







# Better Together: Convening for Impact

## WHY CONVENING MATTERS

Our region's challenges are interconnected.

Educational success, housing stability, early learning access, and culturally responsive systems cannot be solved in isolation.

Better Together brings leaders, practitioners, families, and community members together to:

-  **Break down silos**
-  **Build trust across sectors**
-  **Align strategy and shared goals**
-  **Move from conversation to coordinated action**

These convenings are designed to strengthen the *ecosystem*, not just individual programs.

Since Fall 2025, Better Together has convened cross-sector leaders to strengthen the systems that impact *youth, families, and opportunity* in our region.

Four collaborative groups are aligning action across *education, housing, early learning, youth voice, and Latinx success*.



## WHAT FUNDING SUPPORTS

Since Fall 2025, these four groups have been meeting to build trust, identify shared priorities, and co-create a shared vision and agenda for their focus areas.

Sustaining this work requires:

-  Community outreach & relationship-building
-  Meeting space & accessibility supports
-  Communications & marketing
-  Facilitation & coordination
-  Food & hospitality (removing participation barriers)
-  Strategy development & documentation

This is the infrastructure that makes collaboration possible.



**Better Together**

[bettertogethercentraloregon.org](http://bettertogethercentraloregon.org)

## WHY INVEST NOW

The *relationships* are built.  
The *priorities* are clear.  
The *will to act* exists.



# 4 CONVENING GROUPS



## Elevating Youth Voice to Shape the Future

**Purpose:** Center youth leadership in shaping policies, programs, and community decisions that affect them.

**Goal:** Embed youth voice into decision-making across systems, not as an add-on, but as standard practice.

### Current Work:

- Creating structured opportunities for youth-led dialogue
- Identifying barriers to authentic youth engagement
- Designing pathways for youth participation in civic and institutional spaces

## Latinx Success Initiative

**Purpose:** Advance coordinated, culturally responsive strategies that increase opportunity and success for Latinx youth and families.

**Goal:** Build sustained alignment that improves educational outcomes and long-term opportunity for Latinx youth.

### Current Work:

- Convening ~100 cross-sector leaders with roots dating back to 2012
- Identifying systemic barriers impacting Latinx students
- Strengthening collaboration between education, nonprofits, and community advocates

## Integrating a School Readiness & Early Learning Ecosystem

**Purpose:** Align early childhood partners to strengthen school readiness across Central Oregon.

**Goal:** Ensure every child enters kindergarten supported by a connected, accessible early learning ecosystem.

### Current Work:

- Mapping the early learning landscape
- Identifying service gaps and duplication
- Exploring coordinated referral and family navigation systems

## Housing x Education

**Purpose:** Address the intersection of housing instability and educational success.

**Goal:** Reduce housing-related barriers that disrupt learning and family stability.

### Current Work:

- Bringing together housing providers, educators, and community partners
- Exploring data and lived experience around housing-related disruptions
- Identifying shared intervention points



## INVEST IN COORDINATED COMMUNITY IMPACT

Support the backbone work that makes cross-sector collaboration possible.

Contact: Gabriela Peden, Executive Director | [gabriela@bettertogetherco.org](mailto:gabriela@bettertogetherco.org) | (541) 745-4355