BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

RESOLUTION NO. <u>03-022</u>

Adopting the School-Aged Policy Framework Report: Findings and Policy Recommendations

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

a. That the County has a vital role to play in providing funding for school based and school linked services that will help children succeed in school. The School Aged Policy Framework provides for a set of core services for school aged children and their families that will engage our partners and align with ongoing County initiatives. This framework will guide our decision making around both budget and policy efforts into the future.

b. Multnomah County has the following benchmarks:
  - Improve readiness to learn
  - Increase school success
  - Provide access to health and mental health services
  - Decrease poverty
  - Increase public safety

c. Multnomah County currently funds a wide array of services for school aged youth and their families including health services, mental health services, services for educational support, crime prevention, interdiction and prosecution services, and library services. These services all contribute to the achievement of the County's benchmarks.

d. Multnomah County seeks improved alignment of services for school aged youth to improve access to services for clients, to better integrate services both within the County and with other jurisdictional partners, and to make service delivery more efficient and effective.

e. An extensive public involvement process was employed to develop policies for services to school aged youth and their families.

f. The Board has adopted the Early Childhood Framework, and will be considering adopting a Poverty Reduction Framework in the Spring of 2003. Future implementation planning for the Early Childhood Framework, the School Aged Services Policy Framework and the Poverty Reduction Framework will be coordinated and aligned.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Resolves:

1. The Board shall adopt the attached School-Aged Policy Framework Report: Findings and Policy Recommendations.

2. The Board adopts the following Policy Recommendations contained in the Framework Report:

- **County Role:** Provide funds for school based and school linked services for children and their families that assist all students in succeeding in school. Use natural helpers, cultural mentors, professionals, paraprofessionals, parents, interns and volunteers to provide the support and resources that promote developmental assets and academic achievement. Define a core set of culturally appropriate goals, services, resources and technical assistance activities.
- **One System/One Backbone:** Design an integrated system of care that is geographically coordinated with other jurisdictions and that provides access, intake and linkages to serve communities countywide.
- **Culturally Specific Programs:** The County, in partnership with the geographic and culturally specific entities, will provide culturally, linguistically and gender specific services to school aged children and their families countywide.
- **Equity:** Distribute services based on countywide populations with high risk needs, including the number of children on free and reduced lunch, the percentage of children on free and reduced lunch, and neighborhood poverty, using census, school, ODE and community and culturally determined data that is county validated.
- **Boundaries:** Align service boundaries to establish effective interagency coordination between local, county, state and federal jurisdictions and community and business partners. Boundaries will be used as guides but not as barriers to service delivery. Adjustments to DHS boundaries will be made for effective coordination of service delivery.
- **Information and Referral:** Re-design information and referral system in order to provide equal access for residents of Multnomah County. Information and referral system will strive for culturally specific and multi-lingual approach and have current and relevant data about available resources.
- **Less Paperwork:** Align intake, measurement and databases with other departments and jurisdictions when appropriate.
- **Departmental Linkage:** Designate the Office of School and Community Partnerships as the implementer of this Framework. OSCP will be charged with the administration and management of the School Aged Policy Framework. OSCP will ensure the sound administration and implementation of all components of

the School Aged Policy Framework. OSCP will oversee the planning, implementation, technical assistance, training, monitoring and quality assurance activities. OSCP has the formal authority to coordinate the alignment of school aged services contracts throughout county departments for seamless service delivery. OSCP will be responsible for defining and ensuring service and system accountability between county departments. OSCP will respectfully seek the expertise of other county departments and department Directors will be responsive to the Director of OSCP in the planning, implementation and operation of the Framework. OSCP will also be responsible for overseeing service and system coordination between children and families, schools, providers, and other cross jurisdictional entities involved in the framework.
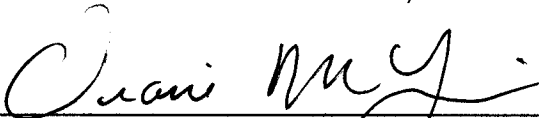
- **New Revenues:** With existing resources, develop capacity to coordinate county departmental grants related to services for school aged youth to support funding for framework strategies.
- **Evaluation:** Create and maintain a strong, viable, consistent monitoring process that evaluates system and program outcomes in partnership with the community.
- **Stakeholder Participation:** Service delivery planning and implementation will be inclusive and comprehensive, involving all stakeholders.

3. The Office of School and Community Partnerships shall prepare a plan to implement the recommendations contained in the School Aged Policy Framework Report: Findings and Policy Recommendations, and shall present an implementation plan to the Board of County Commissioners no later than April 16, 2003.

ADOPTED this 6th day of February, 2003.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

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Diane Linn, Chair

REVIEWED:

THOMAS SPONSLER, COUNTY ATTORNEY
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By_____
Katie Gaetjens, Assistant County Attorney

School-Aged Services Policy Framework Report:

Findings &
Policy Recommendations

February 6, 2003

Executive Summary

In May 2001, County Commissioners Lisa Naito and Serena Cruz called for an examination of the County's investment in programs for school aged youth and their families. On May 31, 2001, the Board of County Commissioners passed a resolution appointing a task force to develop recommendations for services to children and their families in schools. The Board charged the task force with the following tasks:
- Creating an inventory of all existing school based and school related programs funded by the County
- Identifying overlap and duplication of effort
- Developing options for improving services and coordination
- Suggesting methods for maximizing state and federal funding for programs for school aged youth
- Proposing ways to reduce paperwork and improve data collection
- Identifying measurable outcomes

The Board asked the Commission on Children, Families and Community (CCFC) and the Office of School and Community Partnerships (OSCP) to fulfill the mandates outlined in the resolution and to provide them with a proposed policy framework for delivery of services to school aged youth and their families.

The CCFC and OSCP reviewed existing research on educational success for youth, needs assessments for cultural and ethnic communities, data from the 2000 census and data on the geographic distribution of resources for children in Multnomah County. The CCFC and OSCP also commissioned an inventory of all programs and services funded by the County for school aged youth and their families, a Service Delivery Study focusing on information and referral practices, and a best practices study on integrating services for school aged youth. This research raised the following issues:
- **Service and Program Fragmentation:** Programs and services for school aged youth are fragmented with multiple systems of care for at-risk youth. There is a lack of interdepartmental planning and coordination for school aged services within the County, and among jurisdictions. Most services for school aged youth are neither based in nor linked to schools.
- **Barriers to Service Integration:** Lack of common eligibility standards, multiple and prescriptive funding streams for services, and current confidentiality practices are barriers to better service integration.
- **Access, Geographic Distribution of Services, and Equity:** Whether a person can access services often depends upon where they live, or go to school, rather than whether they are eligible for a service. Service dollars are not spread equitably across the County.
- **School Based Services:** Best practices support basing some services for school aged youth at schools.

- **Information and Referral:** Information and referral is inconsistent in quality, and is done by (84%) of staff for OSCP programs and the Student Attendance Initiative.
- **Demographic Shifts:** There is an increasing population living in poverty East of the I-205. The County is increasingly diverse; the Hispanic population has nearly tripled in a decade. There is a corresponding increase in need for culturally competent services.

With these issues in mind, the CCFC and OSCP constructed a process to gather input from County staff, non-profit service providers, parents, youth, cultural groups, community leaders and school personnel. A 35 member Advisory Group was impaneled and co-chaired by CCFC Executive Director, Sue Cameron, and the Director of OSCP, Lolenzo Poe. The Advisory Group was charged with advising the co-chairs in the development of policy recommendations. The CCFC also conducted 19 focus groups, and hosted two community workshops to gather input on the issues outlined above.

Using the research findings and input from stakeholders and community members, an ad hoc team of County staff developed draft policy recommendations for changes to the system of services for school aged youth and their families. This draft was posted on the web with a feedback survey for people to give input on the draft policy recommendations. In addition, the draft was circulated to stakeholders throughout the County for additional input. The following proposed policy recommendations reflect this input:
- County Role:
- One System/One Backbone:
- Culturally Specific Programs:
- Equity:
- Boundaries:
- Information and Referral:
- Less Paperwork:
- Departmental Linkage:
- New Revenues:
- Evaluation:
- Stakeholder Participation:

The CCFC and OSCP will present these proposed policy recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners for adoption on February 6, 2003.

I. Need for Development of a School Aged Policy Framework

In May of 2000, the Portland Multnomah Progress Board and the Commission on Children, Families & Community issued a report titled, *Educational Success for Youth: Aligning School, Family and Community*. The report provided a snapshot of student achievement data, data on youth risk factors and a comprehensive inventory of youth supports offered in the County. The authors highlighted research showing that educational success for all students is much more likely when schools, families and the community all work together in a coordinated and aligned manner to create high expectations, positive adult-child relationships, engaging experiences, and opportunities for youth to contribute.

The report also contained several specific recommendations for system changes by all stakeholders and providers of services, including Multnomah County. Specifically, the report recommended that the County:
- Create stronger linkages between the four (now five) departments (Department of Community Justice, Library, Office of School and Community Partnerships (OSCP), Health, and County Department of Human Services) providing school-based services through strategic and collaborative service planning, alignment around common outcomes and shared data on youth services.
- Take a comprehensive and strategic look at the youth services funded through the (former) Department of Community and Family of Services (now funded through OSCP) and consider consolidating programs.
- Assess the extent to which data systems are able to provide County managers, elected officials and community based organizations with information necessary to tracking youth outcomes and evaluating service effectiveness
- Facilitate a critical look at all existing school-based and family support services so that existing services can be realigned.

In response to these recommendations, as well as to other factors discussed below, the Multnomah Board of County Commissioners passed Resolution Number 01-071 Appointing a Task Force to Develop Recommendations for Services to Children and Their Families in Schools on May 31, 2001. A copy of the resolution is attached as Appendix 1. The Board noted that the County funds many programs for school aged youth including health clinics, mental health services, attendance support services, and family resource centers. The Board charged the task force with many of the recommendations described above including the following:
- Creating an inventory of all existing school based and school related programs funded by the County
- Identifying overlap and duplication of effort
- Developing options for improving services and coordination

- Suggesting methods for maximizing state and federal funding for programs for school aged youth
- Proposing ways to reduce paperwork and improve data collection
- Identifying measurable outcomes

The Board asked the Commission on Children, Families & Community (CCFC) and OSCP to fulfill the mandates outlined in the resolution and to provide them with a proposed policy framework for delivery of services to school aged youth.

Many factors contributed to the Board's request for a policy framework in the arena of services for school aged youth. The fragmentation of existing services and the lack of any County "system" for delivering services to school aged youth makes it difficult for children and families to access services. As the authors of a the Educational Success report noted, "it [is] apparent that we do not have much of a system....While many [people] had a good understanding of some part of the 'system,' no one was really able to describe the full scope of supports for school-aged youth. What we discovered is hundreds of different youth programs supported by chaotic funding streams and varying program expectations," (p. 69).

Awareness of changing demographics within the County also prompted the Board's call to undertake this work. The 2000 census documented significant increases in poor people living in East Multnomah County over the past ten years, as well as significant increases in nearly all minority populations. A 2001 report by the County's Office of Budget and Quality noted that school based services were not distributed equally across school districts in proportion to the percentage of total children served by each district. The report showed a concentration of school based services in Portland Public Schools and a lack of such services in many of the East County school districts. The report recommended taking action to assure more equitable distribution of school based services, and better access to community based services.

The increasing diversity and number of cultural and ethnic populations moving into the County over the past decade has resulted in increasing awareness of the need for culturally competent service delivery and culturally specific services, including bilingual services. In 1999, the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) created a comprehensive plan in which it noted the need for increased culturally specific services, especially in the areas of domestic violence, youth diversion and drug and alcohol prevention. Also in 1999 the Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest, Inc., in collaboration with the Native American Youth Association, published a report titled *Assessment of the Needs of American Indian/Alaska Native Children and Youth in Multnomah County.* The report recommended more culturally specific educational experiences for Native American youth, as well as earlier identification and treatment of mental health problems. In 2001 the Latino Network issued a report titled, *Salir Adelante: A Needs and Assets Assessment of the Hispanic Community of Multnomah County.* The report recommended that services to Latinos in the County be culturally and linguistically specific, that programs be annually assessed against standards of cultural competence, and that Latino participation increase at every level of

public policy development. Finally, the African American Commission on Mental Health has proposed a needs assessment and a study of culturally specific and multi-cultural mental health to address an identified lack of culturally specific services. Finally, in a time of sharply declining public resources and a contracting economy, the Board recognized that the County must define and focus its role in supporting educational success, rationalize and align the array of services it funds to support school aged youth, find efficiencies and identify new revenue possibilities to support its efforts in this arena.

II.   Research and Findings

In addition to considering the reports described above, the CCFC and OSCP produced additional reports, gathered data and consulted other internal and external reports to assist in analyzing existing County programs, best practices for system integration and delivery of children's mental health services, current information and referral practices, and current demographic data. The relevant research is described in detail below. This body of research raised issues of service and program fragmentation, barriers to service integration, and equitable access to services across the county.
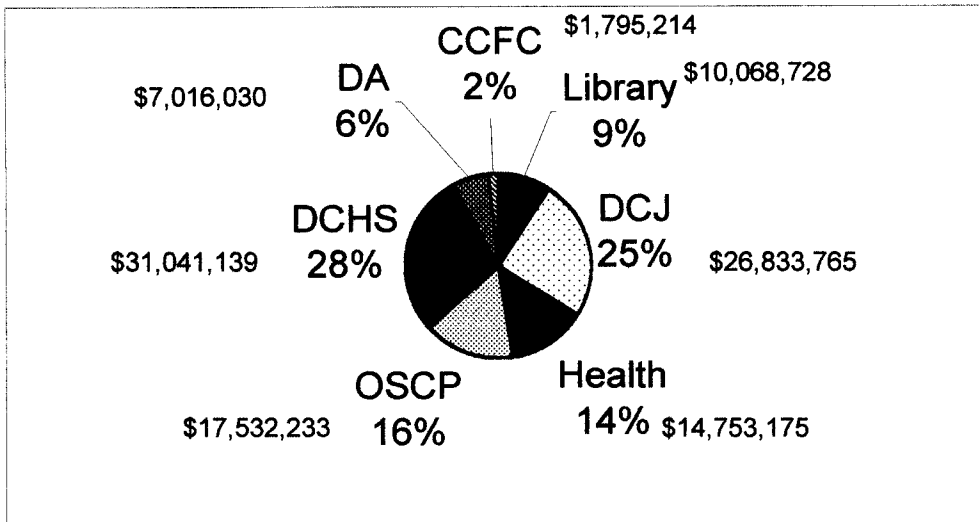
A.   Inventory of County Funded Programs for School Aged Youth

In order to better understand County programs for school aged youth, the CCFC and OSCP, in cooperation with the County's Budget Office, created a detailed inventory of these programs. A copy of this inventory is attached as Appendix 2 and contains program descriptions, age group served, total budget for fiscal year 2002/2003, County general fund budget for fiscal year 2002/2003, whether the program is targeted or universally available, the geographic location of the service, whether the service is school based, school linked or County wide and whether the program is focused on prevention, intervention or interdiction

Programs for school aged youth are delivered by six County departments: the Library, the Department of Community Justice (DCJ), OSCP, the Health Department, the Department of Human Services (DCHS), and the District Attorney (DA), and one non-departmental unit, the CCFC. Across these departments, the County officially budgeted a total of $109,040,284 from all funding sources for services to school aged youth in fiscal year 2002/2003. [1] (See Appendix 2). The following chart illustrates the relative budgets for school aged programs of these departments expressed as a percentage and in dollars.
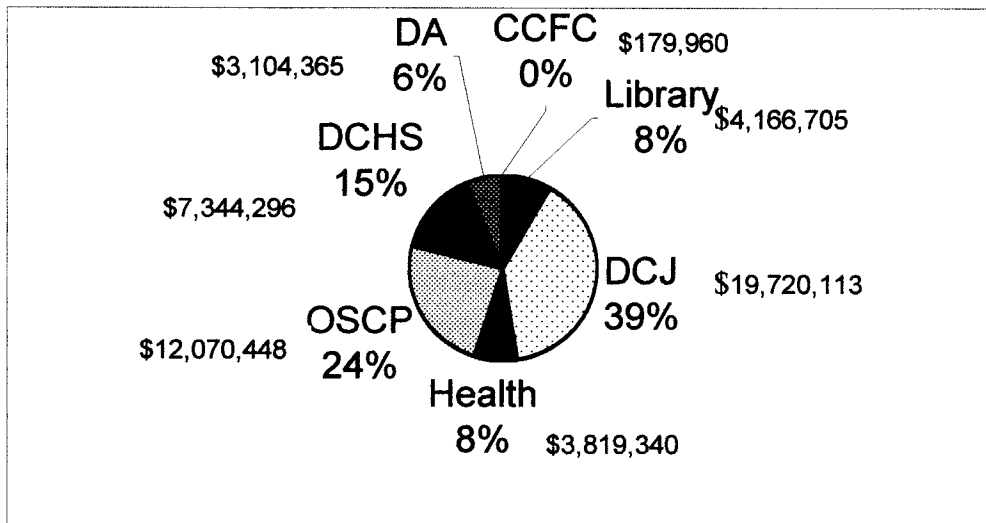
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[1] These figures do not reflect the mid-year budget reduction approved by the Board of County Commissioners on December 19, 2002.

Funds from all Sources Budgeted for School Aged Youth by Department

CCFC $1,795,214

DA 2%

$7,016,030   6%   Library $10,068,728

9%

DCHS   DCJ

$31,041,139   28%   25% $26,833,765

OSCP   Health

$17,532,233   16%   14% $14,753,175

The County general fund portion of the total budget for school aged youth programs is $50,405,227 for fiscal year 2002/2003.[2] The following chart illustrates the relative budgets for school aged programs of these departments expressed as a percentage and in dollars.

County General Fund Budgeted for School Aged Youth by Department

DA   CCFC $179,960

$3,104,365   6%   0%   Library

$4,166,705

DCHS   8%

15%

$7,344,296

DCJ $19,720,113

OSCP   39%
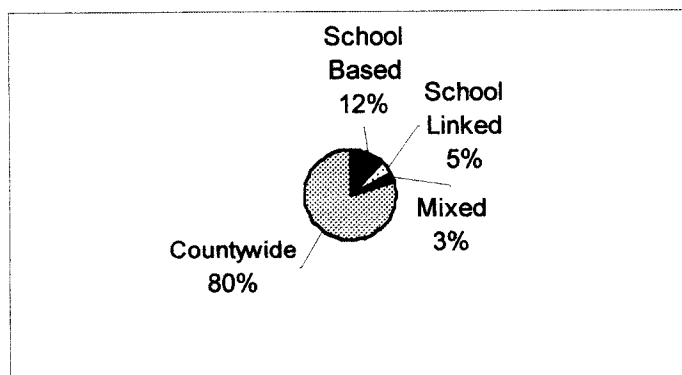
$12,070,448   24%

Health

8% $3,819,340

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[2] These figures do not reflect the mid-year budget reductions approved by the Board of County Commissioners on December 19, 2002.

The inventory revealed several important issues:

1.   The County funds over 100 separate programs for school aged youth and their families. Programs are planned, funded and managed separately by each of these departments. There is no structural mechanism for interdepartmental program planning for school aged youth, and no common goals or outcomes that apply across programs. When departments want to locate services at schools, each department negotiates with each school separately. This often requires schools and community based organizations to contract with separate arms of the same body for different types of services.

2.   There is no mechanism for service planning within any consistent unit of geography. Programs are distributed throughout the County based on different criteria, and different units of geography from zip code to school sites selected on the basis of free and reduced price lunch program usage rates. This lack of integrated and coordinated service planning within a consistent unit of geography makes it difficult to assure equitable distribution of services across the County, to assure that total County resources are targeted to those most in need, and to coordinate with other jurisdictions that provide other social services based upon different geographies.

3.   A detailed analysis of programs demonstrates that the County funds multiple "systems" aimed at supporting at-risk school aged youth and their families. These include the Youth Investment system, the Community and Family Service Center system, the Family Resource Centers, SUN schools, Caring Communities, school based mental health consultants, school based health centers, the Student Attendance Initiative and others. Many of these systems and programs have service integration and coordination components, have similar goals, outcomes and target populations and yet operate in overlapping geographies and with no overarching integration or coordination. The multiplicity of systems is difficult for clients and service staff to negotiate, creates different levels of resources depending upon where a person can access services, creates multiple administrative structures, and makes it difficult to assess whether resources are spread equitably among populations in need.

4.   The majority of County funded programs for school aged youth are neither linked to schools nor based in schools and thus not immediately accessible to youth who present with issues at school. [3] (See Appendix 2). The following chart demonstrates that 80% of the funds budgeted to support school aged youth are allocated to programs that are neither school based nor school linked.

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[3] County departments designated services as school based, school-linked or countywide based upon the following definitions: 1) School based services are services delivered in a school building; 2) School linked services are services are either referred through schools or directly linked to a school or schools; 3) Countywide services are services that are not connected to schools in any discernible way.

Funds from all Sources for School Based, School Linked and Countywide Services

In summary, the inventory quantifies the County's investment in services for school aged youth and their families, provides evidence of program fragmentation both across departmental lines, and within departments, reveals multiple systems of care for at risk youth and their families that are distributed based upon no consistent unit of geography, and highlights the lack of interdepartmental service planning and common program outcomes. While individual departments sought to offer quality programs and services, the lack of policy direction to guide these efforts has contributed to fragmentation over time. In addition, no formal structures existed to allow for interdepartmental planning to decrease fragmentation.

B. Recommendations for Children's Mental Health Redesign

Mental health services are currently provided in many schools throughout the County, as well as offered in other settings. (Appendix 2, Pages 8-10). In early 2002, the Child and Family System of Care Workgroup (the "Workgroup") convened by Commissioner Naito, issued their final Recommendations for Children's Mental Health Redesign. This report provides comprehensive recommendations for a mental health system for all children, and also makes valuable recommendations regarding how and where mental health services for school aged youth should be delivered. A copy of the full report is attached as Appendix 3.

The report notes that recent recommendations from the Surgeon General suggest tapping public schools to identify children with mental health issues, and locating mental health services at schools as a way to improve service to racial and ethnic minorities. The report recommends that mental health services for children should be provided in, or in coordination with schools. Schools, providers and the County must coordinate to provide appropriate screening, assessment and treatment. Parents must be engaged as full partners in developing a plan of care and services must be appropriate for the child and family's language, culture, community and values. Finally, for children that qualify for special educations services under an Individualized Education Program, schools, mental

health providers and other involved systems should formally coordinate services with each other and with the child's family.

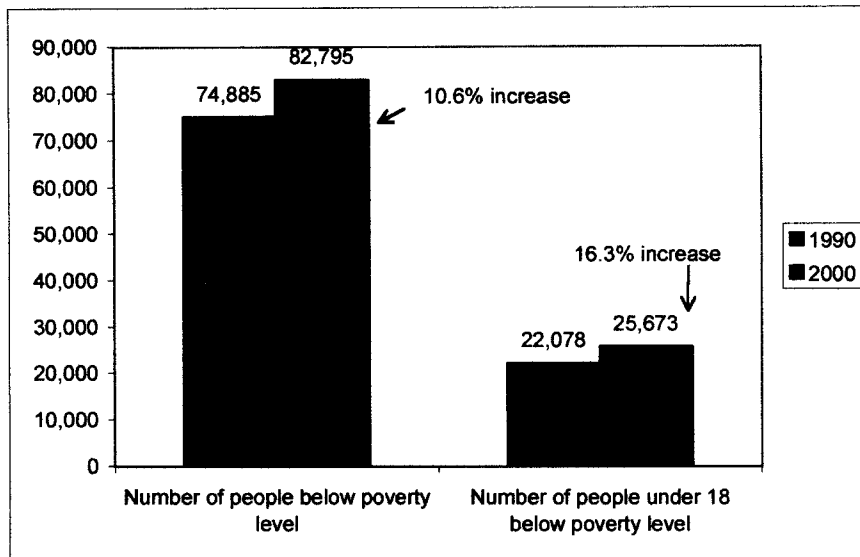The report specifically recommends the following:
- Improve outreach, screening and assessment for children and youth
- Expand and strengthen the continuum of services
- Seek ways to replace funding and/or service capacity of expiring grants, including Safe Schools and Center for Substance Abuse Targeted Capacity Enhancement
- Improve financing for high need children following residential placement
- Develop a coordinated system for mental health services throughout the schools that build on existing successful programs
- Improve long-range system-wide planning between schools and the County

The report also makes specific recommendations for serving special youth populations including improving access, improving the continuum of services, improving services for homeless and sexual minority youth and youth involved with the juvenile justice system, improving transition to the adult system and improving access to and availability of wrap-around services.

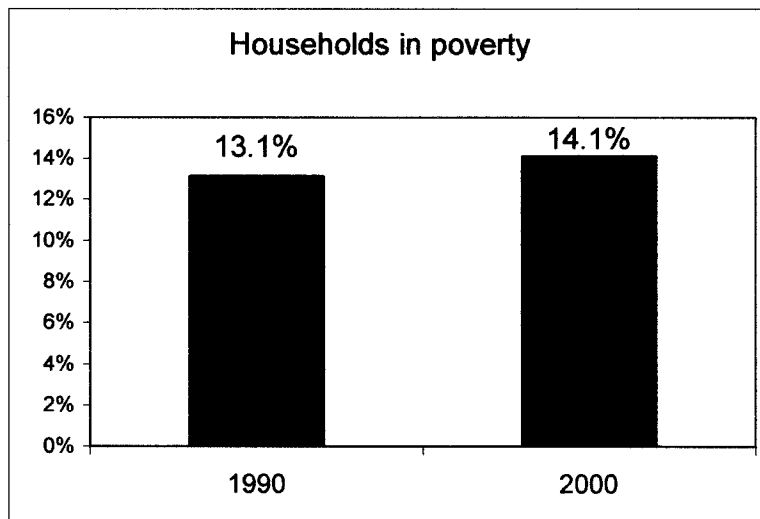## C.   2000 Census Demographic Data

The CCFC conducted a detailed analysis of 2000 census and demographic data to analyze population shifts and determine whether the location of current services aligns with the location of those needing services. The data revealed that a significant portion of the County's growth in population from 1990 to 2000 was in East Multnomah County, both for the adult population and the population under 18. The census tracts experiencing the most growth are East of the I-205. Of the people who moved in Multnomah County between 1990 and 1996, 64.2% moved from within the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area, while about 30% were from outside this area. People who moved from within the area tended to move to North Portland, East Portland and East Multnomah County. People who moved from outside the metropolitan area tended to move to Northwest, Southwest and parts of inner Northeast and Southeast Portland. Both local movers and newcomers moved into East County. These trends reflect an increasing scarcity of affordable housing in the urban core, and the resulting movement of those seeking it to the East.

The number of people in Multnomah County living below the federal poverty level increased at a rate of 10.6% between 1990 and 2000. The number of people under age 18 in poverty increased at a faster rate (16.3%) than the rate of population growth between 1990 and 2000 (13.1%).
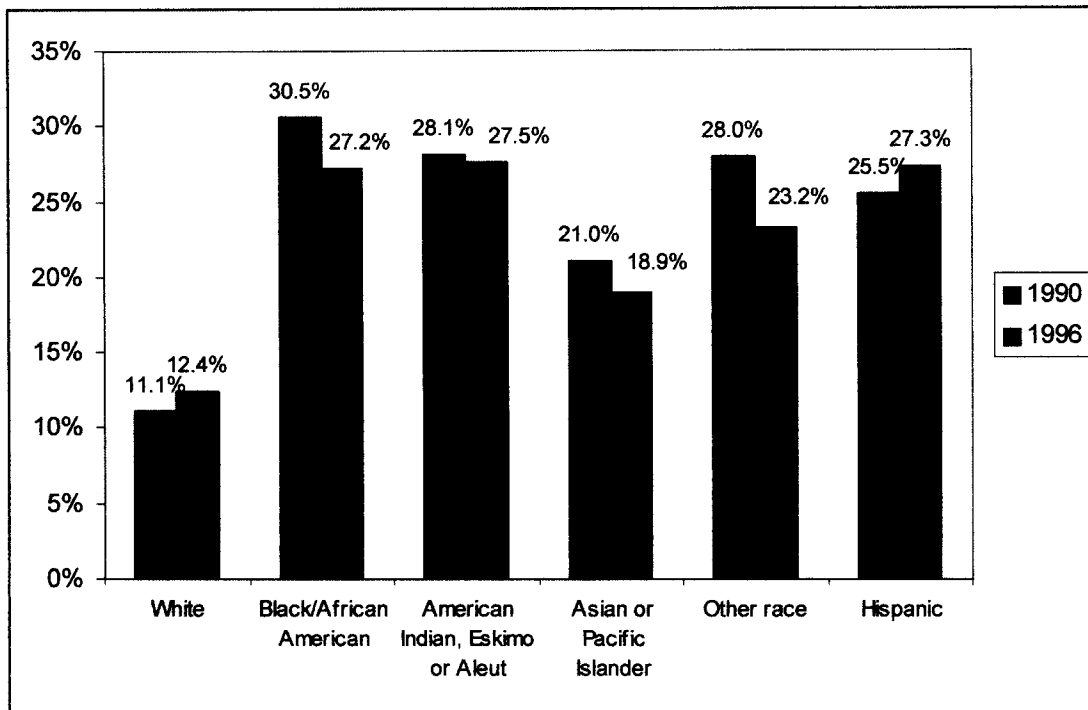
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census

The number of households in poverty in the County increased from 13.1% to 14.1% during the 1990s.
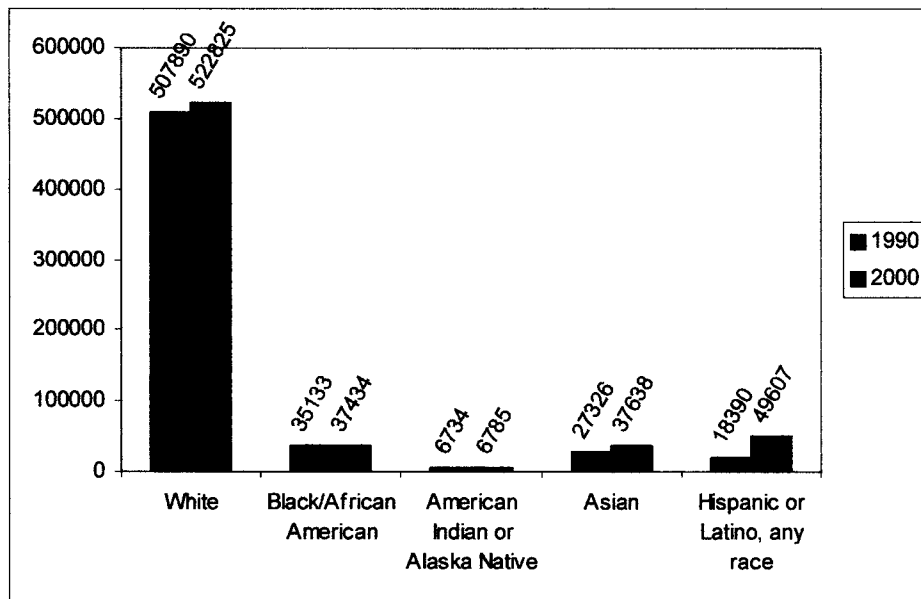

Areas that had high levels of poverty continued to have high levels of poverty. In addition, some areas had large increases in the number of adults and children in poverty especially in East County. At a block group level, the highest concentrations of people living in poverty are centered around sites of public housing. The percentage of minority group members in poverty was still much higher than the white population in 1996, although there was a decrease in the percentage of some minority groups living under the official federal definition of poverty.

Percent of people living in poverty, 1990 to 1996

Data from the 2000 census also shows increases in minority populations including Hispanic, Asian and African American. The Hispanic population nearly tripled over the decade. The maps in Appendix 4 show the distribution of the Hispanic, Asian, Native American and African American populations across the County. The chart below shows the population increases over the decade for racial and ethnic groups.

Because services are not delivered in consistent units of geography across County departments and programs, it is difficult to assess whether appropriate services are currently either accessible or located where children and families who need them reside (or can access them). As noted above, the County's Office of Budget and Quality analyzed County spending on programs for children by school district in 2001. A summary of the study and recommendations is attached as Appendix 5. This study demonstrated that 2001/2002 funding for school based programs, for family centers and homeless services was concentrated in the Portland Public Schools District, most of which is West of the I-205. Further, the proportion of funding for these services in the Eastern school districts was not commensurate with the proportion of the total population of students served by these districts. This study concluded that the County should redistribute some services for school aged youth based on the number of students served in each district. The demographic data cited above confirms this conclusion.

D.   Service Delivery Study

<u>Purpose and Design of Service Delivery Study</u>
As part of the effort to identify overlap and duplication of effort, develop recommendations to improve service delivery and coordination, decrease paperwork and improve data collection, the CCFC and OSCP commissioned a Service Delivery Study. A copy of the study is attached as Appendix 6. The County's Research and Evaluation unit conducted the study and considered the information and referral system, service delivery and linkage practices among programs delivered by OSCP and the Student Attendance Initiative (SAI), a program delivered by the Department of Community Justice. The researchers first took a census of all internal and external staff working in OSCP funded programs and in SAI. Using this list, they randomly selected 120 staff to interview, and interviewed 62 staff. The interview pool reflected the total pool of 418 staff associated with OSCP programs and SAI such that sample opinions can be generalized to the whole group with a moderately high degree of confidence. The interview tool asked staff for the following information:
- Information on the type of service provided
- The geographic location of the service
- The percentage breakdown of a staff person's job responsibilities for information and referral, case management, family advocacy, problem solving, counseling, sharing client information with other agencies and client follow-up
- Whether and how a staff person coordinates programs
- Whether the staff person provides direct services
- Whether and how staff connects to schools
- Whether the staff person is a culturally specific resource person

Staff were also presented with a scenarios involving single and multi-problem families and asked to outline the services their agency would provide to help the client, and what other services staff would refer the family to. Staff was also asked to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their program and the system as a whole, and to give suggestions for redesigning the system.

Service Delivery Study Findings
The study found that service sites and staff are not necessarily clustered in areas where census data shows the highest populations of children under 18, single heads of households, and poverty. In addition, there are few sites and staff East of the I-205. Interviews showed that while some people are mobile, most staff is stationary and clients must access services at the agency location.

The study also found that while 84% of staff does some type of information and referral, there was no consistent response to the multi-problem family in terms of the information and referrals, and services staff would make or provide. Staff noted many challenges for service delivery in the County. Staff highlighted families' difficulty in accessing what services there are. Low quality, incomplete and inconsistent information and referral make it hard for families to find what is available. One staff person said, "It's as if we hide things on purpose." Staff also stressed a lack of services that were actually available to meet the myriad needs of families. This lack of available services often leads families to making many calls in hopes of finding someone who can help them, and leads staff to make referrals even though the chances of families finding what they need may be slim.

Service Delivery Study Recommendations
The study made several recommendations for system changes based on the findings including the following:
- Centralize the information and referral system and assuring that referrals are given to services that are actually available.
- Assure that staff that does information and referral have and dispense better and more consistent information on available services for a multiplicity of needs.
- Identify and promoting existing information and referral tools such as www.oregonhelps.org to both end users with computer access and to professionals who do information and referral.
- Consider service packages and/or bundling to make services available more uniformly across the County and to assure that clients take advantage of all services they are eligible for.
- Consider more mobile services to meet needs in geographic areas where there are no service delivery sites.
- Consider alternatives to current data collection such as assessing trends and using sampling to decrease time spend on paperwork.
- Devise ways to prevent future fragmentation that creates difficulty for clients trying to access services.

E.   Best Practices Review

In developing the framework, the CCFC researched best practices for integrating delivery of services to school aged youth. The results of the research are compiled in a report titled, *Integration of Services for School-Aged Youth: A Review of Best Practices* and attached as Appendix 7. The report includes research on ideal service integration from the client's point of view, case studies of how other jurisdictions have worked to better

integrate services at the local level, and recommended next steps for better service integration in the County.

Best Practices for Service Integration Report Findings
The ideal system for delivery of services allows clients to enter from multiple points, allows access to multiple services from any entry point, assesses a client's needs when the client first accesses services, uses a common needs assessment for all agencies in the system, and employs a common data system so that information can be easily shared across agencies. Service integration can focus on the federal, state or local level and different strategies may be used depending upon the services that are integrated.

At the local level, service integration approaches most commonly include:
- Case management
- Service co-location
- Information and referral
- Mobile service delivery
- Interagency agreements
- Co-application/co-eligibility procedures
- Non-categorical funding
- Programs and agency consolidation

Service delivery systems have used different processes for increasing the levels of cooperation, coordination, collaboration and integration of agencies. These most often are 1) coordinating administrative structures, 2) creating connections among service providers and 3) case management. Coordinating administrative structures includes changing information management systems across agencies so that systems can "talk to each other" about common clients. It is also necessary to standardize the type of information collected from clients so that information can be used and understood across agencies. Agencies must also deal with confidentiality issues. This can be done using a variety of methods including obtaining informed consent from clients to share information with other agencies, developing mutually agreed upon releases for sharing certain types of information across agencies, and developing interagency agreements and memoranda of understanding that specify what types of information will be shared, how it will be shared, who has access to the information, why the information is shared, and assurances blocking further disclosure. Case management helps clients with multiple needs access services from a variety of sources. However, case managers often lack skills beyond their specialty area, and multi-problem clients are often "managed" by case managers from different systems with conflicting plans for the client.

Basing services for school aged youth at schools is a common co-location strategy because many of the potential clients are already there. Schools are also often important focal institutions in neighborhoods and, in some cases, serve as community resource centers. Jurisdictions have employed multiple methods to integrate a variety of social and health services at school sites including universal assessment and referral of families at school registration for risk factors associated with school failure, forming collaboratives of key stakeholder groups that plan, implement and monitor jointly

delivered school based services, and mobile health centers. The report cautioned against locating all services for school aged youth in schools and recommended a balance of community based services and school based services to meet the needs of youth who are not in school, and to assure that families who are not comfortable receiving service at schools have an alternative.

Information and referral systems must also be addressed to support service integration. A needs assessment should be conducted to determine the system design. Key issues are developing rules for the inclusion and exclusion of information and services, the range of services callers are likely to seek, the most frequently asked questions, the pattern of demand for information over time, how the system links to the real time availability of services, and the procedures for updating information. Regardless of how the system is designed, adequate staffing and technology must be available to support smooth functioning.

<u>Best Practices for Service Integration Report Recommendations</u>
After considering different approaches to service integration, and the current state of Multnomah County's efforts in the arena, the report made the following recommendations:

- Multnomah County should identify a set of services for school-aged youth and children that would benefit from consolidation of funding and consider the feasibility of working with the State of Oregon to consolidate funding for these services. Consolidation of funding would facilitate service integration at the local level.
- The County should examine the eligibility/assessment procedures of the agencies and programs that use County funds and identify a group that would benefit from using the same eligibility and assessment procedures. The County should then employ a combination of methods that would allow for sharing client information across these agencies.
- The County should consider the feasibility of improving service coordination through the use of a common client data system for this group of agencies and/or programs that allows for the collection of all client information that is common to the agencies and programs. The County should examine how case management is currently used in this set of agencies and programs and consider centralizing this function.
- The County should identify the current practices being used for information and referral across this group of agencies and programs and create a common system. The County should consider working with the ongoing 211 effort as a means to improving information and referral.

F. Summary of Issues Identified From Research

The existing research and new research commissioned for the development of the policy framework raised the following issues:

- **Service and Program Fragmentation:** Programs and services for school aged youth are fragmented with multiple systems of care for at-risk youth.

There is a lack of interdepartmental planning and coordination for school aged services within the County, and among jurisdictions. Most services for school aged youth are neither based in nor linked to schools.

- **Barriers to Service Integration:** Lack of common eligibility standards, multiple, prescriptive funding streams for services, and current confidentiality practices are barriers to better service integration.
- **Access, Geographic Distribution of Services, and Equity:** Whether a person can access services often depends upon where they live, or go to school, rather than whether they are eligible for a service. Service dollars are not spread equitably across the County.
- **School Based Services:** Best practices support basing some services for school aged youth at schools.
- **Information and Referral:** Information and referral is inconsistent in quality, and is done by (84%) of staff for OSCP programs and SAI.
- **Demographic Shifts:** There is an increasing population living in poverty East of the I-205. The County is increasingly diverse; the Hispanic population has nearly doubled in a decade. There is a corresponding increase in need for culturally competent services.

The next section of this report details the public input collected by the CCFC and OSCP on these issues and the recommendations proposed in these studies to address them.

III. Public Input Process

With the issues outlined above in mind, the CCFC and OSCP constructed a process to gather input from County staff, non-profit service providers, parents, youth, cultural groups, community leaders and school personnel. The process was iterative with many components occurring simultaneously and with continuing revision of products as further feedback was gathered. In general, requests for input were centered on the following questions:

- What is the County's role in supporting students' educational success?
- What is the best way to organize delivery of services and how can the County ensure equitable distribution of resources?
- What types of services should be school based versus community based?
- What constitutes cultural competency?
- What parts of the current system work well for children and families, and what needs improvement?
- How should the County's investment in services for school aged youth be prioritized?
- Where are the opportunities for better linkage and coordination between and among programs and services for school aged youth, and the jurisdictions that provide the services?

After the recommendations for system change were developed based on research and input, many groups and individuals were solicited for input on the change

recommendations. A web-based survey was posted to gather input on the change recommendations and input was incorporated into the draft framework. The draft framework, including the change recommendations, is detailed in the section IV of this report.

A. Groups Providing Input

<u>Advisory Group</u>
A 35 member Advisory Group was impaneled in June 2002 to advise the co-chairs, Kathy Turner[4] and Lolenzo Poe, on developing a vision, goals, outcomes, strategies and recommendations. The members included service providers, County staff working in departments that provide services for school aged youth, school personnel, the State Department of Human Services, representatives of organizations of cultural and ethnic groups, Multnomah Education Service District, alternative schools, Portland Parks and Recreation community schools, United Way, and the Multnomah Youth Commission. A complete roster of the Advisory Group is attached at Appendix 8.

The Advisory Group was charged with advising the co-chairs in the creation of the school services policy framework to guide the County's investment in services for this age group. The Advisory Group agreed to prepare for and participate in eight meetings and at least one focus group and one community workshop. They also agreed to provide input to the co-chairs in the following areas:
- The project scope and methodology
- Existing reports and studies on services for school aged youth as well as studies commissioned for the framework development
- Guiding principles, vision, goals, outcomes, strategies and recommendations
- The role of the County vis-à-vis other government and non-profit entities
- Service distribution and funding criteria
- Administrative improvements
- Opportunities for collaboration and leveraging

<u>Focus Groups</u>
A series of 19 focus groups were conducted in which 220 people participated. Focus group questions were tailored to the type of group consulted e.g. youth, parents, service providers. The groups consulted included African American community members, alternative school directors, SUN site managers, Asian American community members, Caring Community coordinators, staff from each County department providing services to school aged youth, Latino community members, sexual minority youth, Group 3, parents, and the Multnomah Youth Commission.[5] A complete report on the focus groups that includes a listing of all groups consulted, the questions each group was asked, and the responses to the questions is contained in Appendix 9.

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[4] Kathy Turner was a co-chair of the Advisory Group while she was the Executive Director of the CCFC. When Sue Cameron became Executive Director of the CCFC in August 2002, she took over as co-chair for Kathy Turner.
[5] The Multnomah Youth Commission was formerly named the Youth Advisory Board of Multnomah County.

Community Workshops
Two community workshops were held to get input on the questions and issues described above. A total of 75 people attended. The first workshop focused on cultural competency and prioritization of service arenas for the County. The second workshop focused on soliciting input on the draft framework.

B.   Themes and Key Findings
The large volume of public input gathered has been condensed to the following themes and key findings on the issues and questions raised and discussed above.

County Role
Most people who provided us with input thought that the County should be involved in supporting educational success. People thought that some of that support should be provided through school based services, but that the County should not provide "gap" funding for schools and districts because it reduces funding for necessary social service supports to school aged youth and their families. People also thought that the County should facilitate the participation of families and communities to help solve community problems, and regularly convene elected officials, youth and parents to educate everyone about what is happening in young people's lives, schools, neighborhoods and in cultural and ethnic communities.

Key Benchmarks
People thought that the County should be tracking progress on benchmarks, and that benchmarks should be those developed by the State and the local Progress Boards. Stakeholders most commonly cited the following benchmark areas:
- Families' basic needs (including food, shelter, health services and clothing) are met, and families move toward self-sufficiency.
- Children's readiness to learn, literacy and lifelong learning skills improve.
- Public safety improves.
- Efficiency and accountability of services provided to support children and families.

Equitable Geographic Distribution of Services
Many stakeholders cited a lack of services in East County, growing need in East County, and the inability of people in need to access existing services in East County. People think the County should assure that everyone can easily access basic services, especially health and mental health services, regardless of geography.

Most stakeholders agreed that high school catchment areas were the best boundaries to use in organizing service delivery, and the best way to assess whether all parts of the County had equal access to supports for school aged youth and their families. People thought this would allow the County, the State and the schools to align and coordinate delivery of their respective services since the State and the schools already use these boundary lines.

<u>School Based Versus Community Based Services</u>

Most stakeholders agreed that schools were the best way for the County and other service providers to reach the largest number of children and their families. Almost all stakeholders agreed that the following services should be offered at all schools:

- Nutrition (free/reduced price meal program)
- Health
- Mental Health
- Drug and alcohol abuse prevention and referral for treatment
- Social service information and referral

Many stakeholders also asked that the following services be sited at schools:

- Violence prevention
- After school activities including academic and recreational activities.
- Counseling for higher education and employment.

Stakeholders generally cited a need for more school based health, mental health and alcohol and drug abuse prevention and treatment referral services. People also agreed that service delivery should be tailored to each community, both in terms of the service mix, and how services are delivered. Geographic and cultural differences should be taken into account.

While stakeholders generally favored school-based services, many also thought that some community based services for school aged youth should also be retained because:

- It is important to serve families as a whole and some school-based services are not geared toward families.
- Many school-aged youth who most need services are not attending school and thus cannot access services there.
- Some schools cannot host more services due to lack of space.
- Sometimes the school administration does not favor siting services at the school because it can distract from the educational focus and importance of classroom time.
- In schools where there are many services on site, there is often a lack of coordination between them, and the school administration is sometimes not fully aware of what is available in the building.

<u>Cultural Competency</u>

Many stakeholders noted that it is not clear whether offering culturally competent services means the County offers services that are culturally respectful, sensitive and welcoming, or whether services must be delivered by providers and/or staff who are of the cultural group being served and speak the language. Some people thought that in order to be culturally competent, providers of services must hire, train and retain minority staff and that the County should provide training and technical assistance for minority service providers. People thought that this tension should be resolved and that the County should set standards and define the components of a "culturally competent" service.

Stakeholders who participated in the African American, Asian American, Native American, Latino and sexual minority youth focus groups all requested that separate,

culturally specific services be made available to these groups. They thought people would travel longer distances if the service were culturally comfortable and effective. Other stakeholders said that while it might be preferable to offer separate, culturally specific services to cultural groups, it is not financially feasible, it might perpetuate cultural isolation, and it may limit access.

Many providers noted that they are struggling to provide culturally competent services but that it is challenging given the growing diversity of cultural and ethnic groups across the County. People also noted the existing and growing need for services to non-native English speakers including translation and interpretation services.

Information and Referral/Service Integration

Many stakeholders requested a centralized source of information and referral because they felt that the current "system" is fragmented and difficult to understand. They also noted that services must be better integrated from the client perspective e.g. more of a seamless web that does not require multiple contacts for multiple services. Stakeholders felt that the County is in a unique position to pull together community organizations and other jurisdictions to integrate services and leverage resources. Many stakeholders pointed to the current 211 effort headed by United Way as a step in the right direction.

Eligibility Requirements

Both service providers and youth who use services lamented the use of eligibility requirements. For service providers, they mean extra paperwork and less time to serve clients. For clients, they mean multiple forms to fill out for each service they need, and the stigma of "qualifying" for services. While recognizing these problems with eligibility requirements, people also noted that limited resources should be targeted at those most in need. Some stakeholders noted that cross-agency agreements on a common eligibility form for a group of services would cut down on duplicative paperwork for both service providers and clients.

Effective Service Delivery

Service providers pointed out the importance of developing relationships with clients both to provide quality services and to effectively refer clients to other services. One of the barriers to developing relationships with clients is high staff turnover caused by low wages and lack of benefits. Also, the instability of funding for many programs causes programs to come and go, which also inhibits relationship building.

Accountability and Evaluation

Stakeholders felt that program staff and clients should be involved in developing program goals and in assessing whether programs have met their goals. Evaluation should be data driven but also take into account anecdotal evidence. It would be helpful if different funders began using common reporting forms that requested similar information so that providers could cut down on paperwork. Stakeholders felt that the County should evaluate the cultural competency of its County programs and contracted programs. Finally, stakeholders suggested that the County publish an annual report assessing how the system as a whole is making progress in meeting major benchmarks.

<u>Solutions Proposed Through Public Input</u>
Many stakeholders offered potential solutions to the issues discussed above. While this list is not exhaustive, it captures major themes.

- **Organization of Service System:** Organize service delivery using school boundaries and offer some services at schools.
- **Mobile Units:** Offer key services such as health, mental health, and drug and alcohol prevention and treatment referral, via mobile units that keep regular schedules at regular locations.
- **In-School Resource Specialists:** The County and schools should work together to provide in-school resource specialists that serve several schools on different days to connect parents, students and teachers to needed resources.
- **Information and Referral:** Put information kiosks at all Multnomah County sites and work with United Way's regional 211 effort to improve access to services.
- **Menu of Services:** The County could offer a menu of services to schools and let communities choose what is most needed. The County should require that communities have a plan to address core issues and needs.
- **Best Practices:** Provide and promote best practices information to all service providers.

IV.   Proposed Policy Framework

Using the research findings, and input from stakeholders and community members, an ad hoc team of County staff developed a set of policy recommendations for changes to the system of services for school aged children and their families. After the initial development of these recommendations, stakeholders and community members had an opportunity to comment. The recommendations have been revised numerous times based upon input received from many groups and from individuals responding to the web based survey. For a complete list of groups consulted for feedback see Appendix10.

The policy recommendations are as follows:

1.   **County Role:** Provide funds for school based and school linked services for children and their families that assist all students in succeeding in school. Use natural helpers, cultural mentors, professionals, paraprofessionals, parents, interns and volunteers to provide the support and resources that promote developmental assets and academic achievement. Define a core set of culturally appropriate goals, services, resources, and technical assistance activities.

2.   **One System/One Backbone:** Design an integrated system of care that is geographically coordinated with other jurisdictions and that provides access, intake and linkages to serve communities countywide.

3.   **Culturally Specific Programs:** The county, in partnership with the geographic and culturally specific entities, will strive to provide culturally, linguistically and gender specific services to school aged children and their families countywide.

4.   **Equity:** Distribute services based on countywide populations with high risk needs, including the number of children on free and reduced lunch, the percentage of children on free and reduced lunch, and neighborhood poverty, using census, school, ODE and community and culturally determined data that is county validated.

5.   **Boundaries:** Align service boundaries to establish effective interagency coordination between local, county, state and federal jurisdictions and community and business partners. Boundaries will be used as guides but not as barriers to service delivery. Adjustments to DHS boundaries will be made for effective coordination of service delivery.

6.   **Information and Referral:** Re-design information and referral system in order to provide equal access for residents of Multnomah County. Information and referral system will strive for a culturally specific and multi-lingual approach and have current and relevant data about available resources.

7.   **Less Paperwork:** Align intake, measurement and databases with other departments and jurisdictions when appropriate.

8.   **Departmental Linkage:** Designate the Office of School and Community Partnerships as the implementer of this Framework. OSCP will be charged with the administration and management of the School Aged Policy Framework. OSCP will ensure the sound administration and implementation of all components of the School Aged Policy Framework. OSCP will oversee the planning, implementation, technical assistance, training, monitoring and quality assurance activities. OSCP has the formal authority to coordinate the alignment of school aged services contracts throughout county departments for seamless service delivery. OSCP will be responsible for defining and ensuring service and system accountability between county departments. OSCP will respectfully seek the expertise of other county departments and department Directors will be responsive to the Director of OSCP in the planning, implementation and operation of the Framework. OSCP will also be responsible for overseeing service and system coordination between children and families, schools, providers, and other cross jurisdictional entities involved in the Framework.

9.   **New Revenues:** With existing resources, develop capacity to coordinate county departmental grants related to services for school aged youth to support funding for framework strategies.

10.   **Evaluation:** Create and maintain a strong, viable, and consistent monitoring process that evaluates system and program outcomes in partnership with the community.

11.   **Stakeholder Participation:** Service delivery planning and implementation will be inclusive and comprehensive, involving all stakeholders.

These policy recommendations will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners for Multnomah County for adoption on February 6, 2003. Implementation planning to put the recommendations into action will begin immediately following adoption by the Board.