Agenda Item #

July 10, 2012

To: Members, Oregon Education Investment Board

From: Heidi McGowan, Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Team

Re: Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Update

The Early Learning Council will select a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment on July 12th, at the Early Learning Council meeting in Roseburg following the receipt of a report and a recommendation from the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Work Group. The following is a brief summary of the recommendation.

HB 4165 directs the Early Learning Council and the Department of Education to jointly develop a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment to be piloted in the fall of 2012 and ready for statewide implementation by the fall of 2013. To achieve this goal, the Early Learning Council appointed a workgroup to develop recommendations for an Oregon statewide Kindergarten Readiness Assessment to be administered in kindergarten classrooms in the fall of the kindergarten year. The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Workgroup includes kindergarten teachers, district administrators, early educators, Department of Education specialists, researchers, Oregon Education Investment Board staff and members of the Early Learning Council. It has been meeting since January 2012.

The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Workgroup used multiple methods to gather information and input from stakeholders. These methods included:

- Brought key stakeholders into the Workgroup including kindergarten teachers and other school representatives.
- Surveyed Oregon school districts to determine current Kindergarten Readiness Assessment practices, as well as assessment instruments currently used.
- Conducted focus groups with kindergarten teachers, early educators, principals, superintendents and Parent-Teacher Association members.
- Hosted community forums in Newport, Portland, Pendleton, Redmond, Salem and Roseburg.
- Reviewed Kindergarten Readiness instruments used in other states as well as the literature on best practices.

In addition to directly gathering information, the Workgroup also contracted with researchers from the University of Oregon and Oregon State University to review technical characteristics of instruments currently used in Oregon school districts and other states to assess school readiness. The research team, led by Jane Squires, Ph.D. and Megan McClelland, Ph.D., reviewed over thirty instruments, looking at characteristics such as reliability, predictive validity

for third grade academic outcomes, and validation with culturally diverse populations. The research team provided the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Workgroup with an overview on the research linking indicators of school readiness to later academic success, as well as an analysis of the state of the field in school readiness assessments.

The Workgroup recommendations were guided by the following critical considerations: provide data that can be trusted; be appropriate for all children; be useful to schools and teachers; provide meaningful feedback to communities, providers and policy-makers; and be an efficient use of resources.

The Workgroup recommends that the Early Learning Council consider two approaches for Oregon's statewide Kindergarten Readiness Assessment:

(1) A composite assessment based on the Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS) and easyCBM Literacy and Math measures;

(2) A portfolio assessment using the modified Teaching Strategies GOLD adopted by the state of Washington.

Both approaches are built upon instruments that were reviewed for technical adequacy. Both approaches would provide parent, teachers, and policy-makers with important and meaningful information to support children's success. Each approach has its unique strengths.

While the Workgroup believes that both are strong choices, the composite approach is the preferred recommendation. This preference is based on two primary considerations: better alignment with current assessment practices in kindergartens and elementary schools and a lower cost in both dollars and teacher time for training and administration.

Additional information can be found on the OEIB website under Early Learning, including a Webinar presentation with researcher, Megan McClelland, Ph.D. and Workgroup members regarding the above recommendation.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT FOCUS GROUP AND COMMUNITY WORK SESSIONS

Focus Groups:

Early Educators: April 14th, State Library, Salem
Parents: April 20th, Parent Teacher Organization Conference, Portland
Kindergarten Teachers: April 30th, OEA, Tigard
Superintendents / Principals: May 15th, Lane County ESD, Eugene
Superintendents / Principals: May 21st, Willamette ESD, Salem

Community Work Session:

PORTLAND: Tuesday, May 29, 6:30 to 8 p.m.**,** Center for Self Enhancement
PENDLETON: Wednesday, May 30, 6:30 to 8 p.m., Blue Mountain Community College
REDMOND: Thursday, May 31, 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.**,** M.A. Lynch Elementary School
SALEM: Wednesday, June 13, 6:30 to 8 p.m.**,** Salem / Keizer Coalition for Equity
ROSEBURG: Thursday, June 14, 6:30 to 8 p.m.**,** Douglas County Central Library
NEWPORT: Monday, June 25, 6:30 to 8 p.m., Newport High School
PORTLAND: Thursday, June 28, 6:30 to 8 p.m., Center for Self Enhancement

KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT WORKGROUP MEMBERS

Beth Green, Portland State University
Bill Stewart, Curriculum / Assessment / Special Projects, Gladstone School District
Brenda Lewis, Executive Administrator for K-8 Title Programs, Beaverton School District
Catherine Heaton, ODE
Colleen Forbes, Early Childhood Evaluation Team, Portland Public Schools
David Mandell, The Children's Institute
Deborah Berry, Head Start Director, Portland Public Schools
Dell Ford, Head Start Collaboration Office, ODE
Gladys Reynaud, Kindergarten & ESL KIIP Teacher, Beaverton School District
Heidi McGowan, Early Learning Council
Kara Williams, ODE
Kyra Donovan, Director of Elementary and Federal Programs, McMinnville School District
Lisa Shogren, Instructional Mathematics and Literacy Coach, Greater Albany School District
Margie Lowe, Oregon Education Investment Board
Michael Rebar, ODE
Richard Alexander, Early Learning Council, Oregon Education Investment Board
Sandra Potter-Marquardt, Oregon Health Authority
Roberta "Bobbie" Weber, Oregon State University, Early Learning Council
Stephanie Whetzel, Early childhood Coordinator, Salem-Keizer Public Schools