many families, educators, and policymakers recognize that education during these early years is essential for helping children cultivate cognitive abilities such as executive functioning, emotional regulation, and the ability to navigate social environments that set them up for success in their education and career. As a result, we have seen significant movement in Oregon to provide [access](http://oregonearlylearning.com) to high-quality preschool for young learners.

Despite efforts to expand early learning opportunities for more children and families, many children still struggle to fully develop cognitive skills that support kindergarten readiness and third grade [reading achievemen](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/about-us/Documents/News%20Release%2017-18%20Kindergarten%20Assessment.pdf)t. These challenges especially affect children with the fewest opportunities, including children experiencing poverty, children of color, English language learners, and children with learning differences. Skill gaps that develop in the first five years of life typically follow students throughout their K–12 education and contribute to Oregon’s low high school [graduation rates](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/GraduationImprovement/Pages/default.aspx.).

Changing student outcomes and closing opportunity gaps requires a transformational shift in how we think about and approach education in the early years. Most education reform efforts and professional learning opportunities for educators focus on grades 3–12. The [data](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/about-us/Documents/News%20Release%2017-18%20Kindergarten%20Assessment.pdf.) show, however, that Oregon is leaving kids behind by not focusing on education before third grade.

CI works with educators to better understand what they need to be effective: professional learning and tools to build rigorous and developmentally supportive learning environments for the youngest learners. By creating rich, engaging classroom experiences for children that have continuity from preschool through the elementary grades, educators can focus on laying the foundation for lifelong learning achievement. Oregon already [recognizes](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/GraduationImprovement/Documents/PreK-3rd%20Grade%20Alignment.pdf) the value in aligning preschool through elementary instruction; the work ahead is to support educators and communities to make alignment possible.

In 2019, CI launched Early School Success (ESS) with the Beaverton and Forest Grove School Districts as its initial partners. These two pioneering districts are working to improve alignment in the early years, informed by both established and emerging research on how young children [learn best](https://doi.org/10.17226/24783). The full district community (e.g., teachers, parents, community members, district leaders, preschool leaders) are the drivers behind this work. **In 2021, CI seeks to partner specifically with rural districts and is seeking applications from districts or community-driven networks of districts to join with CI in a shared learning agenda focused on building a bold vision for early school success for young learners.**

A Focus on Equity

As Oregon and the nation continue to grapple with a centuries-long history of racial and economic injustice, organizations and institutions must be deliberate in their efforts to dismantle poverty and racism, a process that requires us to [reimagine Oregon](https://www.reimagineoregon.org/about) and strive for structural, transformational change.

[Oregon’s history](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/civic/article/516558) of race-based exclusion and discrimination offers important context for why we must lead with race to overcome the many barriers to opportunity that face children and families of color today. When racial equity is at the center, early childhood programs and services can mitigate disparities by race/ethnicity, income, geography, disability, language, immigrant and refugee status, houselessness, and foster care.

CI understands that achieving our mission requires concerted efforts to examine and eliminate policies, programs, perceptions, and messaging that reinforce racial inequities, and that doing so will improve early learning, healthy development, and access to opportunity for our state’s youngest and most vulnerable children.

# **Program Overview**

## Early School Success: Program Description and Desired Outcomes

ESS consists of six core components that address instruction, collaboration, professional development, and family engagement.

**Six Components of ESS**

* **Connect and Strengthen Preschool and Elementary Instruction at the Systems Level:** Foster collaboration and facilitate planning to align instruction between preschool and K–5. Use evidence-based instructional practice and/or emerging innovations.
* **Dedicate Time to Examine and Design Collaboration Strategies:** Work with educators to assess and co-design shifts in planning time or professional learning to support vertical collaboration and a shared understanding of instructional practices.
* **Use “Learn by Doing” Techniques of Improvement Science:** Surface real-time, actionable lessons learned through rapid “Plan-Do-Study-Act” cycles in small-scale settings (e.g., two classrooms). Scale promising lessons learned to the full district level.
* **Focus on the Whole Child:** Engage families and communities to support young children’s learning.
* **Share What We Learn:** ESS participants will share what they learn and highlight proof points with state stakeholders (e.g., lawmakers) by hosting site visits, providing legislative testimony, and more.
* **A Cross-District Professional Learning Community (PLC):** Facilitated by CI, ESS districts and other districts will be able to share learnings and strategies (scheduled to launch in Year 2 or 3).

These core components will include whole child instructional strategies and family engagement that build consistently across grades, standards, and classroom experiences.

### Implementation Overview

Participating districts will receive a combination of funds for ESS activities (further detailed in the [Budget Description](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1roscMwWDJr8qSGB3q7Fu1CfoZ9J0Elsp/edit#heading=h.49x2ik5) section of this Opportunity Announcement) as well as direct on-site and virtual technical assistance (TA) from CI on conducting the needs assessment, facilitation, coaching, strategies for family/community engagement, access to early learning research, and professional development to support schools and districts as they align teaching practices for children from preschool through elementary grades.

With support from CI, each district will convene a Core Leadership Team of individuals who are stakeholders in this process and who will prioritize the preschool through elementary alignment work. This team will be intentionally diverse, including building and district-level partners as well as community representatives. Core team members should include (at the minimum) an identified project manager (or lead), early learning leader (or equivalent), curriculum and instruction lead(s), English Language Learner (ELL) program lead(s), data manager(s), community partners (e.g., families and advocacy organizations), school-building-level leaders (e.g., principals), and teacher representatives.

This team will serve as the ESS “backbone” and will consult with other key stakeholders regularly (e.g., families, the district superintendent, school board) throughout the work. The work will begin with contact with a wide range of key stakeholders to conduct an initial needs assessment. We recognize that smaller districts have fewer staff/dedicated positions than larger districts and will need to fulfill these roles in unique ways. We expect that the composition of core teams will look different for each district.

During the first year of implementation, the Core Leadership Team will collaborate with CI and other partners to conduct the needs assessment and analyze district data, curricula, instructional practices, professional development structures, community resources, and stakeholder perspectives to identify current district strengths as well as “problems of practice” impeding alignment from preschool through elementary school. CI will provide TA for districts on content, research, and evidence-based best practices that will help educators and the community capitalize on strengths and address problems of practice. CI can also assist as districts test and scale any innovative or emerging practices that might address strengths and problems of practice. The core team will use this information to develop an implementation plan to enhance preschool through elementary alignment and measure progress toward district goals. CI also recognizes that districts’ strengths, needs, and problems of practice will vary depending on the unique local context of each community. The subsequent implementation plan will include tailored coaching and content based on individual district needs.

### Desired Outcomes for District Communities and Beyond

ESS districts work to build cohesive, connected, research-based instructional strategies from preschool through elementary school.

These shifts are designed to equitably improve outcomes for *all* students, laying the foundation for success in middle school, high school, college, and career. This district-level work involving partners from the community, families, and technical assistance (TA) organizations will help influence statewide priorities and investments to bolster a cohesive, research-based approach to early learning for all young Oregonians. Specifically, ESS aims to achieve these outcomes after five years:

* **a district-wide common language and set of collaboration techniques** focused on quality and innovative/research-based instructional strategies in early learning to shape curriculum, classroom instruction, and decisions about resource allocation
* **mastery of innovative early childhood teaching strategies** among preschool to elementary grades teachers, specialists, and leaders who are authentically engaged in ESS decisionmaking
* **an invigorated and vibrant community with families and local partners** that “co-own” this work, including the new practices, communication pathways, and gains made through creating closer alignment from preschool to elementary grades
* **data and practices to showcase as preschool through elementary school alignment “learning labs”** that explore and document the value of aligning instructional practice through an inclusive, community-driven process (which could include district activities like hosting site visits and providing testimony to decision makers, and contributing to reports and other communications to share lessons learned)
* **established, regular touch-points with other participating ESS districts** that will allow districts to share lessons learned, challenges, best practices, and innovations in early learning, creating a sustained community of practice that can serve as an incubator or “think tank” for preschool through elementary alignment strategies

### Decision makers and other districts in Oregon will:

* **have a model framework** (based on the work of ESS districts) for community-driven preschool through elementary instructional alignment to localize in their contexts and help shape state policy and teacher professional learning
* **begin to allocate resources (funds, staff, time)** to aligning early learning around evidence-based strategies and emerging innovations in early learning practice
* **regularly discuss and take steps to foster preschool through elementary alignment efforts,** emphasizing cohesive, research-based, and innovative instructional practice and a community-driven approach

#

# **Early School Success Implementation Timeline**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Activities |
| Spring 2021&2021-2022 School Year | * Form Core Leadership Team
* Work with CI and the program evaluation team to conduct needs assessments of district curriculum, professional learning practices, and community resources to identify strengths, gaps, and needs
* Develop tailored implementation plans based on the local needs assessment to test on a small scale in the district (e.g., in one preschool and one kindergarten classroom)\*
 |
| 2022-2023School Year(may begin sooner as Districts are ready) | * Implementing districts’ core team plans, using rapid-cycle evaluation to analyze and scale emerging outcomes (stakeholder engagement is ongoing)\*
* Engage principals and teachers in coaching to better understand and implement instructional strategies
* Join Professional Learning Community with other ESS rural districts
* Conduct demonstration site visits in districts\*
 |
| 2023-2024School Year\*These Activities Continue | * Continue to engage in ESS implementation activities
* Take stock of ESS outcomes, possibly make adjustments while evaluating overall ESS strengths and progress
* Ensure that all participating districts transition to district-owned long-term plans
 |

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# **Detailed Application Process and Procedures**

## Eligibility Criteria

* Only [rural/remote districts](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1dYeDNaMGpqXJy-Y9ViGMfAvmwSrQi4Ek/edit#gid=1393305867) are eligible to apply for Early School Success Cohort 2.

## Qualifying districts will have a preschool partner which may consist of any program providing services and education to young children; whether co-located with and run by the district or present in the community and connected to the district in a meaningful way.

## Completion and submission of Letter of Interest and accompanying documents by the deadline

* Commitment from Superintendent, Principal, and Preschool Director as evidenced by signed letters submitted with the Letter of Interest.

## Application Process: Three Phases

ESS recognizes that resources are stretched across multiple priorities in rural districts and has designed the application process to reduce demand on staff resources and streamline documentation gathering. Grant reviewers selected for this process will all have experience with rural communities, with at least 50 percent of reviewers residing or working in rural communities to ensure that they are reflective of the demographics of applicant communities.

Phase I – Letter of Interest

## All rural/remote districts are invited to apply.

## School districts and their preschool partners who wish to foster and enhance preschool through elementary instructional alignment should respond to this opportunity. Letters of Interest with all required attachments should be returned to CI by no later than **5:00 p.m. PT January 15, 2021.** To be considered for ESS, districts should reference the Application Materials Checklist and review all guidance below. The letter of interest should be written to address the areas indicated and include a completed District/Partnership Profile, Year 1 Budget Description, Data Use Acknowledgement, and signed letters of commitment from the Superintendent, Principal, and Preschool Director. As listed on the front page of this Opportunity Announcement, there will be office hours where potential applicants can reach CI staff by phone or email to review or address any questions they may have.

Phase II – Formal Application

A select group of rural/remote districts from Phase I will be asked to provide a higher level of detail and data to support their applications. Interviews will be conducted with key district personnel and stakeholders (see details outlined below), and summarized for the application review team so that it is less time-intensive for the districts involved, while still allowing us to gather information at an adequate depth to make a strong selection for the final phase.

## School districts and their preschool partners selected for Phase II will be notified by **February 12, 2021** and receive a packet outlining next steps in further detail.

## Phase II Interviews will be held the week of **March 1st, 2021** and include an individual interview with the district superintendent, a joint interview with the elementary school principal and preschool director (and coordinating agency lead for Community-driven network Model applicants), and two group interviews; an interview with parents and and an interview with staff and community members most closely connected to this work (PreK-2grade teachers, identified staff who are part of the project, a representative of the Early Learning Hub, and community partners.)

## Data and information from the first phase will also be carried forward. Phase II applicants will be asked to submit a more in-depth budget and budget narrative as well as responses to additional written questions. Phase II applicants will need to submit all requested materials no later than **5:00 p.m. PT February 19, 2021.**

Phase III – Site Visits

Finalist districts will be notified by close-of-businesson **March 22, 2021** and asked to prepare for onsite visits (or safest equivalence available with social distancing).

CI will conduct site visits for finalist districts during the weeks of **April 5 and April 12, 2021**. In advance of the site visit, CI will send a packet of materials for district and preschool stakeholders to review and will work with districts to arrange scheduling and logistics. Site visits will include meetings with the prospective core team members, parents, community stakeholders, and other district and preschool leaders as well as classroom observation.

*Districts will be informed if they have been selected for participation in ESS by close-of-business April 26, 2021.*

Applying as a Community-Driven Network

Schools and districts may choose to apply as a community-driven network. This model will be community-driven and designed by communities in whatever fashion best meets their needs. This may be a good option for schools or districts that have historically worked with neighboring communities, or in areas where it will be most viable if communities come together to apply and move this work forward.

Community-driven network applicants will need to assign a coordinating agency or district. The coordinating agency or district will need to be specified on the District/Partnership profile and take leadership in coordinating meetings; even if they manage a rotating calendar of which partner manages them on a regular basis. Examples of agencies could be a regional TA partner or ESD who has been and/or will be active in supporting the alignment goals, or a community partner who serves a culturally specific group that will be at the center of outreach and alignment efforts across the communities. Community partners should always be part of your work as stakeholders and can be named in your application if there is deeper work and they will be doing as an ongoing part of your Core Leadership Team. If there is only one district applying, you will not be taking the extra application steps needed for a community-driven network. Please see the Checklist of Materials for further clarification as to what each partner should submit with the Letter of Interest.

As mentioned previously, the implementation of these components of ESS will look different in each district and will draw upon perspectives, needs, and priorities of educators, community partners, and families.

Selection Criteria

CI will select districts for implementation based on an assessment of their ability to fulfill program goals for the duration of the ESS initiative, their demonstration of motivation and willingness to succeed in the initiative, and evidence of a positive, action-oriented culture that aligns with the [Early Education Essentials](https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/2019-01/Early%20Ed%20Essentials%20Illustrations-Dec2018-Consortium.pdf).

Specifically, districts selected for ESS implementation will have:

* A blossoming partnership with a local preschool(s) or a district-operated preschool
* Evidence of interest and initial steps taken to align preschool and elementary education
* Evidence of a growth mindset and support to sustain this initiative
* Teachers who are supported and work collaboratively to make instructional decisions
* Engagement of families and connection to the local community
* Community partnerships and collaborations
* Ability to achieve positive outcomes for historically underserved children

Throughout the application process, CI will also look for evidence of expected commitments from key district and preschool stakeholders listed below. CI will make a substantial investment of time and resources into ESS and aims to identify district partners that are similarly committed to this work and sustaining it into the future.

CI and Cohort 2 districts will co-establish and sign a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This MOA will define the scope of the partnership and outline the agreements to provide the supports, dedicated resources, and more detailed commitments to the initiative over time.

Commitment to ESS Participants

Children’s Institute and the Early School Success team support will include

* District-level grant awards for planning activities and materials. This funding is variable over the planned span of the project with amounts scaled to district size and needs
* TA, coaching, and content to stakeholders on messaging, research, evidence-based best practices, and emerging innovations for preschool through elementary instructional alignment, primarily funded from a separate budget that does not draw from the district’s award
* A data-rich approach that draws upon perspectives from all key district stakeholders (including leadership, teachers, and parents) to understand district strengths, challenges, and needs to foster preschool through elementary instructional alignment
* Customized and tailored support for preschool to elementary alignment work and access to shared learning opportunities with a network of districts engaged in similar efforts.
* If needed, connect districts to external TA providers that address local needs

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## Commitments Required of ESS Participants (Team)

Below is a list of commitments for members of the Core Leadership Team and other important stakeholder groups. CI is requiring a signed commitment from your superintendent, principal, preschool director, and coordinating agency (for Community-driven network Model applicants only). CI will look for evidence of these commitments from these stakeholders during the full application process (both Phase I and Phase II). Each commitment represents a mindset or activity that contributes to the success and progress of similar preschool through elementary alignment efforts.

**Teachers (Preschool and K–5) will:**

* Be willing to try out and test instructional practices to create alignment between preschool through elementary grades, including incorporating evidence-based and/or emerging, innovative strategies into the classroom
* Participate in vertical planning and collaboration activities across preschool through elementary grades as well as horizontal planning and collaboration to emphasize and integrate preschool through elementary instructional alignment
* Be open to collaborating with new professional development providers and other partners to inform instructional alignment work

**District Leadership will:**

* Create and support a dedicated ESS district core team that will cultivate preschool through elementary instructional alignment; core team membership will include (at the minimum) an identified project manager, early learning leader (or equivalent), curriculum and instruction lead(s), English Language Learner program lead(s), data manager, community partners, school-building-level leaders (e.g., principals) and teacher representatives
* Allocate funds, including appropriate FTE to ensure initiative success
* Support preschool through elementary alignment efforts with resource allocation and public messaging
* Be open to enacting structural changes as necessary that foster preschool through elementary instructional alignment (e.g., adjust schedules, establish professional learning communities)
* Be willing to foster the revision of instructional practice to align with preschool and reflect established research or emerging innovative strategies for young learners
* Be willing to create opportunities for collaboration between educators, district staff and partners outside of the district (e.g., families, community-based organizations, TA providers)

**Principals will:**

* Actively participate in the Core Team activities to advance instructional alignment
* Work to incorporate preschool as part of their leadership (e.g., principals will start to think of themselves as the leaders of preschool–5 school rather than K–5 school)
* Be open to enacting structural changes that foster preschool through elementary grades alignment at the building level (e.g., adjust schedules, establish professional learning communities)
* Be willing to foster the revision of instructional practice to align with preschool and reflect established research or emerging innovative strategies for young learners
* Provide messaging, support, and flexibility to teachers/other building-level educators demonstrating that preschool through elementary grades instructional alignment is a building and district priority (e.g., by setting and supporting school-level instructional alignment goals from preschool to kindergarten)
* Be willing to create opportunities for collaboration between educators, district staff and partners outside of the district (e.g., families, community-based organizations, TA providers)

**Leaders at the Preschool will:**

* Actively participate in and co-lead ESS district core team activities and decision making processes
* Allocate resources (including staff) to preschool through elementary instructional alignment activities
* Be open to enacting structural changes that foster preschool through elementary grades instructional alignment (e.g., scheduling adjustments)
* Be willing to revise/adopt standards and adapt instructional practices to align with the district
* Be willing to consider revising human resources practices to align with the district when possible

**Coordinating Agencies (only an option for Community-driven Network Model) will:**

* Actively participate in and co-lead ESS district core team activities and decision making processes
* Facilitate communication and take the lead in keeping all Community-driven network participants informed and involved
* Support Early School Success and work to make it sustainable in the community
* Allocate resources to support preschool through elementary instructional alignment activities
* Support necessary changes that foster preschool through elementary grades instructional alignment

**The School Board will:**

* Prioritize preschool through elementary grades instructional alignment/ESS work with public messaging and resource allocation, calling out (or continuing to call out) preschool through elementary alignment as a key district goal (e.g., in the district strategic plan)
* Allocate sustaining resources (including funds) to preschool to elementary alignment work at some point in the life cycle of the ESS initiative and beyond
* Periodically meet with the CI ESS team to engage in shared learning and visioning to support and sustain the work.

**The Union will:**

* Be open to changing structures and schedules that enable preschool to elementary grades instructional alignment (e.g., to foster shared vertical planning and collaboration time between preschool and K–5 educators)

**Application Materials Checklist**

## Checklist of Materials for Single District Applicants

* District/Partnership Profile
* Letter of Interest addressing key areas
* Year 1 Budget Description
* Acknowledgment on use of readily available data
* Signed statement of commitment by Superintendent
* Signed statement of commitment by Elementary School Principal
* Signed statement of commitment by Preschool Director

## Checklist of Materials for Community-Driven Network Applicants

* District/Partnership Profile for each member of the Community-Driven Network (copy as needed)
	+ - One profile needs to be identified as the designated Coordinating Agency/District
* Single Letter of Interest addressing key areas
* Single Year 1 Budget Description
* Acknowledgment on use of readily available data by all Districts
* Signed Statement of Commitment by all involved Superintendents
* Signed Statement of Commitment by all involved Elementary School Principals
* Signed Statement of Commitment by all involved Preschool Directors
* Signed Statement of Commitment by Coordinating Agency (if not above)

Completed applications should to be emailed to: rural.applications@childinst.org

by 5:00 p.m. PT on **Friday, January 15, 2021.**



##

## District/Partnership Profile

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. District Name (s)
 |  |
| 1. Superintendent(s)
 |  |
| 1. Elementary School(s)
 |  |
| 1. Principal(s)
 |  |
| 1. Project Lead
 |  |
| 1. Telephone number(s)
 |  |
| 1. Mailing address(es)
 |  |
| 1. Email address(es)
 |  |
| 1. Website(s)
 |  |
|  |  |
| 1. Preschool Partner(s) (PP)
 |  |
| 1. Preschool Director(s)
 |  |
| 1. Telephone number(s)
 |  |
| 1. Mailing address
 |  |
| 1. Email address(es)
 |  |
| 1. Website(s)
 |  |
| 1. Number of preschool students
 |  |
| 1. Location of preschool and whether or not it is co-located with a district school.
 |  |
| 1. Number of preschool teachers
 |  |
| 1. Number/types of other relevant preschool personnel
 |  |
| 1. Amount of Preschool annual operating budget
 |  |
| 1. Year 1 ESS Budget Description

(250 words or less) |  |
|  |  |

## Letter of Interest

**Your letter of interest should address all of the key areas listed below.** You are welcome to respond in a narrative format or list and address each area individually. Regardless of format, please limit your responses to 1,200 words.

1. The early learning structure (PreK-elementary) currently in the proposed school(s)/District(s)
	* Please include your current efforts to support PreK-elementary alignment in your community and include Professional Development & any key Community Partners
2. The ways you assure all families are welcome and engaged from your community in your school(s) and program(s)
	* Please include specific strategies and address historically underserved populations
3. The next phase of increased alignment between the proposed school(s)/District(s)/Partner(s)
	* Please include how you see Early School Success being a potential part of this

## Year 1 Budget Description

CI will provide each ESS Cohort 2 district with grant awards based on district size and needs, to be disbursed over one to three years for district-level ESS activities and expenses. In addition to district grant awards, CI will also provide TA and professional learning. In Year 1, districts can anticipate a disbursal of between $30,000 and $60,000 to support planning activities (i.e., forming the core team, stakeholder engagement, and the needs assessment). Further funds in Years 2 and 3 will depend on outcomes and needs that emerge from Year 1 planning activities. Funding in Year 1 does not act as a guarantee for continued funding; please see the “Estimated Fund Disbursal” below for what possible multi-year ESS funding could look like.

Based on the size and needs of your district and the “Estimated Fund Disbursal” information below, please write a short budget narrative to convey at a high level how your district might designate and use funds to support ESS work. Please include information on any community partners, district funds, or other resources that will be supporting this work. You only need to address Year 1, but can add additional thoughts if space allows. Please limit your response to 250 words and include it in **Box 11** of the District/Partnership Profile.

Expenses can include both personnel and non-personnel expenses. Personnel expenses might include hiring a part-time, or if other funding sources are available, a full-FTE to project manage the work, and non-personnel expenses could include new classroom materials to support refreshed instructional approaches.

Note: If your district is selected for Phase II of the application process, CI will ask to see a budget table and will require a description for subsequent years.

*Estimated Fund Disbursal*: Ranges dependent on district size, needs, and yearly outcomes

1. Year 1 planning and materials: $30,000 to $60,000 total
2. Year 2 implementation: $30,000 to $60,000 total
3. Year 3 supporting funds (for materials and implementation): $30,000 to $60,000

Please limit your response to 250 words and include it in **Box 13** of the District/Partnership Profile.

Data Use Acknowledgment

CI recognizes that school districts, especially those in rural areas, have limited time, access, and available resources. In order to maximize administrative efficiency, we have sought out publicly available data from the Oregon Department of Education such as At-A-Glance Profiles. We realize that data do not tell the full story, are not always timely, and cannot account for the uniqueness of every school and district. We encourage you to review the data we will be using from public sources before your submission. If the information does not adequately reflect a situation specific to your district, you may submit an addendum statement of up to 500 words for consideration in the review process. This addendum can be included in the blank box at the end of the District/Partnership Profile or included as a separate attachment. Please label the submission “Response to Readily Available Data” and note it in the body of the email when submitting your Letter of Interest.

[Kindergarten Regular Attenders Report](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/reports-and-data/students/Pages/Attendance-and-Absenteeism.aspx) (2018-2019)

[English Language Arts Assessment](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/assessment/Pages/Assessment-Group-Reports.aspx) Grade 3 (2018-2019)

[Kindergarten Assessment](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/assessment/Pages/Kindergarten-Assessment.aspx) (2019-2020)

[At a Glance Profiles](https://www.ode.state.or.us/data/reportcard/reports.aspx) (2018-2019)

* Demographics
* Free/Reduced Price Lunch
* Average Teacher Turnover Rate
* Same Principal in the last 3 years

##

## Statements of Commitment

Signed statement of commitment by Superintendent

A sample letter is included as Appendix A for your use. If you prefer to write a letter from scratch, be sure your letter includes the time commitment outlined in the sample letter/Detailed Application Process and Procedures as well as the expectations outlined in the sample letter/Commitments Required of ESS Team Participants.

Signed statement of commitment by Elementary School Principal

A sample letter is included as Appendix B for your use. If you prefer to write a letter from scratch, be sure your letter includes the time commitment outlined in the sample letter/Detailed Application Process and Procedures as well as the expectations outlined in the sample letter/Commitments Required of ESS Team Participants.

Signed statement of commitment by Preschool Director

A sample letter is included as Appendix C for your use. If you prefer to write a letter from scratch, be sure your letter includes the time commitment outlined in the sample letter/Detailed Application Process and Procedures as well as the expectations outlined in the sample letter/Commitments Required of ESS Team Participants.

Signed statement of commitment by Coordinating Agency

(Community-driven Network Model only)

A sample letter is included as Appendix D for your use. If you prefer to write a letter from scratch, be sure your letter includes the time commitment outlined in the sample letter/Detailed Application Process and Procedures as well as the expectations outlined in the sample letter/Commitments Required of ESS Team Participants.

APPENDIX A:

Statement of Commitment by Superintendent Sample

Note: Placeholder space for you to complete is in [*blue italics*].

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| --- |
| ***Date*** |

Dear Children’s Institute Early School Success Team,

 I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment to you for

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***School District*** | with | ***Preschool Partner’s Name*** |

inclusion in the Early School Success initiative. I strongly support this proposal and the focus on fostering better instructional alignment between preschool and K–5 to provide young learners with learning environments that reflect research-based and innovative, emerging best practices.

* I understand the importance of Early School Success and the commitment necessary to make it successful and sustainable in my District and community.
* I agree to support preschool through elementary alignment efforts with resource allocation and public messaging.
* I commit to being open to enacting structural changes as necessary that foster preschool through elementary instructional alignment (e.g., adjust schedules, establish professional learning communities).
* I am willing to foster the revision of instructional practice to align with preschool and reflect established research or emerging innovative strategies for young learners.
* I am willing to create opportunities for collaboration between educators, district staff, and partners outside of the district (e.g., families, community-based organizations, technical assistance providers).

**If my district is selected for Phase II of the application process I will make myself available the week of March 1, 2021, for a 30-45 minute interview with Children’s Institute staff or representatives to answer questions and speak further about the preschool through elementary alignment we are doing and hope to accomplish in our district.**

**If my district is a finalist for ESS Cohort 2, I will be supportive of and available to meet during the site visit sometime during the week of April 5or April 12, 2021 with staff from Children’s Institute.**

|  |
| --- |
| *Insert additional information here* |

We look forward to continuing the conversation about participation in Early School Success.

Sincerely,

|  |
| --- |
| *Signature (insert image file or type name to e-sign)* |
| ***Insert Title*** |
| ***Insert Organization*** |

APPENDIX B:

Statement of Commitment by Principal Sample

Note: Placeholder space for you to complete is in [*blue italics*].

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| --- |
| ***Date*** |

Dear Children’s Institute Early School Success Team,

As the Principal of

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***School Name*** | *In the*  | ***School District*** |

 I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment to you for the inclusion of our district with

|  |
| --- |
| ***Preschool Partner’s Name*** |

In the Early School Success initiative. I strongly support this proposal and the focus on fostering better instructional alignment between preschool and K–5 to provide young learners with learning environments that reflect research-based and innovative, emerging best practices.

I agree to actively participate in the Core Team activities to advance instructional alignment and will incorporate preschool as part of my leadership and vision for my work. I will be open to enacting structural changes that foster preschool through elementary alignment at the building level and am willing to consider the revision of instructional practice to align with preschool and reflect established research or emerging innovative strategies for young learners.I commit to providing messaging, support, and flexibility to teachers/other building-level educators demonstrating that preschool through elementary grades instructional alignment is a building and district priority.

I am willing to create opportunities for collaboration between educators, district staff, and partners outside of the district (e.g., families, community-based organizations, technical assistance providers)

**If my district is selected for Phase II of the application process, I will make myself available the week of March 1, 2021, for a 45 minute interview with Children’s Institute staff or representatives to answer questions and speak further about the preschool through elementary alignment we are doing and hope to accomplish in our district.** I will also work to ensure that PreK-3rd grade teachers and other members of the Core Leadership Team are able to attend an interview around that same time frame that will last 1.5 hours, and will facilitate parent participation in an interview for parents.

**If my district is a finalist for ESS Cohort 2, I will be supportive of and available during the site visit sometime during the week of April 5 or April 12 with staff from the Children’s Institute and ensure my staff has time and availability to support it as well.**

|  |
| --- |
| *Insert additional information here* |

We look forward to continuing the conversation about participation in Early School Success.

Sincerely,

|  |
| --- |
| *Signature (insert image file or type name to e-sign)* |
| ***Insert Title*** |
| ***Insert Organization*** |

APPENDIX C:

Statement of Commitment by Preschool Director Sample

Note: Placeholder space for you to complete is in [*blue italics*].

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| --- |
| ***Date*** |

Dear Children’s Institute Early School Success Team,

As the

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| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Name of Position*** | *at*  | ***Name of Preschool,*** |

 I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment to you for the inclusion of

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| --- |
| ***School District*** |

in the Early School Success initiative. I strongly support this proposal and the focus on fostering better instructional alignment between preschool and elementary to provide young learners with learning environments that reflect research-based and innovative, emerging best practices.

I agree to actively participate in and co-lead ESS district core team activities and decision making processes. I will allocate resources (including staff) to preschool through elementary instructional alignment activities. I will be open to enacting structural changes that foster preschool through elementary grades instructional alignment and am willing to revise/adopt standards and adapt instructional practices to align with the district, which may include being willing to consider revising human resources practices to align with the district, and work with licensors and other regulatory bodies to explore such options.

**If my district is selected for Phase II of the application process, I will make myself available the week of March 1, 2021, for a 45 minute interview with Children’s Institute staff or representatives to answer questions and speak further about the preschool through elementary alignment we are doing alongside the elementary school principal.** I will also work to ensure that preschool teachers are able to attend an interview around that same time frame that will last approximately 1.5 hours, and will facilitate parent participation in an interview with parents around that same time.

**If my district is one of the finalist applicants, I will be supportive of and available during the site visit sometime during the week of April 5or April 12, 2021 with staff from the Children’s Institute and ensure my staff has time and availability to support it as well.**

|  |
| --- |
| ***Insert additional information here*** |

We look forward to continuing the conversation about participation in Early School Success.

Sincerely,

|  |
| --- |
| *Signature (insert image file or type name to e-sign)* |
| ***Insert Title*** |
| ***Insert Organization*** |

APPENDIX D:

Community-driven Network Model Statement of Commitment by Coordinating Agency Sample

Note: Placeholder space for you to complete is in [*blue italics*].

|  |
| --- |
| ***Date*** |

Dear Children’s Institute Early School Success Team,

As the

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Name of Position*** | *at*  | ***Agency/Organization*** |

I am pleased to submit this letter of commitment to you for the inclusion of

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***School District***  | *along with us at* | ***Preschool Name***  |

in the Early School Success initiative. I strongly support this proposal and the focus on fostering better instructional alignment between preschool and elementary to provide young learners with learning environments that reflect research-based and innovative, emerging best practices.

I agree to actively participate in and co-lead ESS district core team activities and decision making processes. I will allocate resources such as:

|  |
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| ***Provide Examples*** |

to preschool through elementary instructional alignment activities. I will be supportive of necessary changes that foster preschool through elementary grades instructional alignment. As the Coordinating Agency we are committed to facilitating communication and keeping everyone informed and involved. I will support Early School Success and work to make it sustainable in my community.

**If my district is selected for Phase II of the application process, I will make myself available the week of March 1, 2021 for a 45 minute interview with Children’s Institute staff or representatives to answer questions and speak further about the preschool through elementary alignment we are doing alongside the elementary school principal and speak further about our unique Community-driven network Model**. I will also work to ensure that necessary staff are able to attend an interview around that same time frame that will last approximately 1.5 hours, and will facilitate parent participation in an interview with parents around that same time.

**If my district is one of the finalist applicants, I will be supportive of and available during the site visit sometime during the week of April 5or April 12, 2021 with staff from the Children’s Institute and ensure my staff has time and availability to support it as well.**

|  |
| --- |
| ***Insert additional information here*** |

We look forward to continuing the conversation about participation in Early School Success.

Sincerely,

|  |
| --- |
| *Signature (insert image file or type name to e-sign)* |
| ***Insert Title*** |
| ***Insert Organization*** |