Willamette
EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT

Willamette Education Service District
Early Intervention
Early Childhood Special Education

INCLUSIVE SYSTEM ROADMAP

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A Message to the Staff and Inclusive System Partners of Willamette ESD

Common Thread Consulting's analysis of Willamette Education Service District Inclusive Practices led to the design of this roadmap, which will serve as an action plan for building bridges for system improvement and will help provide a common understanding for the roles of the WESD Early Learning Team. As WESD becomes the Regional Service Provider for Yamhill, Polk, and Marion counties, this document will help guide our team forward with clarity and system improvement.

WESD and our system partners have committed our time, talents, and resources to the Appreciative Inquiry methodology, which made this roadmap possible. This roadmap will serve as a tool to help WESD and our system partners collectively focus and develop our vision while measuring our progress against clearly defined goals. This roadmap isn't just a plan; it's a pledge to the community.

We invite staff and community partners to do a deep dive into the following sections that describe efforts to remove barriers, secure resources, and create an educational environment where every child is valued and supported, along with the potential barriers that present an opportunity for strategic intervention and thoughtful planning:

ESSENTIAL SUPPORTING CONDITIONS FOR INCLUSIVE SERVICES AND SYSTEMS

ADDRESSING AND OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO PROGRESS

We thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your commitment to providing inclusive services for Oregon's infants, toddlers, and families. We hope you find this roadmap both informative and inspiring, and we look forward to the strides that will be made in the coming year.

ABOUT WILLAMETTE EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT

At Willamette ESD, we are a multi-faceted agency with a workforce of over 450 highly skilled and caring professionals. Our agency is a student-centered organization serving a three county area including 21 Oregon school districts and more than 1400 children through Early Learning.

Willamette ESD provides approximately 61 services related to Special Education, Technology, School Improvement, and Administrative Services that school districts may purchase. We also administer numerous grants and contracts to support education in the region and across the state. These include Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education, Regional Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Provider, and Preschool Promise.

WESD is proud of our role in the education community and we strive to embody our Mission Statement: Success, Achievement, Together...for All Students. This mission statement is built on five Core Values agreed upon by WESD staff and partners. The Core Value concepts are: Equity, Excellence, Innovation, Integrity, and Partnerships.

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WESD SERVICES

EARLY INTERVENTION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION (EI/ECSE)

The Early Intervention (EI) program provides services for children from newborn to 3 years of age. The Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program provides services for children from 3 years to kindergarten age.

To qualify for services, a child must have a significant developmental delay or disability that meets Oregon eligibility criteria related to speech and language, motor, social-emotional, learning, vision, or hearing.

If a child is determined eligible to receive services, an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is developed by the family and the education team. This plan is based on the child's individual strengths, needs, and goals. Services are designed to support learning and development, and include the caregivers as important partners in the education process.

Services are at no cost to the family. Referrals for evaluations and/or services can be made by a parent, physician, preschool staff, childcare providers, nurses, family members or anyone concerned about a child's development. Visit the Oregon Department of Education Early Childhood Inclusion website for more information. See pages 34-35 for WESD processes.

PRESCHOOL PROMISE

Preschool Promise is a state-funded program that provides income-eligible families with free, high-quality preschool for their children in a variety of settings. All programs are licensed with the state of Oregon and adhere to both health and quality standards, including teacher training. Programs typically deliver 900 hours of instruction between September and June and provide nutritious meals and snacks, parent-teacher conferences, and child assessments and developmental screenings.

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

The Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion Prevention Program (ECSEPP) has two main goals: To reduce the use of suspension and expulsion in early learning and care programs, and to reduce disparities in the use of suspension and expulsion in early learning and care programs.

One of the strategies to prevent and reduce disparities in the use of suspension and expulsion is implementing culturally responsive, equity-centered Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) across Oregon. WESD EI.ECSE is the lead agency program for Marion, Polk, and Yamhill Counties.

WESD'S COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

WESD's EDI Mission Statement

"We value the worth and dignity of individuals by actively pursuing equity, diversity, and inclusion for all staff, students, families, and districts of Willamette Education Service District. We strive to create a safe and respectful environment where all can thrive and be successful."

WESD'S EDI Vision

"We envision a workplace culture of belonging, a workplace where equity, diversity, and inclusion are an expectation, a responsibility, and a practice of all individuals at Willamette ESD."

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APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

In the development of this Roadmap, the principle of Appreciative Inquiry serves as a foundational framework guiding the collective efforts of WESD EI/ECSE and our system partners and their system partners. Our approach focuses on the "Positive Core" of EI/ECSE, encompassing the strengths, values, and successes that have made WESD a top-rated district in the state. By zeroing in on this Positive Core, the roadmap aims to amplify what has worked well for us at WESD in the past.

This isn't just a feel-good strategy; it's a catalyst for meaningful, actionable progress. By concentrating on organizational strengths—such as EI/ECSE's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging; our ongoing work in community engagement; and our emphasis on quality assurance—we can generate a forward momentum that will engage stakeholders, inspire our team, and lay the foundation for the future successes envisioned in our priorities.

To fully comprehend how Appreciative Inquiry informs EI/ECSE's 2024 Roadmap, it's essential to understand its four iterative stages, commonly known as the "4-D Cycle": Discover, Dream, Design, and Destiny.

DISCOVER

The key aim of the Discovery Phase is to appreciate the best of 'what is' in terms of the topic under investigation, by recollecting times of excellence – times when people have had a sense of being really effective, engaged and productive.

DREAM

During the Dream Stage, participants are invited to envision an ideal future, in which the organization was organized around its strengths and aspirations, and the exceptional experiences and life-giving energies uncovered in the Discovery phase became the norm rather than the exception.

DESIGN

This stage is about collectively designing the organizational structures and 'social architecture' that need to be in place to enable the Dream to happen. It is more about the structures and communication flows which support action and make it possible, than about specific actions.

DESTINY

The Destiny Stage involves detailed planning and forming teams to carry forward the actions identified in the Design Stage. This phase celebrates the learnings accomplished and puts it all into action with a focus on quality assurance, performance improvement, and ongoing engagement of partners on progress.

APPRECIATIVE INTERVIEWS

As WESD EI/ECSE strives to actively pursue equity, diversity, and inclusion for all staff, students, families, and districts in the Willamette Education Service District (WESD), the role of staff and partner input is key. To this end, a comprehensive series of Appreciative Interviews was conducted to understand the depth, breadth, and nuances of the current landscape. These interviews, aimed at drawing a complete picture of the challenges, opportunities, knowledge, spirit, and aspirations of WESD EI/ECSE staff and stakeholders, serve as a testament to EI/ECSE's commitment to fostering a collaborative and informed approach.

Thanks to the insights gathered from 10 Appreciative Interviews with WESD Early Learning staff and 14 interviews with EI/ECSE partners, EI/ECSE has a strong start on its comprehensive Inclusive Services Roadmap. The following are summaries of their answers, which highlight areas of overlap between EI/ECSE staff and community partners, as well as key differences in their perspectives. The synthesis of these interviews underscores the shared commitment to promoting inclusive education, and highlights the importance of collaboration, innovation, and strategic planning to realize this vision.

The insights gathered from the Appreciative Interviews helped shape the development of the 2024 Roadmap, and provide a foundation upon which EI/ECSE's future initiatives will be anchored. This roadmap will delineate the path forward, outlining actionable steps and the outcomes associated with those steps, in tune with community aspirations. With the collective wisdom gathered and strategic tools ready, EI/ECSE stands on the precipice of a transformative journey, aiming for a brighter future in supporting Oregon's young children, their families, and EI/ECSE professionals in Polk, Marion, and Yamhill Counties.

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Appreciative Interview Questions

QUESTION 1
EMBEDDED KNOWLEDGE

> **What do you see as inclusive services?**

Key Callouts

- **Equity and Access:** Ensure all children, regardless of their unique needs and backgrounds, have equitable access to diverse services.
- **Individualized Support:** When all individuals working with children understand and implement the inclusion-promoting principles of Universal Design for all children, we can quickly identify which children need individualized support.
- **Comprehensive Support:** Provide robust support for marginalized groups and children facing social-emotional challenges, ensuring all children get the supports they need to make progress.
- **Collaborative Spirit:** Foster a collaborative environment involving families, community partners, and educators to support children's development collectively.
- **Adaptable Services:** Make services adaptable and accessible to all children, overcoming geographical, socioeconomic, and cultural barriers.
- **Strategic Implementation:** Emphasize the importance of ongoing professional development, seamless adjustments, and logistical planning to empower advocates and implementers.
- **Unified Communication:** Enhance communication and collaboration across all levels to ensure cohesive and integrated support systems.
- **Awareness and Education:** Promote community awareness and education to shift societal attitudes and support an inclusive environment.

In the journey toward inclusive services within the Willamette Education Service District (WESD), the collective insights from Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) staff and community partners converge to form a cohesive understanding of what inclusivity entails. This unified narrative draws upon shared principles and practices essential for creating an environment where every child can thrive.

These descriptions of inclusivity center on equity, access, and advocating for services that ensure all children can reach their potential. This approach addresses diverse needs, encompassing disabilities, social/emotional needs, and racial equity, highlighting the commitment to serving every child according to their unique circumstances.

Service delivery contexts are envisioned to be as accessible as possible, ensuring that geographical, socioeconomic, and cultural barriers do not impede access to necessary services. Interviewees described the importance of providing services to children in ways that are both individualized and flexible. This approach allows providers to practice the principles of Universal Design for Learning and then tailor their services to the unique needs of each child as needed. This adaptability and personalization ensures that children can learn in truly inclusive settings and get access to services that meet them where they are.

Recognizing the importance of supporting marginalized groups and children with challenging behaviors, interviewees universally acknowledged the need for comprehensive support strategies. These strategies aim to provide an inclusive atmosphere that addresses the broad spectrum of social-emotional challenges, ensuring that inclusivity isn't merely an ideal but a practical reality.

Families and communities play a key role in creating an inclusive environment. Through collaborative efforts, the shared goal is to build a support system that encompasses not only the child but also those who are integral to their development and well-being. This collaborative spirit extends to the creation of strategies that embrace the input and active participation of families and community partners, encouraging a sense of belonging and collective responsibility.

Interviewees described several key areas for promoting a strategic implementation of services, including ongoing professional development, logistical planning, and a commitment to seamless service adjustments. This strategic approach is aimed at empowering families, educators, and service providers to advocate for and implement practices that truly meet the needs of all children.

Communication and teamwork stand out as vital aspects of delivering effective services. By meticulously planning and coordinating activities, the aim is to synchronize efforts across different environments, leading to a more unified and streamlined approach to inclusivity.

Moreover, the importance of raising awareness and providing education is a key factor in shifting societal attitudes and breaking down stereotypes. Through targeted community awareness campaigns, the objective is to cultivate an environment where inclusivity isn't just acknowledged but deeply woven into the community's culture.

This unified set of learnings and recommendations presents a collective vision for an inclusive system that is responsive, adaptable, and committed to meeting the diverse needs of all children within the WESD EI/ECSE. Through coordinated efforts and shared commitment, the roadmap lays the foundation for a future where every child is valued, supported, and empowered to succeed.

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QUESTION 2
PRODUCT STRENGTH

What is it about your organization's services that contributes to inclusive services for children?

Key Callouts

- **Unified Community Support:** EI/ECSE seeks to be a beacon of inclusion, supporting a wide range of educational programs for children across three counties.
- **Educational Innovation and Flexibility:** Through a blend of specialized and general education strategies, EI/ECSE champions a flexible, supportive approach to meet the unique needs of every learner.
- **Collaboration and Empowerment:** Emphasizing strong team dynamics and multidisciplinary collaborations, EI/ECSE fosters an environment where educators, families, and community partners are empowered to contribute to the inclusivity process.
- **Comprehensive Support Systems:** From mental health interventions to individualized educational plans, EI/ECSE's strategies are designed to support the whole child, addressing both immediate and long-term needs.
- **Proactive and Creative Solutions:** Navigating challenges with creativity and foresight, EI/ECSE actively seeks opportunities to expand services and tailor solutions to enhance inclusivity and address educational challenges.

Within the Willamette Education Service District (WESD), the drive towards inclusive services for children is marked by a comprehensive approach that balances primary community support, educational focus, flexibility, and collaborative innovation. EI/ECSE distinguishes itself as a key supporter of inclusive services, offering a guiding hand to general education preschool programs across three counties and spearheading Preschool Promise programs. This dedication extends to children who may have been marginalized by other programs, emphasizing EI/ECSE's commitment to keeping every child engaged in care.

The organization's capacity to blend educational services with collaborative support from various agencies underscores its strategic approach to inclusion. By bridging the gap between special education and the general education environment, EI/ECSE embodies a long-term vision of inclusive education that is both dynamic and responsive to the needs of the community it serves.

A hallmark of EI/ECSE's service model is its flexible and supportive approach, viewing challenges through a special education lens while advocating for solutions that enable individuals to thrive. This perspective is not just about adaptation, but also about validating the efforts of educators and providing tangible steps towards improvement, helping create a supportive and innovative environment.

The proactive expansion of services, particularly through collaborations such as with the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, showcases EI/ECSE's foresight in addressing critical gaps in mental health support. This forward-thinking approach is complemented by an active search for grants to bolster service offerings, ensuring that the needs of the community are met quickly and effectively.

Team dynamics within EI/ECSE are characterized by strong communication, flexibility, and a collaborative spirit, which significantly enhances the experience of community sites. While we gather strength from our effective internal communication and culture of support, we also strive for successful communication with our community partners. This requires the management of community partners' perceptions and expectations for EI/ECSE to act as both a collaborative ally and a problem-solving resource. Such dynamics underscore the complexities of implementing inclusive services across diverse settings.

In navigating the challenges of specialized preschool options and addressing teacher burnout, EI/ECSE demonstrates a commitment to balancing policies with creativity. This is evident in our organization's efforts to run parallel programs for general and special education, thereby showing adaptability to diverse educational needs. The emphasis on continuous training and the provision of adult learning opportunities demonstrate a deep understanding of the demands placed on teachers and the necessity for supportive systems to avoid and address burnout.

EI/ECSE aims to empower each child and the entire ecosystem surrounding them. This multi-generational approach leverages the strengths of multidisciplinary teams, fostering relationships that enhance service delivery and ensure a comprehensive evaluation process. The shift towards inclusive evaluations and the empowerment of our staff to make informed decisions further exemplifies our organization's dedication to creating a supportive, inclusive environment.

By offering varied pathways for teacher training and emphasizing Universal Design in Learning environments, EI/ECSE is actively preparing educators to meet the diverse needs of their students. The incorporation of mental health support, individualized support plans, and a tailored approach to inclusion reflects a deep commitment to the holistic development of every child. Moreover, the engagement in cross-sector partnerships, professional development initiatives, and community outreach efforts illustrates a concerted effort to weave inclusivity into the fabric of the community.

QUESTION 3
COLLECTIVE SPIRIT

> **How are you? Innovating or surviving? Energized or burned out?**

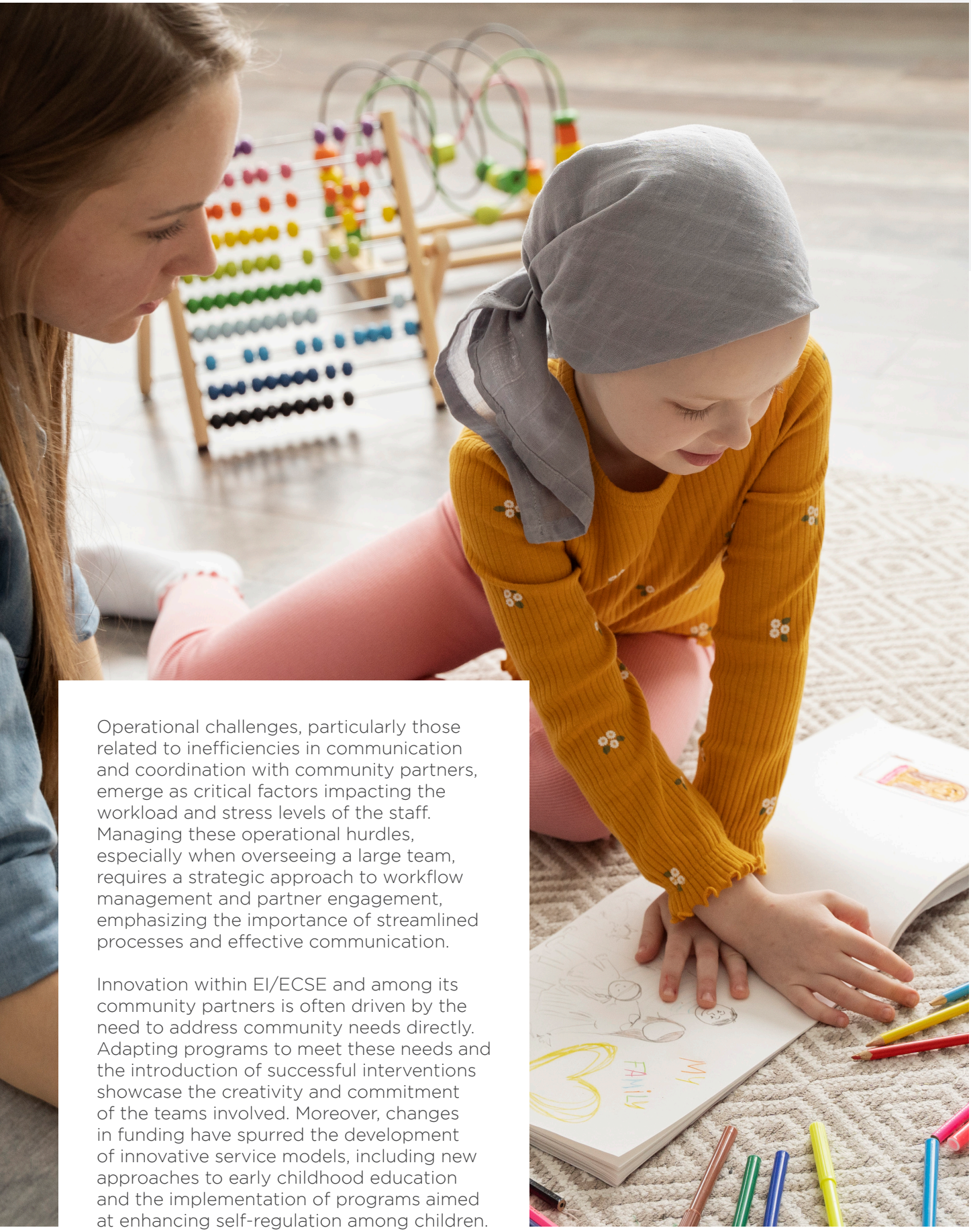
Key Callouts

- **Resilience Amid Challenges:** The collective experience of EI/ECSE staff and community partners is marked by resilience, navigating through burnout and survival mode due to increased demands and external pressures.
- **Innovation and Adaptation in the Face of Stress:** Stressful circumstances have been a significant driver of innovation, leading to the development of new strategies and approaches to serve the community more effectively.
- **The Importance of Relationships:** Building strong relationships and engaging in effective coaching are highlighted as essential elements for reenergizing the team, underscoring the value of support systems in overcoming burnout.
- **Navigating Operational Challenges:** Operational challenges, particularly in communication and coordination, require attention and strategic management to mitigate their impact on workload and stress.
- **Community-Driven Innovation:** The necessity to meet community needs directly has fueled innovation, leading to the creation of new service models and the adoption of programs designed to address specific challenges faced by children and families.

In the dynamic landscape of providing inclusive services within the EI/ECSE and among its community partners, the collective spirit is a blend of resilience, innovation, and a constant navigation between burnout and survival mode. Both EI/ECSE staff and community partners acknowledge the challenges of burnout, attributed to increased workloads, budget constraints, and the demanding nature of their roles. Despite these challenges, there's a shared acknowledgment that stress has often been a catalyst for innovation, pushing both groups to explore new approaches and strategies to overcome the hurdles faced in their mission to serve children effectively.

The impact of external factors such as budget dependencies, the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and systemic inefficiencies is universally felt, influencing work dynamics and energy levels. Within this context, our team at WESD finds itself predominantly in survival mode, grappling with the compounded effects of budget cuts and escalating needs within the community they serve. This state of affairs underscores the necessity for resilience and adaptability as staff confront the realities of their environment.

Personal and team experiences with stress and engagement exhibit significant variability, fluctuating between periods of mere survival and moments of thriving, propelled by the power of relationships and the effectiveness of coaching. These experiences highlight the vital role of interpersonal connections and the support systems in place, serving as a lifeline and source of rejuvenation amid the challenges.



Operational challenges, particularly those related to inefficiencies in communication and coordination with community partners, emerge as critical factors impacting the workload and stress levels of the staff. Managing these operational hurdles, especially when overseeing a large team, requires a strategic approach to workflow management and partner engagement, emphasizing the importance of streamlined processes and effective communication.

Innovation within EI/ECSE and among its community partners is often driven by the need to address community needs directly. Adapting programs to meet these needs and the introduction of successful interventions showcase the creativity and commitment of the teams involved. Moreover, changes in funding have spurred the development of innovative service models, including new approaches to early childhood education and the implementation of programs aimed at enhancing self-regulation among children.

QUESTION 4
STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

What are short- and long-term strategic opportunities for our region for inclusive services?

Key Callouts

- **Strengthened Collaborations:** Enhancing partnerships across stakeholders to maximize impact and efficiency in service delivery.
- **Targeted Professional Development:** Providing educators and staff with comprehensive training that is practical, applicable, and inclusive of trauma-informed approaches.
- **System and Process Efficiency:** Streamlining communication and coordination to improve service accessibility and transition.
- **Expanded Mental Health Support:** Addressing the growing need for mental health services with increased resources and clearer service differentiation.
- **Strategic Capacity Building:** Enhancing staff capabilities to meet the diverse needs of the community through focused training and support.
- **Responsive and Observational Strategies:** Adapting services to meet community needs more effectively, including through expanded classroom observation.
- **Commitment to Equity and Inclusion:** Prioritizing inclusive practices and addressing intersectionality challenges to ensure equitable support for all children.
- **Community Education and Specialist Support:** Raising community awareness and deploying specialist roles to enhance inclusive practices within educational settings.

In addressing the strategic opportunities for enhancing inclusive services in the Willamette ESD region, both EI/ECSE staff and community partners identify a range of initiatives poised to make significant impacts in the short and long term. Central to these initiatives is the enhancement of partnerships and collaboration, underscoring the collective effort required to streamline services and maximize impact without duplicating efforts. This collaborative approach extends to professional development and training, where there's a shared recognition of the need for educators and staff to receive comprehensive, practical training that encompasses trauma-informed approaches and effective strategies for supporting children with diverse needs.

Streamlining systems and processes emerges as a critical area for improvement, with both groups emphasizing the importance of enhancing communication, coordination, and the seamless transition between services. This streamlined approach is seen as essential for responding more effectively to the needs of the community and ensuring that services are both accessible and efficient.

The growing demand for behavioral and mental health support reflects a broader trend within the region, highlighting the need for a significant increase in resources and a clear differentiation between special education and mental health services. This differentiation is crucial for addressing the comprehensive needs of children and ensuring they receive the appropriate support.

Strategic partnerships are prioritized, focusing on strengthening existing relationships and fostering new collaborations that align with the overarching goal of enhancing inclusive services. This strategic focus is coupled with an emphasis on capacity building, recognizing the limitations in current capabilities and the need to prioritize efforts that enhance staff skills and knowledge through targeted training, coaching, and support.

Responsive services and observation are identified as key strategies for meeting community and partner needs more effectively. Expanding classroom observation opportunities will be a vital component of this approach, enabling a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities within educational settings.

EI/ECSE centers equity and inclusivity as essential principles guiding all strategic plans, with a special focus on addressing the intersecting challenges faced by children and their families, including living in rural areas, experiencing poverty, and living with disabilities. This commitment to equity and inclusion underpins both short-term and long-term goals, which range from addressing service lag and expanding after-school programs to broadening eligibility criteria for support and advocating for increased funding.

Community education is emphasized as a crucial strategy for raising awareness about developmental milestones and inclusive practices. This approach aims to empower the broader community with the knowledge and resources needed to support children with special needs effectively.

Specialist support, particularly through roles such as Community Consultants, is identified as a critical strategy for enhancing classroom practices and addressing challenging behaviors. These specialists are envisioned as key players in the effort to implement inclusive practices and ensure that all children receive the support they need to thrive.

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QUESTION 2
VISIONS OF POSSIBILITY

> **What would a truly inclusive system that serves all children look, sound and feel like?**

Key Callouts

- **Celebration of Diversity:** Embracing and valuing the unique contributions of each child and family as foundational to inclusivity.
- **Unified Commitment to Inclusion:** Strengthening collaborative efforts among all stakeholders to support children with diverse needs effectively.
- **Barrier-Free Access to Services:** Ensuring all essential services are accessible and responsive to facilitate timely interventions.
- **Empowerment of Caregivers:** Enabling parents to actively advocate for their children's needs and participate in the educational process.
- **Focus on Educator Support:** Prioritizing continuous professional development and support to foster a positive learning environment.

- **Early and Organized Intervention:** Implementing early intervention strategies and organizing a seamless continuum of care from early stages.
- **Organizational Support:** Securing buy-in and resources from organizations for the breadth of services needed for true inclusivity.
- **Awareness and Outreach:** Conducting active campaigns to inform and empower caregivers about available support and developmental milestones.
- **Nonjudgmental and Safe Environment:** Creating spaces where differences are celebrated, and inclusion is practiced without fear of exclusion.
- **Systemic and Sustained Support:** Committing to long-term funding and skilled workforce to ensure the system's enduring success and impact.

Envisioning a truly inclusive system that serves all children involves a variety of principles and actions, deeply rooted in the collective insights of WESD staff and community partners. At our core, such a system values diversity and individual needs, ensuring that every child and family's unique contributions are respected and celebrated. This foundational principle is accompanied by our steadfast commitment to inclusion and collaboration, where educators, specialists, caregivers, and community partners unite in a cohesive effort to support children with diverse needs.

Accessibility and responsiveness of services form the bedrock of this vision, with critical services such as speech and occupational therapy provided barrier-free, ensuring timely and effective interventions. EI/ECSE encourage parents to to be actively engaged in their children's educational and care processes, and aims to empower caregivers and families to advocate for their children's needs.

Our system also places a high emphasis on teacher support and training, acknowledging the essential role of continuous professional development in creating a positive, enriching learning environment and in preventing educator burnout. This commitment extends to early intervention strategies, advocating for support to begin as early as during pregnancy and calling for a more systematically organized continuum of care from early intervention to universal preschool.

Organizational buy-in and the allocation of necessary resources are critical to the successful implementation of inclusive programs. This includes the adoption of a broad continuum of services to meet the wide range of children's needs. Awareness and outreach efforts through active campaigns about developmental milestones and support services will be a key element of EI/ECSE's approach, which will aim to equip caregivers with the knowledge to proactively seek assistance.

A truly inclusive system is characterized by a nonjudgmental environment where every child's differences are celebrated, and the fear of exclusion is eradicated. Such an environment fosters a sense of safety and belonging, crucial for the holistic development of every child.

Finally, systemic support and a commitment to long-term financial investment will help ensure the sustainability of this vision. A well-funded system equipped with a skilled workforce promises enduring support and resources for families and children, securing their success well into the future.

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PRIORITIES

The WESD EI/ECSE Early Learning Team delved into the Appreciative Interview summaries to determine their top priorities for moving forward with their Roadmap. What follows are their "Roots" (actions to be taken), along with the "Fruits" (describing the outcome of these actions). The term "driven" identifies who has the locus of control.

PRIORITY 1
COMMUNITY INCREASES ITS CAPACITY

These initiatives (Roots) aim to strengthen educational systems by improving support structures and fostering self-sufficiency. Rooted in practices such as evaluation, support enhancement, and resource accessibility, they promote leadership development and organizational autonomy. The outcomes (Fruits) include skilled staff, inclusive mindsets, healthier work environments, reduced reliance on external support, and innovative educational approaches.

ROOTS

WESD EI/ECSE-driven:

- Cultivate trusted relationships between community agencies and EI/ECSE
- Enhance systemic support for teachers and staff
- Secure funding and increase capacity
- Identify internal strengths and talent
- Implement trainings for knowledge and skill development
- Ensure effective allocation and utilization of supports
- Implement internal coaching
- Utilize diverse trainers
- Facilitate systemic change in support and training

Partner-driven:

- Organizations conduct evaluations of their practices
- Improve access to external resources
- Foster autonomy from EI/ECSE
- Promote leader understanding and prioritization of self-care
- Facilitate systemic change in support and training

FRUITS

- Decreased reliance on EI/ECSE, showcasing enhanced independence and self-sufficiency
- Remarkably skilled and proficient staff, equipped with cutting-edge expertise
- Empowered and invigorated staff members who effectively maintain regulatory standards
- A collective mindset where every child is embraced as part of our community, fostering a culture of inclusivity
- Reduced instances of emotional and mental crises among staff members, indicating a healthier and more supportive work environment
- A paradigm shift in learning methodologies, encouraging innovative and transformative approaches to education

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PRIORITY 2
CLARIFICATION OF EI/ECSE ROLES AND SCOPE

Rooted in a deep understanding of legal obligations and a commitment to inclusive practices, the initiatives aim to streamline service processes and clarify roles within the educational landscape. Through collaboration with diverse partners and a focus on transparency, they seek to enhance support structures and promote holistic child development beyond special education. Training and communication strategies are employed to foster humility and evidence-based practices, addressing historical challenges and promoting clarity in procedures. The fruits of these efforts manifest in a harmonious system where collaboration thrives, parents feel empowered and supported, and stakeholders experience increased efficiency and innovation. Through shared understanding and alignment, the initiatives cultivate a culture of ownership, independence, and transformative change, ultimately benefiting every child in the educational environment.

ROOTS

WESD EI/ECSE-driven:

- Visual representation of the roles of staff, partners, parents, and funders to navigate the service process
- Clarified expectations of actual EI/ECSE responsibilities for providers and recipients of services to establish boundaries and provide historical context
- Promote acceptance of EI/ECSE limitations and fostering humility
- Collaborate with community providers for comprehensive planning
- Meet with partners to ensure clear communication
- Train medical providers
- Enhance partners' and families' understanding of child development
- Address the weaponization of ignorance and prioritizing evidence-based practices
- Ensure clarity on processes and procedures

Partner-driven:

- Understanding legal obligations and "least restrictive environment" for IFSP
- Emphasis on diverse pathways beyond special education (SPED)
- Clarified expectations for providers and recipients of services
- Identifying additional resources beyond EI/ECSE
- Documentation of provider processes for transparency and understanding
- Encouraging providers to understand their own roles and responsibilities

FRUITS

- A harmonious system fostering happiness and synergy
- Elimination of triangulation, promoting seamless collaboration
- Empowered and supported parents experiencing reduced stress levels
- Increased efficiency through enhanced collaboration and reduced role debates
- A culture of innovation driving transformative change
- Streamlined staff onboarding processes to ensure clarity of roles and effective communication
- Every child feels a sense of belonging in the classroom
- Diminished frustration and heightened sense of ownership among stakeholders
- Partners empowered to operate independently, reducing dependency
- Mitigation of unreasonable expectations, promoting shared understanding and alignment

PRIORITY 3
ENHANCING PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Rooted in resilience-building and a commitment to diversity, these initiatives prioritize active engagement and collaboration to foster a supportive environment within WESD and its partners. By emphasizing hands-on modeling, open communication, and empathy, they seek to establish shared roles and processes, cultivating a culture of mutual respect and inquiry. The fruits of these efforts are evident in a unified vision and enhanced safety within the educational setting. Efficiency and innovation thrive through interactive learning and collaborative alignment, benefiting the well-being and development of children. Relationships are driven by trust and enthusiastic commitment, ensuring comprehensive support for families and the community as a whole.

ROOTS

WESD EI/ECSE-driven:

- Build resilience to prevent crises for both partners and EI/ECSE
- Foster a culture of assuming good intentions and foster empathy in all interactions
- Embrace diverse perspectives
- Seek and welcome feedback from community partners
- Cultivate active listening over excessive talking
- Demonstrate genuine interest in others with open-ended questions
- Foster collaboration instead of opposition
- Create deliberate opportunities for relationship building
- Prioritize hands-on modeling and coaching over passive instruction
- Collaboratively develop systems and processes
- Establish a shared understanding of roles (listed in priority 2)

Partner-driven:

- Build resilience to prevent crises for both partners and EI/ECSE
- Embrace diverse perspectives
- Avoid making unfounded assumptions
- Collaboratively develop systems and processes
- Establish a shared understanding of roles
- Recognize the common goal of serving children's needs and redirect focus towards families and children

FRUITS

- Unified vision and goals
- Enhanced safety and learning
- Mutual respect
- Efficiency through intelligent choices
- Training and coaching with interactive learning
- Collaborative Ideas and Alignment
- Collaboration fosters a wealth of innovative ideas and collective ownership
- Cultivating trust and enthusiastic commitment across the board
- Directly benefiting the well-being and development of our children
- Ensuring the holistic needs of families, children, and the community are comprehensively met

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ESSENTIAL SUPPORTING CONDITIONS FOR INCLUSIVE SERVICES AND SYSTEMS

Creating inclusive services involves both leveraging strengths and addressing potential barriers. Research into national best practices reveals that inclusive services thrive under certain supporting conditions, but also face common challenges. The following section discusses the essential supporting conditions, anticipated barriers, and strategies for early detection of needs and effective management.

Although WESD and EI/ECSE staff can influence many important aspects of promoting inclusivity, creating a fully inclusive system that serves all children is a collective endeavor. It demands the engagement of community partners, the support of policy makers, and the backing of legislative efforts to remove barriers, secure resources, and create an educational environment where every child, regardless of their needs, is valued and supported. This narrative underscores the interconnectedness of internal actions and external collaborations in paving the way for inclusive services that truly make a difference in the lives of children and their families.

Comprehensive Training and Professional Development

Ongoing, high-quality training for all staff on inclusive practices, cultural competency, and specific needs such as trauma-informed care. WESD and EI/ECSE staff have direct control over the professional growth opportunities provided to their educators and support staff. By prioritizing and investing in ongoing, high-quality training focused on inclusive practices, cultural competency, and specific methodologies such as trauma-informed care, they lay the groundwork for a skilled workforce capable of addressing diverse needs.

Strong Leadership and Commitment

Leaders who prioritize inclusion and are committed to the long-term success of inclusive services. Leadership within WESD and among EI/ECSE teams is crucial for championing the cause of inclusivity. By modeling commitment to inclusive practices and advocating for these values within their organizations, leaders can foster an environment where inclusion is not just a policy, but a core aspect of our organizational culture.

Collaborative Partnerships

Strong relationships between schools, families, community organizations, and service providers to support a holistic approach to inclusion. While WESD and EI/ECSE staff can initiate and nurture partnerships, the full potential of collaborative efforts to support inclusion across educational, healthcare, and social services systems requires active engagement from all parties. Building strong relationships with families, community organizations, and service providers enhances the holistic support network necessary for truly inclusive services.

Adequate Funding and Resources

Sufficient resources to support specialized staff, necessary accommodations, and ongoing program development. Ensuring that inclusive programs are well-funded and resourced often extends beyond the direct control of WESD and EI/ECSE staff. This is where collaboration with community partners, advocacy at the state level, and engagement with the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), Department of Early Learning and Care "DELC), and legislative bodies become critical. Advocating for increased funding and resources at these levels can help secure the financial support needed for specialized staff, accommodations, and program development.

Policy and Legislative Support

Clear policies and regulations that support inclusion and provide frameworks for implementation. The development and enforcement of clear policies and regulations supporting inclusion are essential for creating a sustainable framework for inclusive services. This requires concerted efforts to influence policy development and legislative actions, requirement engagement with the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and lawmakers to advocate for regulations that facilitate, rather than hinder, inclusivity.

Community Engagement and Awareness

Efforts to raise awareness and foster a positive community attitude towards inclusion. Raising awareness and fostering a positive community attitude towards inclusion transcends the boundaries of WESD and EI/ECSE staff capabilities alone. It involves a concerted effort with community partners, local media, and advocacy groups to highlight the value of inclusivity, share success stories, and educate the public on the importance of supporting every child's educational journey.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Use of data to inform practices, identify needs, and measure progress towards inclusion goals. Utilizing data to inform and adjust practices is well within the domain of WESD and EI/ECSE staff. This involves collecting, analyzing, and acting on data related to program effectiveness, student outcomes, and community needs to ensure that services are responsive and impactful.

ADDRESSING AND OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO PROGRESS

To establish truly inclusive services within the Willamette Education Service District (WESD) and its Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) programs, several anticipated barriers emerge as critical challenges to be navigated. These barriers, while diverse in nature, present an opportunity for strategic intervention and thoughtful planning. Addressing them requires not only a deep understanding of each obstacle but also a clear delineation of responsibilities and a commitment to monitoring progress and potential deviations from set goals.

Resistance

The journey toward inclusivity often meets resistance, primarily due to discomfort with change or a lack of understanding of its benefits. Leadership within WESD and EI/ECSE plays a pivotal role in navigating this resistance, employing change management practices that emphasize the value of inclusive services and actively involve all stakeholders in the transformative process.

Signs of Progress: As this resistance begins to wane, evidenced by a growing openness to new ideas and increased engagement, we approach our inclusivity goals.

Signs of Stagnation: Use of language such as “not our kids” or “your kids” while referring to special education/behavioral students serves as a sign for further intervention.

Funding

Funding, dependent on federal and state, stands as a formidable barrier, constraining our ability to expand services, invest in professional development, or hire specialized staff. Our strategy pivots towards identifying alternative funding sources, including grants and partnerships with local businesses while also advocating for increased government support.

Signs of Progress: Signs of progress include successful grant acquisitions and diversified funding streams, changes to the state funding model, and increases in federal funding.

Signs of Stagnation: Recurring budget cuts or layoffs signals an urgent need for a reevaluation of funding strategies.

Professional development

Professional development is another area where WESD EI/ECSE and partners can provide their staff the time and opportunity to reinforce the value and the implementation of training. By leveraging online platforms for cost-effective training and partnering with academic institutions for development opportunities, we aim to equip our staff with authentic coaching, while recognizing the significant cost to do so.

Signs of Progress: Positive feedback on training quality and a reduction in knowledge gaps will indicate forward momentum, reduction in need to repeat the same training year after year.

Signs of Stagnation: Reluctance to embrace new strategies may indicate insufficient training initiatives.

Community support and awareness

Community support and awareness are paramount for the success of inclusive services. Initiatives, mainly driven by Hubs, to enhance community engagement, such as awareness campaigns and forums, are essential for all partners to work together on.

Signs of Progress: Increased community involvement and positive media portrayals mark success

Signs of Stagnation: Negative language when speaking about children with disabilities shows areas needing more focused attention.

Policy support and legislative frameworks

The landscape of federal and state policy support and legislative frameworks significantly influences our ability to implement inclusive practices. Engaging with policymakers and collaborating with legal experts are strategies that will help create a supportive legislative environment.

Signs of Progress: Progress is marked by policy changes and increased policymaker engagement

Signs of Stagnation: Legislative setbacks serving as cautionary indicators of the need for intensified advocacy efforts.

Collaboration

Collaboration among stakeholders is crucial, yet challenges in alignment and communication can impede progress. By establishing clear communication channels and holding regular, productive meetings, we strive for a cohesive approach to inclusion.

Signs of Progress: Successful joint initiatives indicate effective collaboration

Signs of Stagnation: Conflicts among partners signal a need for improved coordination.

Inclusion

The adaptation of existing structures to support inclusion requires thoughtful planning and investment among all partners. Conducting organizational assessments to identify necessary changes and developing phased implementation plans are steps towards creating environments that support inclusivity.

Signs of Progress: Feedback on the effectiveness of these environments serves as a gauge of success

Signs of Stagnation: Resistance to change underscores the ongoing challenges of physical adaptation.

Staff burnout and turnover

Staff burnout and turnover represent significant barriers to sustaining inclusive services. Under impacts from state funding, WESD EI/ECSE and partners can help by implementing wellness programs and recognizing staff contributions are strategies that help create a supportive work culture.

Signs of Progress: A decrease in turnover rates and positive well-being surveys signal progress

Signs of Stagnation: Rising absenteeism and workload complaints highlight areas of concern.

In navigating these barriers, the combined efforts of WESD and EI/ECSE staff, alongside community partners and legislative bodies, are indispensable. By assigning clear responsibilities, employing strategic interventions, and vigilantly monitoring indicators of progress and warning signs, we forge a path toward a more inclusive and supportive educational environment for all children.

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RECOGNITION OF CONTRIBUTORS

Willamette Education Service District Early Learning Team

Listed in order of interview date

Tonya Coker
Executive Director

Amanda Motley
Behavior Support

Tara Neu
Behavior Support

Darcy Gadach
Community Consultant Support

Cendi Sandoval
Early Learning Support Specialist

Brittany McMurray
Services Coordinator for Yamhill County

Peggy Anderson
Early Learning Support Specialist

Angie Carroll
Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Liz Vaughn
Services Coordinator for Marion County

Kendra McGahue
Services Coordinator for Marion/Polk Counties

Yadira Medina
Administrative Assistant

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WESD Community Partners

Listed in order of Interview Date

Cody Haupert
A Family Place, TECP Supervisor

Lisa Harnisch
Marion Polk Early Learning Hub, Ex. Director

Jenn Laine
Yamhill CCO ELH, Director

Robin Stoeber
Salem Keizer School District, Student Services Coordinator

Star Weatherall
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Education and Inclusion Coordinator

Carolin VanOrden
Salem Child Development Center (SCDC), Executive Director

Kourtney Ferrua
McMinnville School District, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

Jenna Sanders
CCRR -Marion, Polk, Yamhill, Program Director

Mariana Guerrero
Family Building Blocks, Health & Disability Services Coordinator

Stephanie Whetzel
Salem Keizer Preschools, Director

Eva Pignotti
MWVCAA, Chief Program Officer

Stacey Eli
MWVCAA, Associate Director

Mindy Larson
Linfield University, Professor

Suey Linzmeier
Head Start of Yamhill County, Executive Director

All Counties Marion and Polk Counties Yamhill County

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APPENDIX

To establish truly inclusive services within Willamette Education Service District (WESD) and our Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) programs, several anticipated barriers emerge as critical challenges to be navigated. These barriers, while diverse in nature, present an opportunity for strategic intervention and thoughtful planning. Addressing them requires not only a deep understanding of each obstacle but also a clear delineation of responsibilities and a commitment to monitoring progress and potential deviations from set goals. Pages 34-35 show Education Service District processes and services that are required by the Oregon Department of Education and that WESD EI/ECSE is funded by local school districts to provide, along with additional services that depend on caseloads and budget capacity.

EI/ECSE TEAM ROLES FOR CHILDREN WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

Community Consultant

- Maintains their role as the key contact and service coordinator throughout the support process and will work with the Behavior Specialist through all steps of the process.
- Schedule any necessary meetings, and complete/file any necessary paperwork that may result throughout the process.
- Be fully involved in implementation/ modeling/monitoring of any plans of support (Skill Plans, Behavior Support Plans).
- Collaborate and communicate to support the development of the child and classroom skills.
- Continue to follow-up with the teaching team on strategies from plans once coaching is discontinued.
- Continue to provide services as identified on IFSP, addressing all goal areas and accommodations, which may include support from other specialists such as OT, SLP, PT, ASD Specialist, or school psychologist.
- Ensures any materials/tools needed to implement accommodations are present and accessible
- Tracks community partner implementation of skill plan
- Continue to follow-up with teaching team once coaching is discontinued

Behavioral Support Specialist

- Gathers additional information and determines need for observation
- Schedules an observation if appropriate.
- Connects with the Community Consultant to determine next steps for WESD support.

Next steps MAY include:

- Further observations
- Problem-solving on ways to support through consultation
- Supports classroom team's development of individualized crisis cycle worksheet
- Develops a skill plan, to model and coach the team.
- Supports classroom team's development of Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Support Plan (FBA/BSP) when appropriate.
- Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the skill plan
- Monitor Community Partner's understanding of their responsibilities
- Weekly check-in with coaching Instructional Assistant (IA) (& community partner if available) to troubleshoot issues

Instructional Assistant

- Ensures any materials/tools needed to implement Skill Plan are present and accessible
- Maintains expectations of the Skill Plan
- Coaches Community Teaching Team
- Takes data
- Connects promptly with Behavior Support Specialist and Community Consultant when concerns/issues/questions arise
- Participates in weekly check-ins with Behavior Support Specialist
- Coaches for a short duration and is supervised by Service Coordinator and Behavior Support Specialist.

Early Learning Support Specialists

- Organizes and deploys instructional assistants.
- Provides coaching and mentoring for instructional assistants.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Specialist

- For children who require augmentative or alternative communication only.
- AAC Specialists will provide training and coaching to classroom staff.
- Set up communication devices.
- Troubleshoots device usage.

Early Learning Social Worker

- For children in programs not already providing these services.
- Support families in accessing mental health services.
- Help the family to access resources through community partners, Oregon Health Plan (OHP), Developmental Disability (DD) services, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

COMMUNITY PARTNER ROLES

Community Partners

- The child remains the responsibility of the community partner teaching team throughout the entire duration of the skill plan.
- The classroom teacher is still the child's teacher and continues to include the child in all classroom directives and expectations.
- Ensures that everyone working in the classroom has knowledge of the strategies in the IFSP and/or Skill Plan.
- Classroom teaching team and coordinator/ supervisor participates in meeting(s).
- Community partners agree to support classroom team observation and implementation time for accommodations/ strategies.
- Implements Skill Plan Strategies & Supports.
- Attend check-ins with Behavior Support Specialist/coaching IA/service coordinator when possible.
- Responsible for providing a positive classroom environment with consistent routines and structure in alignment with licensing, preschool promise, and/or Head Start guidelines.

WESD TRAINING OPTIONS

If you're interested in any of these trainings or another topic, please reach out to your Community Consultant or Robin Stoeber, WESD Program Coordinator, at Robin.Stoeber@wesd.org.

Trainings can:

- be presented as a series or stand-alone.
- provide ORO credit, set 1
- be provided in-person (at your site) or virtually
- be presented in English or interpreted from English into Spanish

Our training sessions are designed to include self-reflection, polls, group discussion and small breakout groups (depending on training time and whether the training is in-person or virtual) to engage adult learners.

Working Together-You and the Willamette Educational Service District (WESD)

Working Together-You and the Willamette Educational Service District (WESD)

This training is an introduction into early childhood special education and how to get the most out of your working relationship with the WESD. Together we can do great things!

- Who the WESD is, what services are provided, the evaluation process
- Basics around eligibilities
- What the consultation model looks like and what the classroom team can expect from the WESD
- The difference between direct and consultation services in the classroom
- Basics around the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)
- Parts of the IFSP
- Overview of accommodations and modifications
- How to embed IFSP goals within the classroom and schedule

2 hours

Foundations-the building blocks of a strong teacher

This training covers three foundational strategies for adults to use while supporting child development. These strategies also are supportive to the adults utilizing them.

These strategies are the building blocks of a strong teacher.

Foundational strategies are:

- Reframing behavior (with adults and children)
- Discussion of the crisis cycle and learnable moments
- Discussion of co-regulation and how to utilize it in the classroom

2 hours

Accommodations are for Everyone!

In Special Education, we often talk about accommodations and modifications for children.

But what is the purpose? What are they? How are they used in a typical preschool classroom?

This training will discuss and explore four common accommodations. We will also learn about a positive behavior philosophy, introduce the purpose of accommodations, and who needs them.

Accommodations discussed are:

- How to use a variety of visual supports (daily schedule, cues, routine strips)
- Scripted stories-the purpose, how to read them and how to write them
- Stating the directions in the positive (avoiding “no” and “don’t” when giving directions)
- How to use visual timers and transitional warnings for more successful transitions

2 hours

Increase behavior strategies through teaching replacement skills, part 1.

When faced with challenging behavior, many teachers can feel overwhelmed or do not know where to start to make improvements. In this training we will discuss how to reframe challenging behaviors, learnable vs. teachable moments and how to utilize teaching time.

We will introduce six new replacement skills that can lead to a decrease in challenging behaviors.

Replacement skills discussed are:

- How to teach communication skills (asking for what the child wants, expressing feelings, asking for help, asking to join in play, asking for space, etc.)
- How to teach children to ask if they want something in another area of the classroom (instead of getting into teacher only areas)
- How to teach children to identify how their body is feeling and what helps them focus/calm.
- How to teach calming skills (such as taking deep breaths, rocks and socks, counting, etc.)
- How to develop structured activities to build peer-related social skills (taking turns, asking to play, sharing, etc.)
- How to teach children to wait (strategies to use when waiting such as singing a song, counting objects, etc.)

2 hours

Increase behavior strategies through teaching replacement skills, part 2.

This training is a continuation of Increase behavior strategies through teaching replacement skills, part 1.

We will revisit reframing challenging behaviors, learnable vs. teachable moments and how to utilize teaching time. We will introduce seven new replacement skills that can lead to a decrease in challenging behaviors.

Replacement skills discussed are:

- How to teach and practice flexibility, "graying up" a child's thinking
- How to teach child independence through using visual schedules
- How to teach appropriate ways for children to gain attention (such as using words, greeting, problem solving when communication doesn't work, etc.)
- How to teach children to request a break and/or sensory input when the child starts to become upset
- How to use visuals to teach children to identify and use problem-solving skills
- How to teach children to tolerate delay of reinforcement
- How to teach (and practice) inhibition skills in children

2 hours

Identifying Differences and Supporting Children on IFSPs

We will discuss the differences and similarities between several Special Education eligibilities (including Autism, Developmental Delay, and Other Health Impairment). We will also discuss the difference between a medical diagnosis and educational eligibility.

Our two main focuses will be:

- How to identify and teach lagging skills
- How to utilize supportive classroom strategies

We will discuss behavior and teaching strategies designed to support specific challenges that can be present under a variety of different eligibilities (instead of being diagnosis/eligibility focused).

2 hours

How to Effectively Use Tools

We will discuss and role play strategies to effectively implement frequently recommended learning tools.

The tools focused on will include:

- Visuals
- Fidgets/transition items
- First/then strips
- The solution kit (social problem-solving)
- Social script
- Breaks
- And more!

2 hours

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC): Crash Course

Individuals taking this training will gain general knowledge regarding Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). By the end of this course participants will gain an understanding of:

- Language Vs Speech
- What is AAC
- Low Tech vs Mid Tech vs High Tech AAC
- Myths Vs Facts for AAC
- Importance of Accessibility of AAC Devices
- Importance of Modeling

1.5 hours

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC): Tips for Successful Communication with A Person Who Uses AAC(PWUAAC)

Individuals taking this training will be provided with 10 tips for successful communication with a person who uses AAC(PWUACC). The tips provided have been developed by PWUAAC. The tips offer perspective and guidance for communication partners of complex communicators. This course will include:

- A review of "What is AAC"
- Why do we model AAC without expectations
- Why no hand over hand for AAC
- Communication Partner's role with AAC
- 10 tips for to be a good communication partner to children who use AAC

1.5 hours

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Implementation of AAC-When a plan comes together

Individuals taking this training will gain knowledge of how to implement AAC in a busy classroom. The training will include the discussion of an "implementation plan". As well as a discussion regarding buy-in and commitment from communication partners. Participants of this class will discover the importance of a collaborative plan vs a directive plan and how to incorporate AAC into the classroom routine. This course includes:

- A review of "What is AAC"
- A review of Modeling without expectation
- Access to pdf of implementation plans and supporting resources
- Guided walk through of implementation plans
- Why implementation plans work
- A case study to practice creating an implementation plan

2 hours

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Willamette ESD Early Intervention/ Early Childhood Special Education Referral Process

Below are the Education Service District processes and services that are required by the Oregon Department of Education and that Willamette Education Service District (WESD) Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) is funded by local school districts to provide.

FAMILIES, DOCTORS, and/or COMMUNITY PARTNERS SEND A REFERRAL TO WESD

INTAKE PROCESS

- Gather information regarding concerns
- Conduct screenings if appropriate

EVALUATION PLANNING

- Team discussion regarding concerns & evaluation needs
- Review of proposed evaluation tools & informed consent to proceed

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

- Team discussion of completed evaluation(s) results
- Review of eligibility criterion to determine if child qualifies for services

IF ELIGIBLE, DEVELOPMENT OF IFSP

- Team gathers to develop Individual Family Service Plan. Team consists of guardian, WESD service coordinator, other needed specialists, and any other individuals with educational interests, like teacher or daycare provider
- The IFSP team develops targeted goals and determines needed services within appropriate or needed developmental skill areas

IMPLEMENTATION OF IFSP

- IFSP team regularly reviews goal progress and makes adjustments to the plan as necessary
- IFSP team supports child's transition to kindergarten

TIMELINES

Ages 0-3
EARLY INTERVENTION

45 days from when EI/ECSE receives the referral (intake) to the development of the IFSP.

Ages 3-5
EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION

60 school days from consent to eligibility.
30 calendar days from eligibility to complete the IFSP.

SERVICES PROVIDED BASED ON WESD EARLY LEARNING CAPACITY

The services listed below are in addition to the required and funded services provided by Education Service Districts. The ability for Willamette ESD to provide these services is dependent on the caseloads and budget capacity of the WESD Early Learning Department. The Early Learning Department must use funding to perform required services before EI/ECSE can provide these additional services.

Generalized/pre-referral proactive supports:

- Training for Community Partners
  - Didactic skills training
  - Universal Classroom Plans (Tier 1/Tier 2)

Student/family specific supports available during the referral process:

- Parent Training
- Access to Social Worker
- Access to Behavior Team collaboration for children with intense safety concerns

Student/family specific supports following eligibility:

- All services provided during pre-referral and referral process
- Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
- Ongoing Coaching/Consultation
- Collaboration for children with intense safety concerns
  - Develop skill plan to model and coach child's team
  - Instructional Assistant-supported staff coaching (outlined by plan)

For more information visit WESD.org Early Learning

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Acronym Chart

4-D Cycle	Discover, Dream, Design, and Destiny
AAC	Augmentative and Alternative Communication
DD	Developmental Disability
ECSE	Early Childhood Special Education
EI	Early Intervention
IA	Instructional Assistant
IFSP	Individualized Family Service Plan
ISP	Individualized Service Plan
ODE	Oregon Department of Education
OHP	Oregon Health Plan
PWUAAC	Person Who Uses AAC
SPED	Special Education
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
WESD	Willamette Education Service District
SPED	Special Education

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