

Oregon Legislative Update 2023



On June 25th, the 2023 Oregon Legislative session officially ended. Despite an unusual session and some legislative misses, we still achieved positive outcomes for young children, with persistent advocacy efforts and the hard work of Oregon's Early Childhood Coalition partners. Although our work is not done, we are making progress. With each step, we continue to drive policies that help make Oregon the best place to be a kid.

Highlights from 2023: Many inspiring stories unfolded during Oregon's legislative session. We have shared some of the highlights below!

DELIC Budget: Bipartisan Support

On June 7th, with a vote of 50-8, the Oregon House of Rep. passed the FIRST-EVER BUDGET for the Department of Early Learning & Care.

This historic moment was made even sweeter by bipartisan support from Rep. Neron (D), Rep. Reynolds (D), Rep. Hieb (R), Rep. Helfrich (R), and Rep. G. Smith (R). and Rep. Mannix (R) for more early childhood funding in the end-of-session "Christmas tree bill."

Road Shows: Multnomah County

"Early childhood investments are the ultimate upstream intervention, saving so much money for the state in the long-run and making life better for families right away. Both Republicans and Democrats, we all care about our children. We're asking you to invest in them."

Molly Day (Early Learning Director at the United Way of the Columbia Willamette + Co-Director of the Early Learning Hub in Multnomah) sharing on the power of early childhood investments.

Road Shows: Newport County

"Relief Nurseries are a major part of making sure that infrastructure is available for kids 0-5 years old. The brain is in critical development at this time, and for many of these families to escape the cycle poverty, they need direct intercession of people, and that's what relief nurseries can do."

Arnie Roblan (School Board member in Coos Bay and member of the federally recognized health center) on the critical impact of Relief Nurseries for families.

Lottery Bonds Hearing

"I'm here to testify about the exciting co-location of an affordable housing and early learning center project in Eugene. Homes for Good, Head Start of Lang County, and Early Childhood CARES formed a partnership a while ago, and we've been working towards... meeting the needs of families, together."

Judy Newman (Senior Advisor at Early Childhood CARES) asking for investment in a shovel-ready co-location project focused on combining community resources to better provide for families.

HB 2991 Hearing

"Our state must be better at recognizing the benefit that our programs, and the children and families within them, receive from the knowledge it takes to obtain our advanced degrees. The state must also do a better job of recognizing degrees outside of the United States, especially from those obtained from non-English speaking countries."

Zakkiyya Ibrahim (Owner and Director of Education Explorers) on why HB2991 matters for OR.





HB 3005 Hearing

"75% of communities in Oregon are considered child care deserts. When it comes to early childhood engagement, no Oregon county has sufficient capacity - not one. Building new facilities and maintaining capacity for these upstream investments in the lives of our children, families and communities should be standard practice for our state."




Tony DeFalco (Executive Director of Latino Network) in support of the possibilities created by HB 3005

Legislative Priorities & Agency Policy Option Packages (POPs)





EXPAND NEEDED FACILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE

-  **HB 3005** **Create a child care infrastructure fund.** Oregon allocated \$50 million to Business Oregon to fund projects, \$5 million to the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) to help providers access the fund, and more than \$11 million in shovel-ready early childhood projects.
-  **HB 2727** **Review zoning, building code, and permitting impact on child care.** Oregon will allocate \$225,000 to the Department of Land Conservation and Development to bring together stakeholders to identify challenges and best practices, and make recommendations for improvement at the city, county, and state levels.
-  **SB 599** **Protect child care providers in rental homes.** Landlords can no longer prevent licensed child care from operating in rental homes. They can require liability protection to be in place.
-  **OHCS POP 114** **Expand co-location of child care and affordable housing.** This effort currently has \$10 million, but did not receive the additional \$20 million requested by Oregon Housing and Community Services.




BUILD A DIVERSE, SKILLED, FAIRLY COMPENSATED WORKFORCE

-  **HB 2991** **Create clear and equitable workforce pathways.** Oregon allocated \$300 million to the Department of Early Learning and Care for community partners to gather input and craft recommendations for workforce pathway improvements.
-  **DELIC POP 101** **Continue to make needed increases to compensation in early childhood programs.** DELIC received:
 - \$1.7 million for Early Childhood Equity Fund to increase funding for existing providers
 - \$1.6 million for Relief Nurseries to continue wage increases first funded in 2022
 - \$2.8 million for Healthy Families Oregon to continue wage increases first funded in 2022
 - 7% per child increase for Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten (repurposing existing unspent funds)
 - 9% per child increase for Preschool Promise (repurposing existing unspent funds)
-  **HB 3561** **Early Learning Educator Scholarship Program (HB 3561 & HECC POP 302). Passed NOT funded.** The legislation passed to expand this scholarship program to include early childhood behavioral health, but no funding was allocated to implement this scholarship.







SUPPORT EARLY CHILDHOOD HEALTH & WELLBEING

-  **HB 5525** **State payment of non-federal Medicaid match for Nurse-Family Partnership.** No allocation was made to provide stability for counties that currently provide Nurse-Family Partnership services, or to support expansion.
-  **OHA POP 425** **Universally Offered Home Visits (Family Connects).** \$5.9 million was allocated to the Oregon Health Authority to expand this program statewide.
-  **OHA POP 414** **Implement Early Periodic Screening, Detection, and Treatment (EPSDT).** \$1 million was allocated to the Oregon Health Authority to strengthen Medicaid services for children.
-  **OHA POP 442** **Create state child health policy team.** The needed \$1.5 million was not allocated to hire staff at the Oregon Health Authority to focus specifically on children's health.


KEY

-  = Passed/Funded
-  = Did not pass
-  = Partially passed/funded

CONTINUE TO EXPAND SERVICES TO REACH MORE CHILDREN

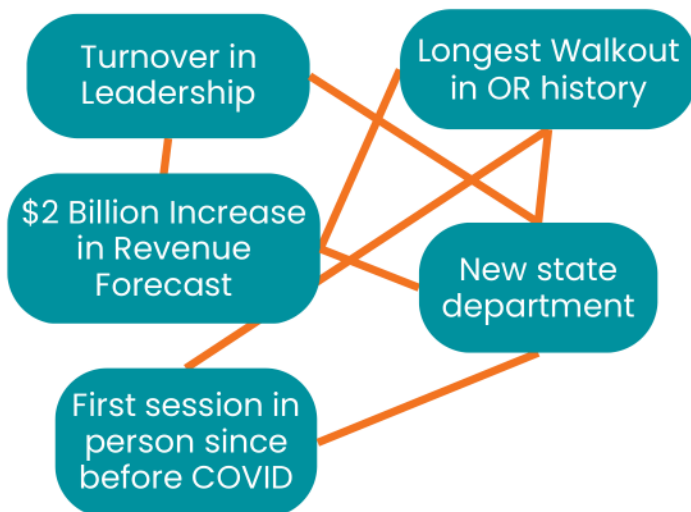
-  **HB 5013 Relief Nursery Expansion.** The Legislature did not allocate the requested funding to reach 855+ additional children across Oregon.
-  **HB 5013 Early Childhood Equity Fund Expansion.** The Legislature did not allocate funding to reach 1000+ additional children.
-  **DELCP OP 101 Expand early childhood programs to reach more children.** Preschool Promise, Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten (OPK), and Parenting Education were funded at current service level.
-  **ODE POP 105 Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education.** The Legislature did not allocate funding to prevent cuts to services for babies and preschoolers with disabilities and developmental delays.
-  **HB 5013 Increased Funding for Healthy Families Oregon.** Funding was allocated to restart services in Lincoln County, but no funding was allocated for needed state staff.
-  **DELCP OP 202 Employment Related Daycare (ERDC).** The Legislature allocated funding, but the Department of Early Learning & Care estimates this will still reduce the number of working families that can be served.

SUPPORT BIRTH TO FIVE EARLY LITERACY STRATEGIES

-  **HB 3198 Early Literacy Bill.** This legislation was a Children's Institute priority bill, focused on birth to 5 literacy. The central piece of this legislation is a ~\$100 million investment in school districts to improve early literacy instruction in preschool through 3rd grade. It also includes \$10 million for birth to five literacy strategies starting in 2024, and \$10 million for community-based literacy interventions.

A FEW MISSED OPPORTUNITIES:

- 1.** Funding cuts to **Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education** will result in cuts to services for babies & young children with disabilities.
- 2.** Not enough funding to support increased number of families accessing **Employment Related Daycare (ERDC).**
- 3.** Funding delayed for one year for **birth to five early literacy strategies.**



Unusual circumstances in this year's Legislature created challenges and delays. From massive turnover in legislative leadership, (including a new Governor, senate president, speaker of the house, 1/3 of legislators, and more) to coming back in person for the first time since before COVID, several influencing factors contributed to a uniquely chaotic session. Despite these road blocks, we adapted, and early childhood advocates provided a powerful voice on behalf of Oregon's youngest children and their families.

NEXT STEPS:

1. Support effective **implementation** of our wins.
2. Engage in **appreciation and accountability** for session outcomes and **build legislator support** for early childhood.
3. **Plan for the future.** Build a strong case for funding in the 2024 short session and look ahead to 2025.