



Oregon Department of
**Early Learning
and Care**

Higher Education Consortia

Oregon's Early Learning Educators find success in college and beyond through Higher Education Consortia

"I received the Partners in Practice scholarship back when I was working towards my associate's degree in 2019. I now have a bachelor's degree and am applying for my own licensed in-home daycare! I am so thankful I received scholarships to help me achieve my goals."

What are Higher Education Consortia?

Consortia are a collaborative partnerships with an institution of higher education and local Child Care Resource and Referral to reduce barriers to achieving certificates and degrees in early childhood education. Other partners may include, among others, neighboring institutions of higher education, Early Learning Hubs, High Schools, and CBOs.

The work of Consortia must incorporate the following areas of support listed below from the Increasing Qualifications, Centering Equity by National Association for the Education of Young Children ([NAEYC](#)) .

Financial Supports:

Debt-free programs that address the comprehensive costs of attendance.

Workplace Supports:

Flexible, work-friendly scheduling that builds on current work assignments, reducing non-financial barriers, and practicum placements that make sense for working students.

Higher Education Supports

Career pathway and academic guidance, support for speakers of languages other than English, Articulated Teacher Preparation Pathways, credit for prior learning, cohorts and mentors.

How are Consortia successful?

Improving access, opportunities for career movement, and increasing enrollment.

"67% answered they would not be pursuing higher education without this consortia grant."

"... [The Consortia] has helped to bolster increased enrollment in the ECE program.115% increase in ECE courses 2021 to 2022 28.5% 2022 to 2023." *Columbia Gorge Community College Navigator*

"Our cohort is so large we had to move our meetings to the Douglas County ESD." *Umpqua Community College Navigator*

"I wouldn't be in the leadership role that I'm going into if it wasn't for [the PD Navigator's] support."

"[Student]...was quickly connected to the on-campus Resource Navigator to receive housing, transportation, and food services."

Improving Spanish language access

Several of the colleges have fully or partially Spanish certificate and degree options. The success of these programs and the desire of those students to continue their education has led to work partnering with universities on pathways to BAs for Spanish speaking early educators.

Improving Collaboration

The consortia have increased collaboration between not only colleges and CCR&Rs, universities and high school Career Technical Education programs; but also, within the colleges themselves. Consortia cohort meetings have offered opportunities for college staff at large to hear directly about student challenges and have led to removal of barriers in areas like enrollment, advising and tutoring, that impact the whole college, not just ECE programs.

Some consortia have also used funding to support faculty to hold their own regular CoPs, discuss how best to support individual students and observe each other's classroom practices, improving services and removing isolation, particularly for adjunct faculty.