

APPENDIX F

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# **Community Foundations and Private Dedicated Funds**

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# Introduction

This is Appendix F to the “Making affordable, high-quality early learning and care accessible to all children in the Walla Walla Valley” executive summary.

## Privately funded Local Dedicated Funds

Many people in the Walla Walla Valley have expressed interest in developing a local dedicated fund from private revenue streams, such as donations, rather than or in addition to a voter-approved public dedicated fund. Blue Mountain Community Foundation (BMCF) has offered to help fundraise and manage a local children’s dedicated fund and the idea was explored in the 2021 “Creating an Accessible, Valley-Wide Child Care System Feasibility Study” (see recommendation R8.3 on page 153).<sup>1</sup> We revisited the idea with a BMCF representative during the current project, who shared the following points:

- BMCF has a Child Care Assistance Fund set up, which is funding this Elevate project. However, there is not currently money in the Child Care Assistance Fund beyond this project.
- BMCF has not previously been involved in a tax initiative, so if the work group decides to advance a public local dedicated fund to voters, the Foundation board would have to decide if that is the type of work they want to be involved in. There are different ways the BMCF could be involved, but the most likely option the

board may agree to would be to provide funding from the Child Care Assistance Fund, along with funding from other donors, to pay for a third party to run the public local dedicated fund campaign.

- BMCF does not have discretionary funds beyond the \$250,000 grant program nonprofits apply for annually. However, BMCF can set up a mechanism for the community, like the existing Child Care Assistance Fund, where donors can donate to support a program, project, or cause. Sustaining the fund overtime could be unpredictable or might not be feasible, depending on what the money is for and how large the fund needs to be.

A private local dedicated fund will be able to generate a small but potentially flexible and consistent amount of funding over the long-term. It is unlikely to generate enough revenue to significantly impact higher price-tag items such as paying for additional child care slots. It would not make sense to have the private fund focus on needs for which public funding is available.

Strategic potential uses of a private local dedicated fund include the following:

- To leverage funding through support for grant writing or donor-based fundraising.
- To support the campaign work involved with developing a public local dedicated fund.
- To provide small grants to enable private child care providers to start or expand operations or to build capacity to serve children with disabilities (e.g., equipment and training funds).

- To provide small grants to pay for predesign work to enable facility projects to be competitive for larger public funding.
- To provide funding for organizational capacity building for fundraising larger projects.
- To pay for coalition-building expenses.
- To pay for activities to engage employers in subsidizing child care.

The common theme is to use small grants to leverage greater resources.

## How community foundations have been involved in other places

In addition to interviewing representatives of two local community foundations, we conducted case studies to explore the ways community foundations are supporting child care and early learning access and affordability throughout the country. We found community foundations are fulfilling a variety of roles, depending on their resources, strengths, and what is most needed in their local context. Of course, a critical role for community foundations is developing and managing locally focused funds. Importantly, community foundation funds are not necessarily constrained by geopolitical boundaries in the way public funds are, which could be important in the context of resourcing strategies on both sides of the Oregon-Washington border and in multiple counties.

The Bipartisan Policy Center’s 2021 report titled “The Role of Community Foundations in Supporting Child Care: Local Solutions for Child Care” is a useful resource on this topic.<sup>2</sup> The Bipartisan Policy Center identified several categories of child care-related interventions community foundations have been involved in through funding and sometimes implementation:

- Needs assessments, parent surveys, feasibility studies, and strategic planning, including setting goals, coordinating action, and tracking progress;
- “Supply building” or certifying new child care providers to increase child care slots;
- Creating shared service models;
- Implementing direct services for families or child care providers;
- Targeting support to areas in the community with the greatest need, for example, by focusing technical and financial resources to improve equity for groups that have been underserved;
- Partnering “with public social service agencies to serve as the private arm of public funds...[to increase] the efficiency and expediency of fund distribution” (i.e., public-private partnerships);
- Multisectoral coalition building and awareness raising, for example, by engaging business and community leaders to develop and implement strategies; and

- Supporting advocacy by aligning groups and meeting with local leaders.

Table 38 summarizes the roles community foundation case studies have filled to address child care and early learning gaps in their respective service areas. Oregon Community Foundation is a good example of a community foundation that has very actively been supporting child care and early learning access in rural areas. For example, Oregon Community Foundation has been the largest private funder of the new Pendleton Children’s Center opening Fall 2022 and supports a large-scale child care access project in rural Coos and Curry counties in

southwest Oregon. One interviewee who is involved with the Oregon Community Foundation believes it would be interested in supporting projects in Milton-Freewater.

**TABLE 38 | Community foundation roles: case study summary<sup>3</sup>**

Case study	Description	Family subsidies & scholarships	Resource hub or coordination	Partner organization funding	Advocacy	Child care provider support	Needs assessment & strategic planning
<b>Yakima Valley Community Foundation, WA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sponsors “the Investing in Children Coalition of South Central Washington, a collective of over 35 agencies”</li> <li>• Coalition advocates through its “network of community, business, service agency, and government leaders”</li> <li>• Coalition conducts needs assessments</li> </ul>			X	X		X
<b>Oregon Community Foundation<sup>4</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awarded \$100K to support building the new Pendleton Children’s Center</li> <li>• Invested \$500K to create an Early Learning Shared Services program to increase access to child care in rural Coos &amp; Curry counties</li> <li>• Coos &amp; Curry Counties Program “pools resources &amp; reduces operating costs for small child care providers...also helps child care businesses with their payroll, administrative tasks, &amp; quality improvement”</li> <li>• Funded nonprofit to create Oregon Child Care Provider Relief Guide</li> </ul>			X		X	
<b>Marin Community Foundation, Novato, CA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ~800 children waitlisted for CA’s child care subsidy program in the county, so addresses gap by funding slots for low-income families with priority on employed single parents</li> <li>• Provides hub of health, social, child care services for families</li> <li>• Funds a nonprofit that provide resources &amp; referrals for families &amp; providers</li> </ul>	X	X	X			
<b>The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, Nashville</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners with state agency to provide administrative &amp; operational services &amp; a consolidated resource &amp; info service for child care providers</li> <li>• Partners with vendors to get child care providers supply &amp; equipment discounts</li> <li>• Administers grants to providers</li> <li>• Scholarships for children “from low-income families and are at risk of entering kindergarten with educational or behavioral challenges”</li> </ul>	X	X			X	
<b>The Dallas Foundation, TX</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support non-profits that advance child care &amp; early education</li> <li>• Funds the Early Matters Dallas broad coalition, which does advocacy</li> <li>• Funds the Zero-to-Five Funders Collaborative, “which promotes school readiness in low-income communities”</li> </ul>			X	X		
<b>Southwest Initiative Foundation, Hutchinson, MN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five focus areas: project investment &amp; technical assistance, community planning, professional development, public policy, &amp; public relations</li> <li>• Provides funding, professional development, &amp; technical assistance to local child care providers</li> <li>• Advocacy to provide info &amp; raise awareness of issues with community leaders and policy makers</li> </ul>				X	X	
<b>Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, Iowa</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funded a child care needs assessment</li> <li>• Providing data, best practices models, and hosting child care councils “composed of employers, child care providers, parents, &amp; community organizations in six rural communities...[to] assess the child care need, unify advocacy efforts to build a more effective child care system, and brainstorm solutions that best meet the unique needs of their community”</li> </ul>		X		X		X
<b>Forest County Potawatomi Foundation, Crandon, WI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administers a centralized child care resource and referral system for parents</li> <li>• Certifies new home-based providers</li> <li>• Partners with tribal departments “to increase &amp; improve child care programming for parents &amp; providers”</li> <li>• Collaborates on statewide intertribal child care conference</li> </ul>		X			X	

# Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Saul, D., Saul, M., Newman, S., Rivera, G. (2021). *Creating an Accessible, Valley-Wide Child Care System Feasibility Study*. Walla Walla Early Learning Coalition.

<https://earlylearningwallawalla.org/research/reports>

<sup>2</sup> Rosen, S., Smith, L., Thornton, C. (2021). *The Role of Community Foundations in Supporting Child Care: Local Solutions for Child Care*. Bipartisan Policy Center.

<https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Community-Foundations-Brief-min-compressed.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Much of the information in this table is from Rosen, S., L. Smith, Thornton, C. (2021). *The Role of Community Foundations in Supporting Child Care: Local Solutions for Child Care*. Bipartisan Policy Center.

<https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Community-Foundations-Brief-min-compressed.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> *Oregon Community Foundation Announces \$500,000 Investment to Improve Access to Child Care in Oregon's South Coast*. (2019). Oregon Community Foundation.

<https://oregoncf.org/news/oregon-community-foundation-announces-500000-investment-to-improve-access-to-child-care-in-oregon-south-coast/>