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I. Priority – Result to be realized, as expressed by citizens

I want all children in Multnomah County to succeed in school

II. Indicators of Success – How the County will know if progress is being made on the result

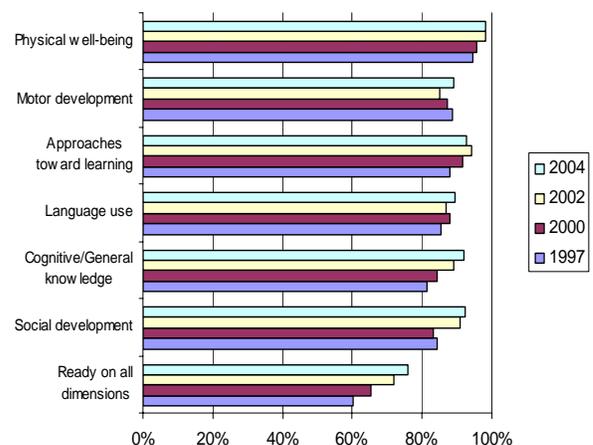
While the indicators are dependent on data collected from public school districts in Multnomah County, it is important to stress that the intent is that ALL youth in Multnomah County will succeed regardless of the setting in which they receive their education. The information provided by these measures will be more compelling and provide a more accurate picture of what is occurring for individual students within a specific educational setting.

1. Percentage of entering kindergarten students who meet specific developmental standards for their age¹

It is essential to determine whether kindergarten students are developmentally ready and identify gaps and barriers that inhibit all children from being prepared to learn. Currently voluntary assessments are conducted bi-annually. The team recommends Multnomah County partner with the school districts to make it an annual mandatory measure for all schools.

Source: Oregon Dept of Education

Multnomah County Kindergarten Students
Meeting Readiness Dimensions



¹ The 2006 Readiness to Learn survey is currently underway, making 2004 the most current year. ODE makes the following cautions about use of this measure: "Comparable groups of children are needed to make a claim about the percent increase in children meeting all Developmental Dimensions over time... The survey results give a point-in-time picture of children attending Kindergarten. Cautious commentary should be used when making statements about progress from one survey to another."

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2. Percentage of students at 3rd, 5th, 8th, and 10th grade that meet or exceed standards on state assessments (reading and math)

Currently students are tested at grades 3, 5, 8 and 10. These tests are used to determine individual students' mastery of a specific subject. These results are also used to benchmark a school's performance.

Reading Standards

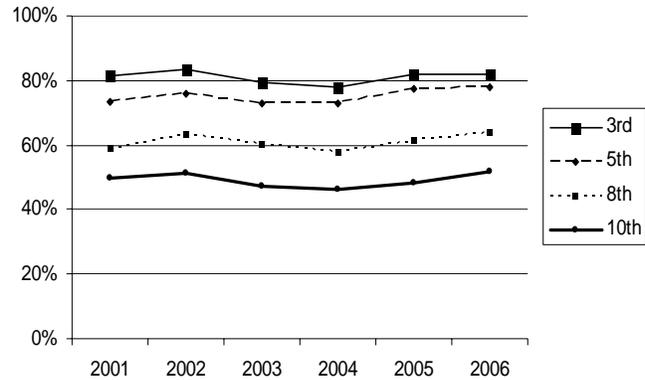
Over the past six years, the percent of Multnomah County students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 who meet standards in reading has vacillated. In 2006, the percent of students meeting standards in 8th and 10th grade was up, while other grades were level.

Math Standards

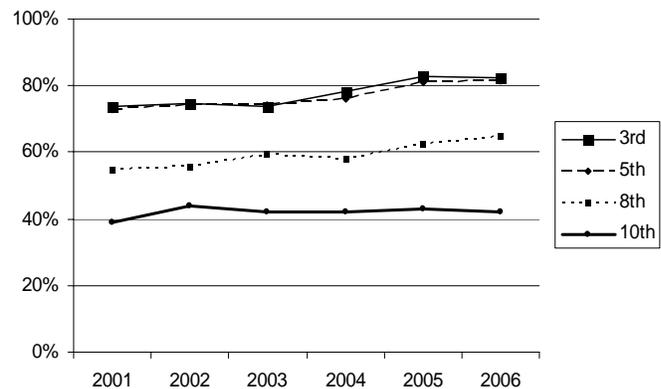
Multnomah County 3rd and 5th grade scores are roughly the same, so distinct trend lines are not able to be seen in the chart. The percent of students meeting standards was up in 8th grade and level in all other grades.

Source: Oregon Department of Education

3rd, 5th, 8th, and 10th Grade Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards in Reading (Countywide)



3rd, 5th, 8th, and 10th Grade Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards in Math (Countywide)



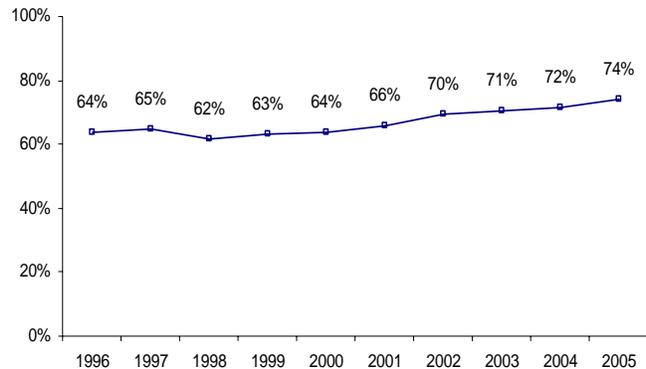
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3. Four-Year Graduation Rate

The graduation rate is a formula (number of graduates divided by the number of graduates plus number of drop-outs) which counts all of the kids who graduate from the 12th grade or who get their GED; however the number of kids who have dropped out before reaching the 12th grade reduces the completion rate. The team believes this is the best measure for reporting school retention and student completion. The traditional 12th grade graduation rate only reports those kids who started and completed 12th grade. It does not capture the drop out rate occurring before a student enters 12th grade. The data for Oregon continues to show that the highest number of students drop out between 9th and 10th grade.

The graduation rate in Multnomah County increased 13% over the past five years, 17% over the last ten years.

**High School Graduation Rate
All Multnomah County School Districts**



Source: Oregon Dept of Education

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III. Map of key factors – “Cause-effect map of factors that influence / produce the result”

I want all children in Multnomah County to succeed in school

- As Measured by the Following Indicators:**
1. Percentage of entering kindergarten students who meet specific developmental standards for their age.
 2. Percentage of students at 3rd, 5th, 8th, and 10th grade that meet or exceed standards on state assessments.
 3. Synthetic Four-Year Graduation Rate.

+ Ensuring & Developing Success in School Completion (4th Factor)

H i g h

- *Broad range of learning opportunities (i.e. journalism, art, drama, sports, **vocational and technical training**)
- *Caring, committed staff
- ***Student commitment** (responsible and motivated)

M e d i u m

- *Community involvement (Business, Non-profits, Government, Faith Communities)
- *Advanced learning opportunities
- *Extracurricular activities
- *Schools that allow for parental input, involvement and investment

L o w

- *Access to information

+ Basic Education "The Three R's" (3rd Factor)

H i g h

- *Leadership/Principal
- *Competent Teachers
- *Diverse classrooms

M e d i u m

- *Rigorous and relevant curriculum
- *Buildings, books, and teaching materials
- *Safe school environment

L o w

- *Reasonable classroom size
- *Teachers reflective of population

- Gaps and Barriers (2nd Factor)

H i g h

- *Student and Family Mobility
- *Addictions
- *Disability
- *Presence of Criminal Activity at home

M e d i u m

- *Parental Literacy
- *Teen Parenting
- *Students who have dropped out

L o w

- *Transportation
- *Poor Coordination Between Schools & Social Service Systems
- ***Poor Tracking & Analysis of Students Between School Districts**

+ Prepared to Learn at All Ages (1st Factor)

H i g h

- *Basic Needs
- *Food, stable housing, clothing
- ***Physical Health**
- ***Mental Health** (social & emotional well being)

L o w

- *Language & Literacy
- *Cognition & Learning Approach

H i g h

L o w

***Ready Parents/Caregivers**

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The Education map illustrates the most important factors that result in “all children in Multnomah County succeeding in school.” All three policy frameworks adopted by the Board of County Commissioners are strongly supported through this factor map. The Early Childhood Framework supports the priority placed on the first and second factors and provides additional successful strategies to meet the needs of children and their families. Once children enter school, the School Age Policy Framework further describes strategies for school-based and school linked service approaches to address many of the factors identified here. Finally, the Poverty Elimination Framework is underscored in all of the factors identified.

Factor 1: Prepared to Learn at All Ages

Experts and research agree that preparing children to learn is the most crucial factor in the success of all students in Multnomah County. A child’s readiness to learn is multi-dimensional and the importance of the causal factors change based on the age of the student. However, one factor, “ready parents (caregivers),” is ranked high throughout the student’s school experience. Ready parents (caregivers) as defined in the report, “Children’s Readiness to Learn: Strategies for Improvement,” are parents who are “knowledgeable about the importance of their role in child development” and are “supported in their efforts to provide their children with responsive, consistent, and nurturing care, appropriate stimulation and safe/stable environment.”

While recognizing the importance of language and literacy, a child’s basic needs have to be addressed before he/she can focus on education. Once a child’s basic needs are met, it is imperative that the child learn to read at grade level by third grade. Research shows that it is increasingly more difficult for children to make up for lost learning after the third grade.

Factor 2: Gaps and Barriers

Gaps and barriers are those factors that negatively influence all of the other factors, impeding a child’s ability to enter school ready to learn, the student’s ability to succeed throughout his/her academic career, and the parents’ or caregivers’ ability to support their children.

Family mobility, family or student addiction, criminal activity, health problems, language barriers, and a host of other issues can be barriers that interrupt the student’s educational experience. In fact, the 2004-2005 School Year Report produced by the School Efficiency and Quality Advisory Council reports that Limited English Proficiency, Poverty, and Mobility are three significant factors that affect student achievement. As a result, families, schools, and communities must work together to support these students and address the barriers. If left unattended, these students become less likely to succeed in school.

Factor 3: Basic Education

The sub-factors within “Basic Education” are largely controlled by the school districts. Multnomah County may influence the sub-factors, but the final decision-making belongs with the districts. Despite the County’s limited influence on this

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sub-factor, it has been included in the map because it is a pivotal factor in the overall scope of academic success. Basic education provides for the three fundamentals in education: reading, writing, and arithmetic and are the identified cornerstones of all students' educational experience. When reviewing the literature and in discussions with the experts, all believed that the principal and teacher are crucial to children succeeding. In addition, most experts believed that having teachers who are committed and caring coupled with the ability to teach subject matter to a wide range of students was more important than having a teacher who was reflective of the student population. The ability to create an individual learning experience based on the specific needs of each student is invaluable to both the success of individual students and in creating an environment that is responsive to student ability.

Over the years, research has been conducted on other factors that contribute and detract from the learning experience. The research on classroom size is inconclusive except for its importance in a child's early school experience. Reasonable classroom size is most critical for grades K – 3. Research reveals that students who are in smaller classrooms during those years fare better in larger classrooms later on in their school experience than those who were always in larger classrooms. The team ranked classroom size low as a sub-factor, but recognizes its ranking for K-3 should be high.

Factor 4: Ensuring and Developing Success in School Completion

Providing a rigorous and relevant curriculum and access to caring and committed adults is an essential factor in basic education, which overlaps into ensuring and developing successful students. Many of the factors in this area—broad academic offerings, advanced learning opportunities, extracurricular activities—are often what make school rigorous and relevant. Students also bear some responsibility for their academic success. They cannot succeed in school if they are not attending or are not fully engaged as an active participant in their learning while in school. Caring and committed teachers, staff and community members teaching, providing or supporting these programs are essential to student success. The importance of providing opportunities for students to connect and establish relationships with adults is a critical element in the student's life. In addition, youth report that having both an opportunity to contribute to the community and high expectations of them by adults is important to their success.

Assisting youth to succeed both in school and upon completion of school requires a broad range of academic offerings and advanced learning opportunities. Challenging the student throughout the academic experience reinforces the notion of success. Offering a range of classes provides the student with the opportunity to experience a wide spectrum of life and expose them to the range of possibilities that await them as they complete their high school experience.

IV. Selection Strategies and Request for Offers – *Focused choices to realize results*

The Education team had considerable discussion about each of the factors and the five strategies. We are looking for program offers that support one or more of the strategies. Departments should consider the information below when preparing their program offers.

Strategy 1: Ensure the basic needs of children are met as they relate to school success

Children who are hungry, who are unable to see the chalkboard or hear the teacher, who attend school sporadically due to unstable housing situations, must have their basic physical needs addressed in order to clear the path for school readiness and success. Likewise, there are less visible emotional and cognitive challenges within the child or the child's family which are obstacles to academic success as fundamental as an empty stomach. We feel there is a strong role for the County to play in identifying and providing services to children and their families where developmental, emotional, social, and material challenges are a barrier to school success.

We are looking for Program Offers that:

- Provide food, housing, or clothing for children whose lack of these necessities *significantly impedes their school success.*
- Identify and support children and families whose developmental, physical, or emotional challenges may limit the child's academic success.
- Mitigate the educational impacts of unstable housing by providing access to a stable school situation (e.g. transportation support, continued school attendance during periods of transition, etc).

Strategy 2: Prepare children to learn, either directly or by assisting parents and caregivers.

All children should enter school ready to learn. Lack of school readiness can be due to: low parental literacy, language and cultural barriers and reduced access to educational and stimulating cultural activities. Studies show² those who have early learning opportunities enter kindergarten prepared to do better academically. Multnomah County does not have direct control over the quality or type of instruction students experience but there is an appropriate role for the County in ensuring our most vulnerable children and their caregivers have the resources they need to set children on a path to academic success.

² Getting Smarter, Becoming Fairer, 2005

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We are looking for Program Offers that:

- Support and educate parents and caregivers in preparing children to learn and succeed in school.
- Enhance the quality of the educational and social experiences of children in childcare situations.
- Improve the ability of limited English proficiency children and their caregivers to have positive school experiences.

Strategy 3: Promote reading at grade level by third grade

According to a survey released in August 2004, commissioned by TD Waterhouse USA “a majority of respondents (51%) consider reading to be the most important skill in a child's development, more essential than listening (30%), speaking (12%), and writing (4%).

Furthermore, the lack of access to books was recognized as the leading cause of illiteracy in children by one out of five Americans (20%). In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Education, 61% of low-income families have no books in their homes for children. Additionally, over 80% of the preschool and after-school programs serving at-risk children have no books at all.”

According to the report “Educational Success for Youth,” prepared for the Portland Multnomah Progress Board and the Commission on Children, Families and Community, “...many studies have documented the impact on subsequent educational success of engaging children early in elementary school and ensuring that they can read by 3rd grade.” Among the report's eight key strategies is: “Marshal resources within and outside of schools to ensure that all children read at grade level by the third grade. If we do nothing else, the research suggests that this would be the most cost-effective investment we could make as a community in increasing educational success.”

We are looking for Program Offers that:

- Promote parent and caregiver literacy.
- Provide reading materials and outreach to caregivers and children especially those children at risk of not reading at grade level by third grade.
- Provide daily, year-round experiences and opportunities for children to participate in developmentally appropriate activities that promote reading success.
- Provide opportunities for adults, other children, or youth to mentor young readers.

Strategy 4: Promote student performance beyond the fifth grade targeting students who are performing below standards

While all of the evidence and research is clear on the importance of early childhood development and learning readiness in academic success, in Multnomah County it is also evident that children may succeed in elementary school, with a marked decline in performance once they enter middle school. The 2004-2005 School Year Report produced by the School Efficiency and Quality Advisory Council notes that the percentage of Multnomah County students who meet or exceed the reading benchmark goes from 73% at 5th grade, to 58% at 8th, and 46% at 10th. The research does not point to any one factor causing this decline for kids who were succeeding at grade level prior to middle school. However, the approach taken by the School Age Policy Framework and other educational research agree on the importance of supportive adult relationships between parent and child, and between the child and teacher, coach, staff, mentor, or other involved community member. It is essential throughout the child's academic life that they know that someone expects them to succeed and will support them in doing so. Expecting that all students want, need and have access to a rigorous curriculum is also important. Finally, the academic offerings, extracurricular activities or vocational training must be relevant to students' lives.

We are looking for Program Offers that:

- Foster supportive, enduring relationships that enhance the student's resilience and engagement in school.
- Support academic success by ensuring students' access to positive learning and social opportunities beyond the school day.
- Provide leadership opportunities that motivate students to develop and achieve their own intellectual, vocational, and personal goals as a means to academic success.

Strategy 5: Bridge the gaps and breakdown the barriers to help all youth attend, engage, and succeed in school.

We know that young people need to experience success, curiosity, and originality to succeed.³ We also know that some of the common reasons that students don't attend school are: classes were boring or irrelevant; relationships with teachers and other students were lacking; students were in trouble either in or out of school.⁴ Data shows that students involved in service-learning, hands on learning which connects academic content to real world problems through service and community involvement, outperform their counterparts. Because of events in some youths' lives- poverty, violence, drug abuse, etc- some students have dropped out and are failing in our system. To improve their opportunities, and mitigate social problems that result from youth who drop out of

³ Northwest Regional Education Labs: Presentation on December 19th, 2006 by Bob Rayborn Director of Research and Analysis.

⁴ As reported by Amy Spring, Assistant Director Portland State University Center for Academic Success, December 12, 2006.

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school, we need to help youth finish their education. Young people themselves report that the importance of one relationship was enough to motivate them to attend school and work hard to succeed.⁵ Offers should work to engage and motivate students who are in school and re-engage youth who have dropped out of school. Specifically,

We are looking for Program Offers that:

- Promote civic engagement and academic success by providing students, supported by adults, with opportunities to create youth-driven projects that address real world concerns.
- Help students return to and graduate from high school or earn a diploma or its equivalent through alternative educational avenues.

⁵ Multnomah Youth Commission focus group held December 10, 2006.