



# MULTNOMAH COUNTY AGENDA PLACEMENT REQUEST

(Revised: 09/23/13)

## Board Clerk Use Only

Meeting Date: 11/5/13  
Agenda Item #: B.2  
Est. Start Time: 11:00 am  
Date Submitted: 10/21/13

**Agenda Title:** **Informational Board Briefing on Kindergarten Counts, an Early Childhood Community Schools Linkage Project**

*Note: Title should not be more than 2 lines but be sufficient to describe the action requested.*

**Requested Meeting Date:** November 5, 2013 **Time Needed:** 30 minutes  
**Department:** County Human Services **Division:** SUN Service System  
**Contact(s):** Peggy Samolinski  
**Phone:** 503-988-7453 **Ext.** 87453 **I/O Address:** 167/2

**Presenter Name(s) & Title(s):** **Peggy Samolinski, SUN Service System Division Director and invited guests**

## General Information

### 1. What action are you requesting from the Board?

No formal action – just to learn about the Kindergarten Counts effort of the SUN Service System.

### 2. Please provide sufficient background information for the Board and the public to understand this issue. Please note which Program Offer this action affects and how it impacts the results.

The Kindergarten Counts effort builds on the infrastructure of the SUN Community School initiative to deepen SUN's work in the area of early childhood supports. It is an effort to focus on bridging transitions between early childhood experiences and elementary school, specifically SUN Community Schools. This began as a grant funded project four years ago, and has grown into two primary strategies that have organically evolved from bringing early childhood professionals and school staff together.

First, in response to high numbers of late kindergarten registrations and the resulting challenging transitions for students and teachers, the project began a *Register by June* campaign to encourage families to register their entering kindergarteners before fall school begins. This campaign uses specially created materials in multiple languages, delivered through existing networks of connections to and relationships with parents, to spread this important message. The first year of this effort (fall 2012) resulted in a 6% reduction in September registrations.

The second effort is the *Early Kindergarten Transition* (EKT) program. This is a three-week transition program for entering kindergarteners and their parents/caregivers, who have had

little to no formal preschool experience. Portland Public Schools pioneered this project in summer 2010 and their model is the foundation for the SUN Early Kindergarten Transition program. It is led by a kindergarten teacher in the classroom and a professional parent educator for the parent sessions, and focuses on the social and emotional transition into a formal kindergarten classroom.

Portland State University is a key partner in this project, conducting a process evaluation in the summer 2012 with recommendations for program improvements that were implemented in 2013. School districts immediately embraced the value of this summer effort and have invested in expanding the number of sites offering this program; it grew from 12 SUN Schools in summer 2012 to 21 SUN Schools in summer 2013. Numerical summaries show strong participation by children and their parents/caregivers. Anecdotal information highlights the deep impacts this short program has on easing parent/caregiver concerns about their children's entering kindergarten and increasing parent involvement and leadership at schools. Finally, teachers report striking positive changes in their classrooms when more children are prepared to be in the classroom environment.

These focused projects have both built and strengthened relationships in these two sectors and have also brought in other intentional partners to the effort, such as Portland State University, Home Forward and the Library. We welcome the opportunity to share the successes of these efforts with the Board of County Commissioners.

This program is included in Program Offer 25145A, and does not impact outputs or outcomes of that offer.

**3. Explain the fiscal impact (current year and ongoing).**

None

**4. Explain any legal and/or policy issues involved.**

None

**5. Explain any citizen and/or other government participation that has or will take place.**

Kindergarten Counts has a range of partners and participants engaged in this work, including school districts, the Multnomah County Library, Head Start programs, Home Forward, early childhood providers and of course parents and children at the schools.

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**Required Signature**

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**Elected Official  
or Department/  
Agency Director:**

Kathy Tinkle for Susan Myers /s/

**Date:** 10/21/13

*Note: Please submit electronically. Insert names of your approvers followed by /s/ - we no longer use actual signatures. Please insert date approved."*