



Early Learning Division

2021 Legislative Session Recap

The Early Learning Division would like to thank the Oregon Legislature for its deep and on-going support for early learning and child care during the 2021 Legislative Session. New legislation and the resources allocated during this session will assist the Early Learning Division (ELD) and our partner-agencies in advancing our mission to support all of Oregon’s young children and families to learn and thrive. Below is a summary of the legislation and its impact on our programs and services.

Passed HB 3073: Early Care and Education Governance

This legislation builds on Oregon’s work to increase access to affordable, high-quality early learning experiences and supports for children and families by establishing a new early learning agency. The new agency, the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC), will consolidate all early child care services into one state agency, including licensing, registration, and the distribution of state and federal child care funds, including Employment Related Day Care (ERDC). Most of these key functions currently exist in ELD, which is part of the Oregon Department of Education. HB 3073 creates DELIC beginning January 1, 2023 and the transfer of ERDC from Oregon Department of Human Services to DELIC by July 1, 2023.

Passed HB 2166: Establishing the Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion Prevention Program

This \$5.8 million General Fund investment funds a statewide system for early care and education (ECE) programs to provide mental health consultation services to ECE providers, support stable and inclusive placements for children and families, and reduce expulsion or suspension in birth-five programs. These funds will be available to the ELD based on a progress report during the 2022 Legislative Session.

Passed HB 2053: Preschool Promise and Baby Promise Statute Alignment

Aligns the community plans portion of the Baby Promise and Preschool Promise statutes codified in HB 2025 (2019).

Passed HB 2054: Update to Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation Program



Refines the scope for the use of program grant funds to better target resources to kindergarten transition, engaging families of children zero to five years in learning and development, and investing in priority populations and geographic areas identified in Early Learning Hub plans. HB 2054 codifies Early Learning Hubs as a pass-through entity for grant funds.

Passed HB 2055: Creates a Tribal Early Learning Hub

Creates a Tribal Early Learning Hub and Tribal Early Learning Hub Advisory Committee that will serve Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes.

Passed HB 2059: Reforming Spark Program and Tiered Reimbursement

Gives latitude to the ELD in designing a more effective quality rating and improvement system (Spark) to increase provider participation and families' use of the resource in finding quality early care and education programs.

Passed SB 757: Expanding Conditional Enrollment for the Central Background Registry

Expands conditional enrollment to include those who have passed the Oregon background check but are awaiting the out-of-state background check. This policy change assists in potential candidates in early learning and care programs to be processed in a more timely manner. Also, SB 757 requires that removal from the Central Background Registry would need to be "for cause."

Passed HB 5513 – Budget

All ELD programs were funded at current service levels for the 21-23 biennium. Some programs received an additional investment from the legislature. Those investments are:

Preschool Expansion

The legislature invested \$68 million for preschool program expansion. The expansion totals around 4,000 slots for Preschool Promise, Oregon Prekindergarten and Early Head Start and Healthy Families Oregon. \$38 million of those funds will be available to the ELD based on a report to the legislature in the 2022 Legislative Session.

Early Childhood Equity Fund

The Early Childhood Equity Fund received an additional \$3 million investment to ensure continued expansion of culturally-responsive early childhood and family engagement programming across the state.

Relief Nurseries

Relief Nurseries received an additional \$2 million investment from the legislature for pay parity.

Parenting Education

The Parenting Education budget was increased by \$2 million.

Restored cut to Reach Out & Read



Restored \$75,000 to the program lost during the 2020 Second Special Session.

Restored cut to Early Learning Hubs

Restored \$1.4 million to the Early Learning Hubs lost during the 2020 Second Special Session.

Passed HB 5042: Summer Learning Investment

Summer Preschool Programs

Invested \$8 million for an estimated additional 2,900 children to be served during the summer by expansion of the Preschool Promise program, Oregon Prekindergarten program, and the Early Childhood Equity Fund.

Kindergarten Transition

Increased the Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation Program (KPI) contracts with Early Learning Hubs by \$4 million to expand kindergarten transition programming to reach an additional 2,000 children and families and schools statewide.

Employment Related Day Care Investment

Invested \$8.2 million to enable Oregon Department of Human Services to expand the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program to more providers to participate in ERDC, increase supports for providers serving children with special needs, and serve 1,000 additional families, beginning this summer.

Passed HB 5006: ERDC Co-Pay Policy Changes

Invested \$95 million to fund the ERDC co-pay policy changes in HB 3073. Families at or below 100% of the federal poverty line (FPL) will have a zero co-pay and families above will have a cap on co-pays at 7% of their income.

Although the ELD scored key wins in policy and budget priorities, two bills developed in response to Secretary of State recommendations did not pass. However, the ELD will work with legislators to bring these bills back in the short session in 2022.

SB 49: License Exempt Child Care Background Check Process

Transfers the license exempt child care background check process for subsidized care from the Oregon Department of Human Services to the Office of Child Care in the ELD. The process enrolls license exempt providers in the Central Background Registry.

SB 50: Recorded Programs Oversight

Provides preschool and school-age recorded programs oversight by requiring the staff and volunteers of recorded programs to enroll in the Central Background Registry.

