

**PUGET SOUND TAXPAYER ACCOUNTABILITY ACT ACCOUNT****2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT**

Institution of Higher Education/School District	Mukilteo School District
Total 2021-2022 Allocation	\$120,064.00
Direct Service	\$-
Early Learning designation	\$108,057.60
Admin	\$12,006.40
Total 2021-2022 Expenditure	\$86,231.00

FUNDS DESIGNATED FOR IHE/SCHOOL DISTRICT SERVICES**Proposed Use (Brief Summary)**

Mukilteo School District is applying the admin funding towards staff that provide direct support for administration of the PSTAA grant.

- **Identify any modifications that occurred during implementation.**
Not applicable
- **Share your progress including outcomes achieved during 2021-2022.**
Not applicable
- **What challenges did you encounter?**
Not applicable

FUNDS DESIGNATED FOR EARLY LEARNING PROVIDERS

Early Learning Provider	ChildStrive
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Proposed Use (Brief Summary)

Hire a counselor (\$97,746) to provide culturally relevant family counseling services to increase support for the ChildStrive's CORE Family project in the Casino Road community in partnership with ECEAP to identify families in need and help with basic needs (\$10,311.60) that prevent participation and engagement in the project.

- **Share their progress including outcomes achieved during 2021-2022 / Identify any modifications that occurred during implementation.**

Counselor position: A bilingual counselor position was posted in indeed.com in October 2021 and we utilized our network to share it with a targeted audience of social workers and mental health counselors. We updated the posting in January to include a \$5000 signing bonus. In late February 2022 we offered the position to a qualified person in OR. However, in April she



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wrote to say that she had trouble finding affordable housing and declined the offer. The position is now posted on another site in the hopes of attracting another person. In the meantime, Catalina Angel, another family counselor, has been seeing many of the families' meeting criteria for service residing in Mukilteo School District. She increased the number of groups provided to allow as much access as possible to therapeutic services. In May we accepted a bilingual MSW student for a practicum placement at ChildStrive from September 2022-June 2023. She will provide counseling to families who are eligible for Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) services or are exiting those services into the Mukilteo School District. She will also assist with groups.

Mental Health: During the project year, the current counselor has seen about 22 families and 68 children (under 18) within the Mukilteo SD for early childhood-focused family counseling. This does include some new babies as well as some older teens needing crisis stabilization. She has offered a PEPS group for new parents, two Circle of Security groups, and is lining up additional groups for the coming school year. These groups build community connections and social support for the parents. The therapist has also connected several families with Early Supports to Infants and Toddlers, or the Mukilteo School District regarding evaluation for special educational needs. She helped them navigate complex systems of mental health, education, family court, and protection from intimate partner violence.

Flexible Funding: Flexible funding is financial support provided to families to assist in removing barriers within and between systems related to early childhood education, postsecondary and employment pathways, economic assets, social capital, and health and well-being.

As of 6/5/2022, 15 Families have been assisted with \$25,757 of flex funding.

Thirty-three payments were made in five different areas: Medical (11), Utilities (9), Housing (9), Transportation (3) and Communication (1).

As a result of this financial assistance, families were able to make significant progress on their goal to eliminate debt, remain in stable housing, cover utility costs, become current in their car payments and phone bills.

For families receiving financial assistance, one or more of the following were implemented:

- Referral to utility assistance.
 - Provided information of how to negotiate medical bills
 - Referral to budgeting classes
 - Referral to Consumer Debt Agencies
 - Referral to income-based housing
- **Share successes and challenges designating funding to community-based early learning providers.**

Thanks to the long history of partnership work between Mukilteo School District, ChildStrive, and Connect Casino Road, this grant opportunity served to further the creative and collaborative work of local community-based partnerships. Further, it nurtured a new and invaluable partnership with ECEAP. We are pleased to be part of a blossoming connection, one that centers families and their needs.



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ChildStrive is the lead early learning provider within the school district, and we are committed to providing responsive, culturally relevant service to increasing numbers of vulnerable families. ChildStrive was eager to utilize our expertise in early childhood mental health to increase access to counseling for families in Mukilteo School District. It was gratifying to hear that the district wanted more of a service we piloted beginning in 2019.

As noted earlier, the flexible funding opened a much-needed opportunity to offer immediate and relevant assistance to families in five different areas: Medical, Utilities, Housing, Transportation, and Communication. As a result of this financial assistance, families were able to make significant progress on their goal to eliminate debt, remain in stable housing, cover utility costs, become current in their car payments and phone bills.

- **What challenges did you encounter?**

Acquiring new talent is a serious challenge when the median cost of living is rising so rapidly in our county. We saw that it was difficult for someone to relocate to our area due to the cost of housing. The salary and benefits are being revisited to see if we can be more competitive with other mental health organizations. We are also offering supervision toward licensure, and training in evidence-based practices in recruitment efforts.

The majority of parents enrolled in our program do not have medical coverage and have been incurring medical debt as they address healthcare issues.

Many parents had to adjust to an increase of rent when their leases were renewed with increases between \$200 - \$300 a month.