

The Oscar G. & Elsa S. Mayer Family Foundation
Proposal Information Form

Please make entries directly into this form, or as continuations or attachments to this form.

I. PROPOSAL SUMMARY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Organization name: Morrison Child & Family Services

Project/Program title: Early Learning Demonstration Initiative at Earl Boyles Program Design

Program/Project Start Date: November 2010 Program/Project End Date: April 2012

Proposed Funding: First Year: \$ 50,000 Total: \$ 50,000

Grant Administrator:
Name & Title: Monica Ford, MSW, Division Director, Early Childhood & Foster Care Services
Address: Morrison Child & Family Services: Hand in Hand
11456 NE Knott Street
Portland, OR 97220

Telephone: 503-736-6510 Fax: 503-256-9601
Email: monica.ford@morrisonkids.org
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Program Director/Project Manager/Principal Investigator (if different above):
Name/Position: Same as above
Address: _____

Email: _____
Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

II. PROPOSAL STATEMENT

Please describe the program/project that you propose for our Foundation to fund. Please mention the overall size of the program/project, how many children, by age range, and how many caregivers, it serves, studies, or supports, and what you know about their socio-economic characteristics and that of the community in which they live.

Morrison Child and Family Services is excited to partner with the Children's Institute and David Douglas School District to design a model of an early learning system, for children birth to 8, which links early childhood programs with an existing elementary school, Earl Boyles, in southeast Portland. Morrison is uniquely positioned to be a key stakeholder in the life of this Initiative because of its history and experience delivering a wide-range of services and programs for children and families in need. Morrison's leadership is committed to moving mental health and social services outside of clinic settings and recognizes the importance of school readiness to improving long-term health outcomes for children, especially those living in poverty. We see the intrinsic value of bringing stakeholders together across the systems of education, health, and social services to meet the early learning needs of young children and their families. The Early Learning Demonstration Initiative at Earl Boyles will enable Morrison to capitalize on its community-based delivery model while providing an opportunity to showcase how aligning birth to 5 services with an elementary school can shift the odds for an entire community.

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Morrison is eager to enter this partnership with the David Douglas School District and the Children's Institute because of the complimentary skill set each brings to the table. We are inspired by the leadership in David Douglas School District and at Earl Boyles because of their demonstrated commitment to ensuring all children arrive at kindergarten ready for school and on a path to meet 3rd grade benchmarks. But to meet these goals; the school must begin earlier during their students' formative years – birth to 5 – before they enter school in kindergarten. We have also worked closely with the Children's Institute, an organization that has established itself as an expert on early childhood education and serves as an important community resource in this field.

We are currently operating in the Earl Boyles catchment area and have a parent education and school readiness support program for Latino families with young children through Listos Para Aprender, which is funded by the Portland Children's Levy. Our knowledge and work delivering programs in this community provides us an ideal vantage point to play a critical role in designing the Initiative's birth to 5 services. Our experience will allow us to work with Earl Boyles to create a system that ensures connections are built during children's formative window of development, allowing for a seamless transition from preschool to kindergarten. We began working with the Children's Institute and Earl Boyles in November 2010 to design a model of an integrated birth to 8 early learning system. The program design phase of the Initiative requires experience with providing direct services to a community with a high level of need – Morrison is well equipped to deliver this expertise. Two of our experienced early childhood specialists have been working since November 2010 to design a model integrating birth-to-8 services in the Early Learning Demonstration Initiative. We are requesting funding from the Oscar G. & Elsa S. Mayer Family Foundation to continue our work designing a program that meets the needs of the families in the community and builds an integrated early learning system for Earl Boyles.

Morrison was founded in 1947 with a primary focus on school-age youth and has been a leader in the early childhood field in advocacy, creative programming, direct service to children and families, and community leadership since the late 1970's. Morrison provides mental health consultants to Head Start and child care centers, partnering together to address the needs of young children in child care and preschool settings and to minimize disruptions in placements. Morrison created Oregon's first young (3-6 years) child's day treatment program in 1981 and still utilizes the evidence based High Scope model based on the Perry Preschool Project, designed to serve children living in poverty who have other environmental challenges similar to the Earl Boyle's catchment area.

The Early Learning Demonstration Initiative will be based in the Earl Boyles Elementary School catchment area where Morrison is already established providing on-the-ground community services. We know that this school is located in a community that has demonstrated high need and we have a deep understanding of the nature of these needs. Earl Boyles has approximately 430 students, many of whom come from families with identifiable risk factors (e.g., low-income, linguistic or social isolation; parents with less than a high school education; parents with substance abuse or mental health disorders; members of certain racial/ethnic minority groups, etc.). Children who live in places where there is a high concentration of poverty, unemployment or violence face additional risk and are less likely to arrive at kindergarten with the skills needed to succeed. This Initiative will transform the school into a learning laboratory where whole-child development strategies believed to have the greatest impact on school readiness and 3rd grade proficiency will be implemented and tested.

For children in the Earl Boyles catchment area, the Initiative will ensure more are ready for school success at kindergarten entry and achieve or exceed 3rd grade benchmarks. Furthermore, it will ensure fewer are placed in remedial and special education. At its core this is a community-based strategy designed to connect children and their families to the elementary school. Earl Boyles is already established in the SUN School service system; therefore it is positioned as a hub in the community for

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families with school-aged children. Our Early Learning Demonstration Initiative will build on the existing SUN School model to include birth to 5 services. Furthermore, the Initiative will be a model to demonstrate what a SUN school looks like if it has birth to 5 services tightly integrated into the broader program. Earl Boyles will become the nucleus and a hub that connects families to their school and broader community.

A key factor for this partnership and the Initiative's overarching success is to have on-the-ground champions who are committed to transforming their district. Don Grotting, David Douglas School District superintendent, and Ericka Guynes, Earl Boyles Elementary School principal have shown their passion, commitment and long-term vision and have initiated steps to gain the support of the teachers and stakeholders in the community. They are fully committed partners and it is their vision that all children at Earl Boyles thrive and meet 3rd grade benchmarks.

Morrison, because of its connections with direct service programs and community organizations, will play an essential role in developing a neighborhood-based, community-owned project. This is critical because simply expanding access by investing more in existing early childhood programs is not enough. Together Morrison and the Children's Institute have identified four key challenges to successfully closing the achievement gap in the current system of early childhood and elementary school services.

1. **Peer Effect:** At-risk children are more likely to live in at-risk communities. Consequently, they are more likely to be in classrooms with children who struggle academically. The compounding effect of at-risk children being surrounded by other children who are struggling is an underlying cause of the achievement gap and partially explains why gains children make in early childhood programs sometimes "fade out" when they enter elementary school.
2. **Continuity:** Many of the children/families who could most benefit from these programs/strategies — even when they have access to them — either do not participate or often drop out before the program strategy can be effective. These families struggle to commit to the demands of intensive services such as making appointments, actively engaging at the time of services, and following up on suggested activities or actions after a service has been delivered. The high mobility rate of many at-risk families makes it particularly difficult for them to take advantage of early learning programs/strategies and to receive the sustained, integrated supports children need to successfully transition to elementary school.
3. **Quality:** Even when children/families have access to proven programs/strategies and take advantage of that access, the programs/strategies are not always delivered with sufficient quality to achieve results. Existing accountability systems are often not focused on outcomes or oriented toward quality improvement. Programs often do not have access to the data needed to guide continuous quality improvement or lack the expertise to effectively make use of this data.
4. **Alignment:** The gains children make in early learning programs are not always sustained in elementary school. Children suffer from a lack of communication and connection between early childhood services/education and elementary schools, often because families exit one fragmented service world and enter a very different one complete with new terms and expectations and a new approach to working with children and families. Preschool teachers rarely have the opportunity to communicate with elementary school staff regarding individual children's needs, styles, and personalities in the classroom environment. Furthermore, children who take part in early learning programs frequently end up in schools that lack the support services necessary to sustain their upward trajectory in the face of new challenges in school, at home and sometimes on the streets.

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Over the next year, Morrison and the Children's Institute will rigorously work on the elements of the program design. At the end of the grant period, we will have developed a community blueprint that maps the program design components of the demonstration needed for a successful launch. Together, Morrison and the Children's Institute propose their combined early childhood expertise, direct service delivery, research and policy advocacy to provide the critical thinking necessary to develop a program service model that meets the needs of the elementary school and families within the community and provides a platform for policy change.

III. PROPOSAL ATTRIBUTES

Earl Boyles community – characteristics and community need:

Children from families in communities that represent identifiable risk factors (e.g., low-income; linguistic or social isolation; parents with less than a high school education; parents with substance abuse or mental health disorders; members of certain racial/ethnic minority groups) are less likely to arrive at kindergarten with the skills needed to succeed in 3rd grade. Children who live in places where there is a high concentration of poverty, unemployment or violence face additional risks and added educational challenges. The achievement gap is rooted in all of these circumstances. Not only is the achievement gap well-established before children ever arrive at kindergarten, it becomes much more difficult and expensive to close as children move through their school years.

Oregon's effort to close the achievement gap begins too late and invests too little. Two recent studies prepared by ECONorthwest show that children who start school behind generally finish behind. In particular, the Black-White and the Latino-White achievement gaps remain nearly constant between 3rd and 10th grade.¹ Another national study shows the gaps in scores between low-income and high-income children and between Latino and White children in Oregon on the NAEP 4th grade reading test increased by 9 points on both measures from 2003 to 2007.²

The Earl Boyles Elementary School and the surrounding neighborhood, all within the David Douglas School District, will be the hub of this community-centered Initiative. We chose Earl Boyles Elementary School because it is ideally suited to be a testing ground for this demonstration project. Approximately 430 children from kindergarten through 5th grade attend Earl Boyles and a majority face a host of risk factors related to the achievement gap, most notably poverty, language barriers, high family mobility, and a lack of high-quality early educational experiences. As a result, test scores through 5th grade lag behind state standards. Over 65% of Earl Boyles students qualify for the Federal Free Lunch program (their families earn less than 130% of the federal poverty guideline) and another 12% qualify for the Federal Reduced Lunch Program (185% of FPL). 51% of the students are minorities and 26% receive English as a Second Language (ESL) services. Earl Boyles' 3rd grade reading scores are in the bottom 5th in the state, and its 3rd grade math scores are in the bottom 15%.

However, the characteristic that was the catalyst for rooting the project in the David Douglas School District, and the one that will overwhelmingly ensure the success of this Initiative, is the community's

¹ "A Deeper Look at the Black-White Achievement Gap in Multnomah County: A Report to the Black Parent Initiative. Winter 2009; "The Hispanic-White Achievement Gap in Oregon," Summer 2009.

² "Gauging the Gaps: A Deeper Look at Student Achievement." The Education Trust. January, 2010.

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strong leadership. The staff of Earl Boyles Elementary School and the David Douglas School District shows great strength and resourcefulness under the leadership of Principal Guynes and Superintendent Grotting. Earl Boyles has also demonstrated a strong approach to school behavioral management through Positive Behavior Supports. Walking through the halls and speaking with staff members, it's clear that children are welcomed and engaged by teachers and a principal who truly care about them. Earl Boyles is an ideal home for the Initiative, a place where motivation and collaboration are already in place to address the challenges facing the community.

Project to identify program elements:

Morrison and the Children's Institute are partnering at this critical stage of the Initiative's pre-implementation to design the overarching program elements of the services to be provided birth through 3rd grade. The goal of the Initiative is to build a fully integrated and aligned birth-to-8 education system that meets the different needs of children and families at each developmental stage. Morrison will be primarily focused on birth-to-5 services while partnering closely with the elementary school to enhance and inform educational support strategies for kindergarten through 3rd grade (age 6-8) and beyond.

Morrison and Children's Institute staff will work to identify a curriculum for the preschool. Over the duration of this grant, the team will research curriculums for the classrooms and work with the Earl Boyles instruction staff on choosing the right one. The guiding principles in this decision process include providing early learning opportunities through developmentally appropriate activities that address all domains of development (cognitive, social-emotional, motor skills, and language). The curriculum will be evidence-based as well as aligned and integrated with elementary school curriculum. The curriculum choice will also reflect the needs of the population, including all risk factors already mentioned, to best support academic success as the children transition into kindergarten.

Morrison staff will also work closely with the Institute as they design their evaluation plan and data system. Morrison staff will work to ensure the data system provides continuous feedback on child-level data outcomes to program leadership to ensure quality improvement. It is essential that the data collected be meaningful and can be used to drive program development. This Initiative is designed to be a demonstration project that shows how evidence-based early childhood programs can be linked and aligned to maximize their efficacy for improving outcomes for children and families. The research and evaluation will be designed to answer key implementation and outcome questions. Furthermore, giving program staff access to child-level data on outcomes and support in interpreting and using that data will improve program/teaching quality and outcomes for children.

At its heart, this Initiative will be neighborhood-based and community-owned. Services will focus on engaging families and children in early learning and providing support to families to combat the common risk factors they may be facing. To ensure the services offered meet the community's needs Morrison staff, because of their deep wealth of experience providing direct services, will work with the Institute on conducting focus groups with parents and community members as well as Earl Boyles teachers. Furthermore, Morrison will conduct an assessment of the programs provided in the community and begin to facilitate dialogue with providers to develop linkages with the Initiative to ensure services delivered to families are smooth and streamlined.

Project team experience

Monica Ford – Director of Clinical Operations, Division Director for Early Childhood and Foster Care Services, Morrison Child and Family Services

For over 30 years, Monica Ford has held a number of different positions at Morrison, including Director of Foster Care Services, and Hand In Hand Early Childhood Program Director. Last year she was

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promoted to Director of Clinical Operations for the agency which includes legal oversight of agency operations. She has a BA in Education from the University of Washington (Seattle) and an M.S.W. from Portland State University focusing on Social Work Planning and Management. Monica is also on the Advisory Committees for both the DHS/Addictions and Mental Health Division Children's System and the Statewide Children's Wraparound Initiative. An accomplished public speaker, she has delivered presentations on the impact of abuse and neglect on early childhood development, the effectiveness of day treatment services for young children, and the importance of proctor care (therapeutic foster care for traumatized children) to conferences in Portland, Oregon, Banff, Canada, and Little Rock, Arkansas. A selection of Monica's research conclusions on therapeutic day treatment and proctor care can be found in the *Journal of Community Psychology*.

Molly Day – Research Fellow, Morrison Child and Family Services and the Children's Institute

Molly Day is a program manager at Morrison. Her responsibilities include therapeutic foster care for youth with significant mental health and behavioral issues, crisis respite programs for families experiencing acute mental health instability, and the Listos Para Aprender program which provides immigrant integration services and parent education to prepare children for school success. Over the past 11 years Molly has supervised and managed 8 programs and multiple contracts with complex funding streams, reporting requirements, staffing models and service delivery systems.

Bridey Mendoza-Moore - Research Fellow, Morrison Child and Family Services and the Children's Institute

Bridey is currently an assistant program manager with Morrison Child & Family Services. She leads the Oregon Parents As Teachers (PAT) State Training Team coordinating trainings and providing technical assistance for programs/staff who are utilizing the PAT curriculum for Birth-Three home visiting. In the past Bridey has worked in several roles with early childhood programs including home visitor with children and families Birth-Three; Child Development Specialist consulting with staff and families around early developmental concerns; supervisor; and program manager.

Swati Adarkar, Executive Director, Children's Institute

Swati Adarkar has a wealth of experience on issues affecting children and families. Swati has advised nonprofits on public policy and communications issues affecting disadvantaged children and their families. Swati has been with the Institute since its inception and her strong leadership has guided it from a small start-up to becoming one of Oregon's leading experts on early childhood development and education. Since her appointment in 2005, the organization has grown with intention including: doubling the annual budget; increasing staff from two to seven; deepening partnerships with national funders including the Buffet Early Childhood Fund, The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Partnership for America's Economic Success; increasing multi-year funding; and expanding the Board of Directors to include an Emeritus Board. She has a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

David Mandell, Research Director, Children's Institute

David Mandell leads the Institute's major research projects and is integral in developing the organization's policy agenda and strategies. During his tenure at the Children's Institute, David has: developed two policy briefs, which led to the doubling of the state's investment in pre-kindergarten; completed a research study on professional development, which led to the creation of EQUIP; and released the Kindergarten Readiness Report, which prompted the Oregon Department of Education to commit to evaluating the effectiveness of the survey.

Community Partners

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At the heart of this project is a deep collaboration with community groups and a corps base of volunteers. We have developed strong partnerships with leaders in the David Douglas School District. Don Grotting, superintendent, and Ericka Guynes, Earl Boyles Elementary School principal, have both demonstrated a passion and commitment to aligning early childhood programs with elementary education. We are also partnering with Dr. Beth Green, Director of Early Childhood & Family Support Research at Portland State University's Center for Improvement of Child and Family Services, to develop the long-term evaluation plan for the Initiative.

Other community partners include:

Partners in the David Douglas School District:

Dawn Barberis, School Board Chair, Head Start

David Callaway, Building Operations Supervisor at David Douglas School District

Derek Edens, Assessment and Accountability Coordinator at David Douglas School District

Brooke O'Neill, Director of Curriculum, David Douglas School District

Community partners and stakeholders:

Nancy Anderson, Multnomah Education Service District

Jennifer Cahill, Mt. Hood Community College Early Head Start

Julie Houston, Impact NW

Danita Huynh, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization

Lucrecia Perez, Morrison Child and Family Services (Listos Para Aprender)

Peggy Samolinski, Multnomah County Office of Schools and Community Partnerships (SUN)

Krista Larson, Metropolitan Family Services

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IV. OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

Please complete the following table detailing desired outcomes and measures of progress for the program/project that is proposed for funding. Add rows as necessary. Include information for the entire period you are seeking funding. See examples for further information.

Desired Outcome(s)	Action Steps to Achieve Outcome	Indicators of Progress/Results (interim benchmarks)	Timeline for Activities / Estimated Completion	Evaluation and Measurement Methods *
Program design for integrated early learning system finalized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research curriculum for preschool • Work with Earl Boyles teachers to choose curriculum and facilitate decision-making process • Work with providers to see how they collect data and incorporates the process into the evaluation system • Work with evaluation team to ensure MIS system collects meaningful data • Identify costs for program development (e.g., components of the building, facilities consultation) • Meet with key facilities stakeholders; explore options and needs for facilities to support execution of services • Site visits to regional programs to research program design elements • Develop tool to determine at-risk status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Model design created based on input from all stakeholders, best practices and extensive research • Preschool curriculum identified and incorporated by teachers • Feedback loop between program design and evaluation team established ensuring data collected can be used for program improvement • MIS needs and the process for capturing and tracking determined • Program element costs defined 	Ongoing (completed April 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups conducted to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teachers and instruction staff have implemented curriculum and integrated preschool into the elementary school system ○ Teachers and instruction staff know importance of early education and linking to primary grades

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design tool to determine school readiness 			
Community assessment completed that conveys services and programs needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess programs provided in the neighborhood • Identify community leaders to ensure needs of the neighborhood are being met • Conduct interviews and focus groups with parents to determine needs of families • Conduct interviews and focus groups with teachers • Facilitate dialogue among early childhood providers, neighborhood groups and school stakeholders • Interview Head Start providers to assess their engagement with elementary schools and kindergarten transition practices • Coordinate and present to neighborhood groups (e.g. neighborhood associations, community recreation centers, the library, child care providers, etc.) to discuss partnering strategies • Plan community outreach strategies, identify strategies for reaching out to families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community needs assessment developed • Advisory Board of community leaders created • Surveys/interviews of elementary schools, Head Start providers, parents and community leaders completed, analyzed, and documented in a baseline study • Common intake process with universal screening method developed • We have determined and are sharing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Challenges early childhood providers and elementary school leadership face in creating links ○ Parental and community needs 	Ongoing (completed April 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-6 focus groups are conducted with parents; additional focus groups with parents held to meet different cultural needs • 2 focus groups are conducted with teachers

* Describe internal or external procedures used to evaluate the outcomes and the effectiveness of any of the activities listed above.

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Outcomes yielding social returns

The Early Learning Demonstration Initiative is designed to offer a concrete new vision for early learning serving children birth to age 8 in a high-need community. The demonstration project will engage the David Douglas School District to provide leadership and vision and will establish Earl Boyles Elementary School as the center of the district's early learning hub. The demonstration project will have the following core features:

- High expectations for children's educational success.
- Birth-to-8 services integrated and aligned with K-3rd education.
- Whole-child development.
- Inclusivity of all children in the neighborhood with more intensive supports for children with greater need.
- Targeted public health approach to service delivery: first prevention, then intervention.
- Active parent engagement and involvement at every level.

The Initiative will be designed with the following short- and long-term anticipated benefits for children, families and community:

- More children are ready for school success at kindergarten entry.
- More children achieve or exceed 3rd grade benchmarks.
- Cost of remedial and special education in the K-12 system is reduced.
- Referrals of young children to child protective services are reduced.
- Mental health outcomes are improved.
- More children are connected to their families, extended families, schools and communities.
- The quality of teaching and child care for young children improves through professional development and training.
- High school graduation rate increases.

Funding

The funding requested will be utilized to support Morrison's team as we work intimately with the Children's Institute on the design and pre-implementation phase of the Early Learning Demonstration Initiative to best position it for a successful launch. At the end of the grant period, we will have developed the program design and mapped the community to identify program needs. In addition, we will have laid the foundation for vital relationships with community providers. We are approaching the Oscar G. & Elsa S. Mayer Family Foundation because we believe we have an opportunity to do something visionary in Oregon that the Foundation can be truly proud of.

If the level of funding requested is not awarded, we would work to fill the funding gap to ensure that program development and community assessments can be fully realized. Morrison and the Children's Institute would each undertake the research of other grant and fundraising opportunities; however; the time spent fundraising would potentially reduce the amount of time devoted to the development of the early learning system and possibly delay the start date of working directly with children and their families. The timing of the Early Learning Demonstration Initiative grant from the Mayer Family Foundation would be particularly opportune, as it would allow for a seamless continuation of the work we have begun in partnership with the Children's Institute.

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VI. PROPOSAL ATTACHMENTS

When you submit your Proposal, please attach

- A. A resume, curriculum vita, or biography of the Program Director, Principal Investigator, or Project Manager for the work of this proposal.
- B. A completed RFP-Proposal Operating Data Form. (Please submit this form in the format of an MS Excel spreadsheet file.)
- C. A completed RFP-Proposal Budget spreadsheet (also in Excel).