

**PUGET SOUND TAXPAYER ACCOUNTABILITY ACT ACCOUNT****2021-2022 Annual Report**

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| Institution of Higher Education/School District | Everett Community College |
| Total 2021-2022 Allocation | \$88,000.00 |
| Direct Service | \$20,000.00 |
| Early Learning designation | \$65,000.00 |
| Admin | \$3,000.00 |
| Total 2021-2022 Expenditure | \$82,793.00 |

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

PSTAA funds will expand the Equity and Social Justice Division's Peer Navigation model to improve retention and completion rates among student parents. The Student Parent Peer Navigator will be work-study eligible for up to 16-hours a week and serve 30-40 student parents that express interest in joining a cohort focused on their success at EvCC. PSTAA funds will also be used to initiate an endowment fund focused on improving retention and completion efforts among non-traditional students which includes but is not limited to student parents.

- **Identify any modifications that occurred during implementation.**

Modifications that occurred during implementation surround funding for the student-Parent Peer Navigator. As indicated below, this position was the biggest challenge and has been left unfilled to date. The budget has been adjusted within the ILA parameters, and \$8,800 of salaries/wages has been redistributed to seed the endowment to support student-parents over time. No other modifications were made to the implementation plan as outlined in Exhibit D of the ILA. A majority of time was spent building a relationship with ChildStrive and establishing policies and procedures surrounding the co-op model of care at The Village on Casino Road.

- **Share your progress including outcomes achieved during 2021-2022?**

Proposed Educational Outcomes:

- **Increase fall to winter retention from 75% to 80%; from 66% to 70% among students who are historically underrepresented by race/ethnicity (HU student)**
Fall-to-Winter retention had mixed results. All student-parents declined in Fall-to-Winter retention to 72% for the 2020-21 year, whereas HU student-parents increased to 69%, just missing the stated objective by 1%.
- **Increase fall to fall retention from 47% to 50%; from 42% to 47% among HU students**
- For 2019-20, Fall-to-Fall retention increased to 70% for all student-parents and 69% for HU student-parents. This high increase is likely due to the transition to online coursework, which is the preferred modality among student-parents according to a survey done in Winter 2021. The survey indicated that more than 62% of student-parents preferred fully online coursework, and only 13% preferred in-person only.



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Human Services

3000 Rockefeller, M/S 305

EVERETT, WA 98201

OFFICE (425) 388-3923

FAX (425) 388-6471

- **Increase 2-year completion rate from 28% to 32%; from 24% to 30% among HU students**

EvCC has met the educational outcomes as indicated in Exhibit D of the ILA. Two-year completion rates for students starting in fall 2019 is 35% for all students and 36% for HU students.

Overall, EvCC has made great progress toward the proposed educational outcomes of the project, meeting the latter two (2) objectives above expectation. A caveat to the data is that student-parents indicate that they prefer online modalities of coursework, which help them balance work, home, and school priorities. With a transition to more in-person coursework, we may see declines in some outcomes, particularly the Fall-to-Fall retention, which will be seen in next year's report since Fall quarter begins in September. We also expect declines as unemployment falls to pre-pandemic levels and inflation rises to its highest levels in 40 years. The work done through this funding will likely mitigate those anticipated declines.

- **What challenges did you encounter?**

EvCC's biggest challenge was hiring personnel for the student-Parent Peer Navigator position, which was not hired during the 2021-22 project period. The desire was to have this position filled prior to the end of the current year allocation. A successful search was completed during the project period, but the start date for the position was set after the end of the project period. While this was a challenge in 2021-22, the position is poised to start at the beginning of the 2022-23 project period. Knowing that we would not spend out the full amount of salary/wages and benefits budgeted for this position in 2021-22, EvCC moved a partial amount of this line item. As allowed per the ILA, EvCC moved \$8,800 (10% of award amount) from salaries/benefits to the endowment to support student-parents over time.

FUNDS DESIGNATED FOR EARLY LEARNING PROVIDERS

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Early Learning Provider | ChildStrive (The Village at Casino Road) |
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Proposed Use (Brief Summary)

Funds will be used to support a co-op childcare program for children ages 12 months to five years as part of a 2-generational approach to improving educational and economic outcomes among low-income families enrolled in adult education classes offered by EvCC and Goodwill through Connect Casino Road at the Village on Casino Road supporting parents as their child's first and best teachers. An early learning co-op model of care creates an opportunity for parents to learn more about their children and early childhood development while building a strong community. ChildStrive will hire, train, support and supervise two co-op Lead Teachers who will be supported by 30-40 student parent/family co-op members each week (6-8 co-op members each day).



- **Share their progress including outcomes achieved during 2021-2022.**

ChildStrive was able to hire a very experienced and talented Lead Teacher and began serving children in the Fall Quarter. While advertised for months and interviewed several candidates, the assistant teacher position wasn't filled until July. The Assistant Teacher worked with the Lead Teacher to prepare for the fall, while providing drop-in care to support activities in the Village on Casino Road.

Fall Quarter, 27 children attended childcare. All were children of parents attending the Adult Learning Academy (ALA). In the Winter Quarter, 28 children whose parents attended ALA (only EvCC offered courses this quarter) attended childcare. Only eight of those children were returning from the Fall Quarter. In the Spring Quarter, 35 children attended childcare and their parents were enrolled in ALA. Childcare had to end early in the Spring Quarter due to a family emergency of the Lead Teacher which required her to attend to family members in another country. In addition to providing childcare for the ALA parents, ChildStrive added some care for other Connect Casino Road groups including some parent groups provided by the Infant Mental Health Counselor. In total, the Co-Op Childcare served 77 children during the year. Five parents helped in the classroom during the Spring Quarter. Childcare services were not provided during the summer months, but teachers worked on curriculum and classroom updates for the coming year. Teachers also offered once per week "Activity Day" for 3 hours during the Summer to increase activity in the program and meet the teachers.

The Lead Teacher is creative, competent, and experienced and did an amazing job of transforming a multi-use room full of storage into a beautiful classroom. One observer described it this way, "The childcare is a space which is full of natural light and soft textured furnishings, shelves labeled with corresponding content in English and Spanish and cubbies labeled with children's names where they are instructed to hang their coats. The room has been prepared with developmentally appropriate activities encouraging literacy, emotional, cognitive, physical, and gross motor learning domains. Social learning domains are met during the circle time interactions. There is space for children to gather on soft rugs, in chairs for quiet reading near the library or on the rug near blocks and other manipulatives. Every moment they are in this space and every moment a child is interacting with the environment or the teacher, they are learning through carefully designed play spaces and deliberate, focused activities with the child. There is also an outdoor area for children to play at designated times of the day to use gross and fine motor skills."

One observer noted the following characteristics of nurturing relationships about the Lead Teacher's interactions with children and parents:

- Making eye contact with each child
- Greeting each child at the door by name
- Asking parents about circumstances in their lives; positive and caring



- Supporting parents when in need of resources
- Guiding children to hang coats in their cubbies
- Kneeling to get on the same eye level as the child
- Following conversation interests of the child
- Asking to follow up questions about child's interests
- Waiting for a child to respond to a question
- Models' positive behavior in the classroom
- Models' social interactions with children
- Models emotional support through vocabulary and empathy
- Encourages children to interact with one another
- Encourages children to share objects and toys
- Newsletter in two languages for parents

ChildStrive has been building up work in assessments, teacher-parent meetings, and the like, but these were not yet a part of regular activities. This is part of an intentional layering and scaffolding of this new program. ChildStrive has been diligently setting boundaries around some foundational requirements such as registration, and timely drop-off and pick-up times. We are still promoting parent participation in the classroom with minimal response.

- **Share successes and challenges designating funding to community-based early learning providers.**

CHALLENGES:

ChildStrive did not use ReadyRosie this year, due to having only one teacher in the classroom. It was also difficult because the children were in class for such a short time, with most only there 1.5 hours three days per week. The Lead Teacher was able to do informal observations and plan activities based on the abilities and needs of the children but did not do more formal assessments. The teachers worked on a formal documentation system this summer to use starting in the fall. ReadyRosie will be considered during that time. The Lead Teacher and several observers noted that the children served often had never been away from their parents or in any kind of care during the two previous years of the pandemic. Many were young, two years of age and younger, and were upset initially about being away from their parents. The Lead Teacher was quite good at helping them calm down and by the second week of care, all the children were settling into the routine and engaging in meaningful play. The Lead Teacher and other observers noticed a big increase in social-emotional development, self-regulation, communication, and cognitive development. Some increases in motor development were also noticed. The majority of the children spoke Spanish and had very little English. The few children that spoke other languages (i.e., Japanese, French, and Arabic) had a bit more English than the Hispanic children. The Lead Teacher is fluent in English and Spanish and taught the class in both languages, encouraging the children to also use both. In this way, the children and their parents were working to learn English at the same time. There was no need to do any Ages and Stages screenings this year, but ChildStrive is prepared to do so if any concerns are identified in the children served next year.



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There were many challenges because the co-op model was being applied in a setting not normally served (drop-in childcare). Registration for the Fall Quarter was a bit chaotic, and it wasn't easy to explain the Co-op Childcare while signing children up. Written documentation was provided to explain the co-op (in six languages), but it did not seem that parents read the information. Many more children ended up attending than were signed up at registration. There were also complications due to an instructor having Covid and that class met virtually to start. It was challenging to get all the completed paperwork needed just to serve the children. Three parent meetings were scheduled between September and March, but they were not well attended, with the last one having no attendees. Finally, in the Spring Quarter, ChildStrive collaborated with Connect Casino Road staff who helped us reach out to the parents of the children in child care, and began to have helpers in the classroom. While only five parents participated last quarter, it was a start that will be built upon in the upcoming Fall Quarter.

This was a learning year, especially about including the parents as helpers. While ChildStrive is still committed to the Co-op model, it must be adapted for the much more episodic, drop-in childcare service. ChildStrive will continue to encourage parent workers in the classroom and will work with them in the classroom by modeling and in-the-moment coaching, but not require a certain number of hours of participation. ChildStrive is helping parents understand that while this service is free to them, there is a cost to provide the service. The long-term viability of this program rests on the presence of Parent Workers to support the teachers.

Parents were encouraged to participate in the parent education component and provided some incentives for attendance (like food, small gifts, etc.). The Conscious Discipline framework and ReadyRosie videos were incorporated into those meetings.

SUCSESSES:

Parents of registered children provide positive feedback regarding the teachers and the activities. Children enter the childcare with little or no separation anxiety after the initial few days. This demonstrates a sense that the children feel, not only safe and secure, but welcome and valued in the childcare. ChildStrive expects to see an increase in enrollments in Fall 2022.