Communities of Practice

ELM COMMON DEFINITION
A group of Early Learning practitioners who share a common concern, a set of problems, or interest in a topic and who come together to share best practices, create new knowledge, and advance early learning strategies in a collaborative, coordinated way.

TYPES OF CoP IN ELM STRUCTURE
General Communities of Practice: ELM planning efforts identified existing and nascent Communities of Practice (CoP) focused on Early Learning efforts across Multnomah County. ELM will encourage development of additional CoP as needs and/or programs evolve. There is no limit to the number of CoP affiliated with ELM, nor is there a requirement they have a particular structure or meeting schedule. All CoP members are part of the broader stakeholder group and will be invited to the quarterly Congress meetings (see Governance).

Communities of Practice with Community Accountability Council (CAC) representation
• General CoP: Established CoP with direct involvement and influence on a priority ELM strategy will be invited to have two members on the CAC. Requirements for these CoP are outlined below; further details about the selection of CoP on the CAC are outlined in the Governance section.
• Ad-Hoc CoP: The three leadership councils may create “ad-hoc” CoP to sit on the CAC, which are defined as time-limited practice groups with a defined purpose related to the early implementation phase of a priority strategy. These ad-hoc CoP may transition to General CoP if the members choose to, though continued membership on the CAC is not assured.

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE ON CAC AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2014
• Home Visiting Network:
  o Existing group
  o Currently provided staffing support through LAUNCH
  o Represent Core home visiting service including representation from:
    ▪ Multnomah County Health Department
    ▪ Non-profit providers
    ▪ Portland State University (as support, not practitioner)
• Kindergarten Transitions
  o Merger of two existing groups (SUN Linkages and R4K Transitions)
  o Includes staff from K-12, Libraries, early learning, non-profit providers
  o Currently staffed by Multnomah County and Ready for Kindergarten
  o Cements critical linkage between K-12 and Early Learning
• EC-PBIS
  o Staffed by LAUNCH
  o Training in PBIS for schools, childcare settings, and others
**CoP Staffing**

ELM-funded staffing (or staff funded through a partner, e.g. LAUNCH) will be offered to CoP with representation on the CAC. Non-represented CoP may be staffed by an ELM partner based on criteria set by that partner, but this staffing will not imply a role in ELM Governance. ELM will facilitate development of new non-represented CoP serving the Early Learning Community by making written materials available outlining evolving best practices and recommendations related to CoP governance and facilitation. Additional technical assistance will be made available as resources are available.

The role of ELM staff supporting CoP will include:
- Prepare and distribute agenda and minutes
- Serve as link to other CoP, Governance, and United Way, Multnomah County
- Support and follow up on work identified through the efforts of the assigned CoP
- Participate in the ELM Operations Committee and disseminate relevant information

**Criteria for Inclusion on CAC**

Communities of Practice represented on the Community Accountability Council (CAC) will be required to meet the following criteria:
- Have a direct impact on a specific strategy identified by ELM governance
- Agree to focus efforts on improving and implementing identified strategy/strategies.
- Agree to use the CoP forum to identify and/or address systemic barriers to implementation and eliminating disparities
- Have a committed core group of practitioners who have signed a CoP Charter. Practitioners who have not signed the Charter may participate in all CoP activities, but may not be considered to serve as representatives on the CAC. At a minimum, CoP charter must outline:
  - Agreement with common definition as stated above
  - General meeting guidelines (frequency [minimum quarterly], membership, outreach)
  - Definition of unique aspects and role of CoP (practice area) and purpose
  - A mechanism for identifying CAC representation
  - Agreement to align efforts with outcomes identified by ELM through their governance and community input process
  - Formalized deliverables that align with the ELM strategic plan.
    - At a minimum, these deliverables include:
      - Specific feedback to CAC about suggested strategies for addressing key outcomes
      - A mechanism for identifying and recommending ways to address systemic barriers such as funding and/or policy.
    - Other deliverables may, but are not limited to:
      - Identifying priorities for service and access improvement
      - Data collection
      - Gaps analysis and overlaps
• Analysis of service landscape relevant to CoP practice areas
• Assign two members to sit on the CAC for a period of at least one year.

Additional required roles may include:
• Monitor, assess and review necessary changes to implementation of specified strategy, which may require compiling and analyzing data collected by practitioners as well as advising ELM leadership on data needs.
• Share best practices in relationship to outcomes

ADDITIONAL COP FOR THE CAC
The CAC will begin with at least three CoP (Home Visiting, Transitions and EC-PBIS) and grow to include additional CoP over time. Other CoP that meet the above criteria and are positioned to advance a priority strategy will be added as need and opportunity arises.