Impact Assessment
for Outsourcing the Sophia Bremer Early Learning Academy
at Olympic College

Overview

Olympic College (“OC”) is considering contracting out child care services at the Sophia Bremer Early Learning Academy (“SBELA”) to ensure financial sustainability at OC and the continuity of accessible, reliable service to children of OC students, employees, and the community. In accordance with RCW 41.06.142, this document shares (1) the objective OC would like to achieve; (2) the rationale for considering contracting out child care services; (3) the estimated costs of performance of the services by employees; (4) the estimated costs of performance of the services if contracted out; and (5) the determination that a competitive market exists.

Objective & Rationale

Mission, Vision, and Values

OC’s objective is to ensure financial sustainability and achieve accessible, reliable child care services that serve our institutional mission, vision, and values.

Consistent with our mission, achieving accessible, reliable child care services on campus would enrich our community by providing critical holistic family supports to ensure that students are positioned to achieve their educational goals.

Our vision demands that we support our students through accessible education and personalized services for students, that we empower our employees through appreciation and by prioritizing and sharing institutional resources, and that we serve as a cornerstone of learning in the community by developing strong community partnerships. Ensuring a long-term child care option with expanded, year-round hours on campus would promote access, especially for students of color, who disproportionately use child care services at community colleges in Washington State. It would also support employees who are also subject to the dearth of child care resources as we steadily increase our presence back on campus. Exploring community partnerships will also serve our vision by creating shared ownership and integration of family and community supports at Olympic College, as well as increasing capacity for community members to have greater access of child care services at Olympic College.

In considering contracting child care services to secure a long-term solution on campus, and consistent with our shared values, we hold ourselves accountable for fostering innovation, creativity, and flexibility in our effort to offer exemplary services, continue to evaluate our practice to make changes to better support underserved populations, take thoughtful risks to acquire new perspectives in service delivery, remain open-minded problem solvers, and make the most effective use of finite resources by thoughtfully considering alternatives.

The College’s mission, vision, and values statements can be found at the following webpage: https://www.olympic.edu/about-olympic-college/mission-vision-values.
Student Success

Pursuing accessible, reliable child care services on campus will promote student success through increased accessibility, increased retention and completion rates, and continued support for practicum experiences and service professions.

Child care is crucial to the success of student parents while they are earning their postsecondary credentials. Child care centers and programs located on college campuses enable student parents to balance parenting with their college education. They are convenient and create efficiencies by providing opportunities for parents to visit the child care center between classes when necessary and decreasing scheduling conflicts with the academic calendar. On-site child care centers also support student parents by connecting them with study groups, playdates, and campus and community support.

Research suggests that child care helps parents persist in and complete higher education programs. A 2013 study found that parenting students who used community college campus child care services were more likely to return to school the following year than their counterparts who did not use the center; additionally, parents who used child care were also nearly 3 times more likely to graduate or go on to pursue a B.A. within 3 years of enrollment. (Monroe Community College, 2013, Campus Child Care Center & Student Outcomes, Inside IR 4 (2): 3.). A 2015 survey of over 550 community college women students in Mississippi also found that nearly one-in-four interrupted their college careers due to insufficient child care; of respondents with dependent children, 42% said that having more stable or affordable care would help them stay in school (Hess et al., 2014, Securing a Better Future: A Portrait of Female Students in Mississippi's Community Colleges. Report, IWPR #C417).

Child care services are also critical in addressing equity and improving access for underserved populations. According to a 2017 report by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, 23% of Washington's community and technical college students are parenting, with almost 41% raising children without the support of a spouse or partner; women are also more likely than men to be parenting while in school and 38% of student parents enrolled in the CTC system are students of color. (Institute for Women’s Policy Research, 2017, Child Care Assistance for College Students with Children: An Opportunity for Change in Washington State). We also know that Washington State parenting students are more likely to experience basic needs insecurity than their peers: more than half of parenting students experience food insecurity and 69% experience housing insecurity—rates of insecurity higher than their peers without children (37% and 46%, respectively). (The Hope Center, February 2020, Washington State Community and Technical Colleges #RealCollege Survey). For these families, higher education is a path to economic mobility for both themselves and their children and wrap around services make that a reality.

On-campus child care centers also serve a dual purpose of providing applied training experiences and supports for enrolled students training for essential service industries. SBELA partners with programs across campus to serve as a practicum site for our Early Childhood Education, Nursing, and Social Work programs. Identifying a sustainable option for child care will promote our academic programs and service professions by reducing
disruption in academic quality and offerings.

**Revenue Impact**

A sustainable option for child care must also be explored as child care services on campus have been very negatively impacted by declining revenue and enrollment, increases in costs of services, and availability of qualified educators.

SBELA has experienced declining revenue for fiscal year ("FY") 2019-2020 and FY 2020-2021 and in the current period is projected to record a loss greater than FY 2019-2020 and FY 2020-2021 combined. Despite OC's best efforts, our child care center has operated at a deficit in two (2) of the last five (5) fiscal years. These annual deficits have far exceeded net proceeds of any recent annual period. Given current conditions, reversing that trend in a reasonable timeframe will likely be impossible.

Deficits are occurring, in large part, due to decreased enrollment at OC and at SBELA. As depicted in the graph below, full time equivalent (FTE) enrollment decreased by 5% from FY 2018-2019 to FY 2019-2020, and then a more precipitous 9% decrease from FY 2019-2020 to FY 2020-2021. Headcount, which reflects the number of individual students we serve, and a more relevant indicator of demand for the number of individuals that may request in-person services on campus such as child care, reflected a decrease of enrollment of 9% from FY 2018-2019 to FY 2019-2020, and a greater 18% decrease from FY 2019-2020 to FY 2020-2021. Enrollment data are publicly available at the State Board for Community & Technical College's (SBCTC's) webpage: [https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/research/data-public/enrollment-data-dashboard.aspx](https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/research/data-public/enrollment-data-dashboard.aspx).
Shrinking enrollments at OC follow national and state-wide decreasing demographic trends. These downward trends are not expected to shift until after 2025 and are predicted to improve slowly. Recovery to past historic demographic averages is unlikely to occur for some time to come.

Enrollment at SBELA has correspondingly declined. The number of children served showed a decrease in enrollment of 6% from FY 2018-2019 to FY 2019-2020, a 32% decrease from FY 2019-2020 to FY 2020-2021, and a 64% decrease from FY 2020-2021 to FY 2021-2022.
Demand for child care has not declined. In 2020, at the start of the pandemic, 21,013 children across 15,617 families sought child care in Washington State (Child Care Aware of Washington, 2020, *Annual Report*). From December 2019 to March 2021, nearly 16,000 child care programs have permanently closed in the United States; of those closures, 8,889 are licensed child care centers. (Child Care Aware of America, 2022, *Demanding Change: Repairing Our Child Care System*).

In Kitsap County, while the number of child care providers has dropped from 142 in 2017 to 124 in December 2021, overall capacity has increased from 4,518 children in 2017 to 5,372 children in December 2021; this increase in capacity is likely due to more family child care closures. (Child Care Aware of Washington, April 2022, *Child Care in Kitsap County Data Report*). This is also due to care shifting to providers with child care center models, which can assume greater capacity. (Child Care Aware of Washington, 2019, *2019 Data Report: Trends, Child Care Supply, Cost of Care, & Demand for Referrals*).

Increases in demand, however, have also been met with cost increases, which is unsustainable. Currently, the national average price of child care is $10,174, which is 10% of the median income for a married-couple household and 36% of median income for a single parent with children. (Child Care Aware of America, 2022, *Demanding Change: Repairing Our Child Care System*). Since 2020, the rise of child care prices has outpaced inflation by nearly 4%, thus diminishing the ability for families to cover child care expenses across other household needs. (Child Care Aware of America, 2022, *Demanding Change: Repairing Our Child Care System*). The cost of child care has increased primarily because the cost of providing these services has increased. Increased labor costs and increased regulatory requirements are among the top factors driving cost increases. Invariably, the costs of operations are passed along to the families of children enrolled in child care programs.
As highlighted by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, the share of public academic institutions offering child care services has declined by 14% – from 59% in 2004 to 45% in 2019; the largest decrease – nearly 17% – has taken place at community colleges, where the largest share of student parents are enrolled. (IWPR, October 2021, Evaluating the Role of Campus Child Care in Student Parent Success). To wit, some institutions in the SBCTC system have chosen to either not offer child care services or close down centers altogether, including Bellingham Technical College, Cascadia College, Columbia Basin College, Green River College, Highline College, Renton Technical College, Seattle Central College, South Seattle College, Walla Walla Community College, Whatcom Community College, and Yakima Valley College. At least two campuses in the system have permitted third parties to operate child care centers on campus, including Grays Harbor College's Wunderland Care and South Puget Sound Community College’s Serendipity Children’s Center. Olympic College is not pursuing the removal of child care services on campus as an outcome of this process and remains committed to providing accessible child care services.

Summary Financial Impact Statement

A summary financial impact statement table is included below, which highlights the revenues and expenses for SBELA across 5 years, including Student Government of Olympic College (“SGOC”) subsidies, federal emergency relief, expenses, and income, including grant funding. When forecasting potential revenue streams, it is improbable that SGOC will be able to continue to subsidize funds in the amount needed to continue operations of SBELA; SGOC has in fact awarded $150,000 next year (FY 2022-2023), despite which SBELA will most likely remain unsustainable. Additionally, the federal emergency funds that were granted to higher education institutions to help address the impacts of the COVID pandemic will not be renewed in FY 2022-2023. More than $150k of this emergency aid was allocated to SBELA in FY 2020-2021 and in FY 2021-2022. As indicated by the studies cited above, the trend of steadily increasing deficits is not expected to change and as a result, SBELA will remain insolvent.
The deficits reported in the above tabulation represent additional subsidies paid by OC in order to keep SBELA solvent. These amounts are paid from OC’s operating budget and reduce funds available for allocation to other purposes across the College. When combined with the operating subsidies provided by SGOC, the total amount of subsidies, including Higher Education Emergency Education Fund (HEERF) Grants in FY 2020-2021 and FY 2021-2022, is almost $500,000 per year in FY 2019-2020, FY 2020-2021 and projected for FY 2021-2022. With no further HEERF grants being awarded in the future, the amount of that lost subsidy would have to be borne by OC and/or SGOC.
Another factor impacting child care services is the nationwide, regional, and local educator shortages. According to Washington State's Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), early childhood education roles persist as the top role shortage in Washington State across educator roles; these gaps often experience long term vacancies and disproportionately impact students of color and those affected by poverty. (Washington State Professional Educator Standards Board, May 2021, *Addressing Washington's Educator Shortage: A Review of Promising Practices and Systemwide Approaches*). Identifying a long-term solution for child care services as a site for practicum is thus also essential to support the educator pipeline. The Early Childhood Education workforce has multiple demographic overlaps with student parents. According to PESB, teachers of color make up 13% of the teacher workforce compared to 49% of students of color, but the teacher workforce continues to remain mostly White and female. (Washington State Professional Educator Standards Board, May 2021, *Addressing Washington's Educator Shortage: A Review of Promising Practices and Systemwide Approaches*). Maintaining a site for educator training is the pathway for improving equity in the profession.

**Cost Estimate of Performance by Employees**

**Fully Allocated Cost of the Service**

This estimate does not include the OC's indirect overhead costs unless those costs can be attributed directly to the function in question and would not exist if that function were not performed in SBELA.

**Salaries & Benefits**
The largest expense in SBELA’s budget is labor (salaries and benefits) and is reflected as a percentage of revenue illustrated below. The resources expended on wages and benefits have continued to rise exponentially over the period analyzed. This reality highlights the long-term financial impracticality of the current operation.

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<td>111%</td>
<td>$ 1,101,830</td>
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Declining revenue has been mitigated by a steady and gradual decline in staffing. This has been primarily achieved by an eighty-five percent (85%) reduction in Student and Hourly staffing. Retention of Classified staff has also declined by one FTE or twenty-five percent (25%) over the same period. Future reductions in both FTE Classified and Exempt staff are inevitable based on continued declining revenue. Below is a graph depicting FTE staffing history at SBELA.

Contracting with another provider would permanently impact (8) eight budgeted classified staff positions and three (3) part-time hourly positions budgeted at SBELA. An interim director is currently in place. During this process, the director position will remain vacant.
Equipment and Materials

This category represents the largest group of non-labor related expenses incurred by SBELA. Careful expense management has kept these costs generally in line with revenue. Note: Indirect overhead charges have been excluded from this category.

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<tr>
<th>EMPLOYEE CLASS</th>
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<td>K</td>
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<td>CLA</td>
<td>ECPS 3</td>
<td>42</td>
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Other Costs

Other recurring non-labor expenses incurred by SBELA are nominal - representing a very small percentage of the program’s annual budget. Costs for related goods and services would be borne by the third-party operator.

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<td>4%</td>
<td>$42,137</td>
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Other Expenses

Total cost to provide child care services is projected to be approximately $632,799 in FY 2021-2022. FY 2021-2022 follows the trend of decreasing expenses primarily as a result of reduced services due to shrinking enrollments and COVID. The estimated cost of providing child care services in the future is difficult to determine given the unprecedented nature of the disruptions the College has been facing. It seems reasonable to expect that operational expenses will increase with the increased cost of doing business and growing enrollments, at some point, meeting or exceeding pre-pandemic levels.

Cost Estimate of Performance if Contracted Out

Because OC's Early Childhood Education Program is collocated with SBELA, it is anticipated that the indirect costs of operating these two related activities would be split between OC and the third-party child care operator. Allocable indirect costs would be shared and it is
anticipated that the facility would be provided to the third-party operator on a rent-free basis. Indirect costs such as utilities would be split between the College and the contracted operator. Responsibility for the direct costs of operations and resulting revenues would be retained by our contracting partner with the potential that a portion of any residual revenue would in-turn be shared with the College.

If OC's child care is outsourced, financial responsibility for these services would be shifted to the third-party operator. As already mentioned, OC intends to provide the facility for use by our partner and pro-rata costs of utilities and services would be billed to them. In consideration for allowing the third-party operator to use the facility rent-free, children of OC students and employees would be given priority in enrollment during service hours that support instructional programming and student and employee needs. The third party would also partner with OC instructional programs to ensure that the center continues to serve as a high-quality site for practicum experiences throughout the year. OC's Early Childhood Education program would also continue to use its existing, designated area of the SBELA facility for office and administrative space. OC would also retain full control, access, and use of non-child care instructional spaces, such as classroom 2-105E.

Costs for general administration of the child care program would be retained by the College, would be performed by the same individuals who have those responsibilities currently, and, are estimated to cost nominally the same as the costs already incurred by the College to provide program management and oversight. At this time, OC has not engaged in financial discussion with any potential operators.

Contracts management involving the third-party operator of the child care program would also be retained by the College. As with responsibility for the general administration of the program, contract management tasks would be performed by the same individuals who have those responsibilities currently, and, are also estimated to add nominal cost to the College.

The cost of operating the child care center by a third party would likely be similar to the cost incurred by the College running the program internally. A reasonable estimate, under similar conditions, would be approximately $600-$700k per year. At the point that operations begin to return to pre-COVID levels, operating costs also would be expected to increase. However, because financial responsibility would be shifted to the third-party operator, that entity will be responsible for scaling up operations.

**Competitive Market**

A competitive market exists for child care services as there are two or more separate businesses, individuals, nonprofit organizations, or other entities capable of providing child care services, including, but not limited to, the following three providers in alphabetical order: KinderCare Learning Centers, Kitsap Community Resources, and Olympic Education Service District 114.

**KinderCare Learning Centers**

KinderCare is a for-profit child care business entity based in Portland, OR, with centers across 40 states. It was founded in 1969 to provide educational programs for children and its
mission is the following:

We build confidence for life by providing high-quality early childhood education for families of all backgrounds and means. Serving children from 6 weeks to 12 years of age, we are committed to providing each of them with the very best start in life through a high-quality educational experience in a nurturing and engaging environment. We believe that investment in early childhood education and care produces long-term societal benefits including stronger, healthier communities and a more productive economy. In pursuit of our mission, we have purposefully built a scaled and differentiated platform enabling us to reach more families and children than any other private childcare provider. We play a significant role in helping to deliver the broader societal benefits achieved through high-quality early childhood education.

Programming includes options for part-time, full-time, before/after school, and spring, summer and winter breaks consistent with primary school calendars. Locations in Kitsap County include the following:

- 1 Bremerton location, serving children 6 weeks to 6 years, open 6 a.m. – 6 p.m., Monday – Friday.
- 1 Silverdale location, serving children 6 weeks to 6 years, open 6 a.m. – 6 p.m., Monday – Friday.

More information can be found at the following webpage: https://www.kindericare.com/.

**Kitsap Community Resources (KCR)**

KCR is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit social services agency based in Bremerton, WA, that was established in 1965 to end poverty. It’s early learning mission is “to provide children and their families the resources to develop the skills and attitudes for success, growth, and empowerment to advance the health and quality of their lives.” In 2020, KCR expended $5,683,965 on Early Learning & Family Services (Kitsap Community Resources (2020). 2020 Kitsap Community Resources (KCR) Impact Report). KCR programming provides family-centered pre-schools, child care and home visitation services that offer education, health, and social services. These programs are offered at little to no cost for qualifying families. Kitsap County program options include the following:

- Part-Day Program: 7 Bremerton locations, 1 Poulsbo location, and 1 Silverdale location provide services 2-3 days a week for 4 hours a day, in either the morning or afternoon. The program year is typically from September through May. This option serves children 3 to 5 years old and prepares them for transition into kindergarten.

- Extended Day Program: 2 Bremerton locations are open 2 days a week for 6 hours a day. The program year typically runs from September through August. This option serves children from 3 to 5 years old and prepares them for transition into kindergarten.

- Full Working Day: 2 sites in Bremerton provide Early Head Start / Head Start services up to 10 hours each day, 5 days a week from 7am until 5:00pm all year long. This
options services children from 8 weeks old until they transition to kindergarten.

More information can be found at the following webpage: https://www.kcr.org/pre-school-early-learning/.

Olympic Education Service District 114 (OESD)

OESD is a state agency and one of nine regional educational agencies serving school districts. In coordination with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, OESD services school districts, tribal compact schools, and state-approved private schools across Kitsap, Mason, Clallam, and Jefferson Counties. Its mission is “through caring relationships with families, respect for diversity and community partnerships, we nurture school readiness by promoting supportive learning environments, comprehensive health and well-being and the empowerment of children and families.”

In the 2020-2021 fiscal year, OESD administered $22.2 million to support educational programming. During the 2020-2021 school year, OESD served 547 Head Start, ECEAP children and Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships (Olympic Education Service District 114 (2021). 2020-2021 Annual Report). Kitsap County program options include part-time and full-time options at multiple locations, including the following: Belfair, Bremerton (4 locations), Kingston, Olalla, and Port Orchard (5).

More information can be found at the following webpage: https://www.oesd114.org/early-learning/about-early-learning/.

Determination

The results of this impact assessment inform OC’s determination that contracting with a third-party operator would result in material savings stemming from the cost avoided covering annual operating deficits. As operating subsidies would no longer be necessary to mitigate ongoing intractable structural deficits, monies currently expended for those purposes could be reallocated to other mission-based strategic priorities.

The benefits of a long-term solution to accessible, reliable on-campus child care services for students, employees, and instructional programming are considerable even when controlling for the consequences and potential mitigation of improper or failed performance by a third-party operator. Improper or failed performance could disrupt the delivery of child care services, which could impact students’ ability to attend classes, work, or complete their program of study; it could hamper employees’ ability to attend work; or it could disrupt the availability of SBELA as a site for practicum experiences. Given the long history, institutional memory, and current expertise of staff and faculty across the Student Services Division, Instruction Division, and the Early Childhood Education Program, mitigation efforts could include the following: connecting students and employees to other child care options; providing additional funding to support child care attendance elsewhere; identifying other practicum sites; leveraging institutional knowledge and expertise to bridge gaps in service; or identifying additional service providers to support the services on an interim basis.

In sum, OC has reaffirmed that a financially healthy, vibrant and sustainable child care center on our main campus in Bremerton, would significantly benefit the College as a whole, our
students, employees, and their children, as well as the broader Kitsap County community.