



David Douglas School District

Don Grotting, Superintendent
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April 8, 2015

Committee Members:

For the record, I am Nancy Anderson, Assistant Director of Student Services in Douglas School District and Contractor for Region 6 Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education. I am submitting testimony in support of legislative funding investments in early childhood. The proposed funding for early childhood would increase access and quality of early childhood programs for children across the state. Investing in early childhood programs and services support thriving families and ensure children are ready to succeed in kindergarten.

I know that every child has an unlimited capacity to learn. However, Oregon is in the bottom quarter of all states nationally for access to preschool for 4 year olds. Oregon currently enrolls only 10%. Also, access to Head Start is limited with only 55% of the children be served. I know over 32,000 three and four-year olds across Oregon do not have access to high-quality preschool experiences before kindergarten. These children face a significant opportunity gap when they arrive at school. Many enter a year or two behind and do not catch up by third grade, placing them on a trajectory for limited success in school and life.

At David Douglas we've seen the power of early childhood education. Instead of investing scarce resources in programs and interventions that struggle to close the achievement gap after the third grade we believe the key is to preventing that gap in the first place. By providing access to quality preschool and supporting families we've shown we can make a difference and change the trajectory for our students.

We can improve access through HB 5016 and HB 3380. The legislation will provide funding to build a high-quality preschool system through a mixed delivery model. A mixed delivery model ensures we can meet the needs of our diverse families. In building a system, we will set high-quality standards and align our early childhood systems to our school systems k-12. This funding will support over 1500 children from families who aren't eligible for Head and can't afford private preschool.

I believe if we are really going to move Oregon's education forward and be able to support a world class economy we need to start with our youngest students. We are excited about the positive change we see through our early investments in preschool and recognize the importance in offering this to all children and families. I urge you to support HB 5016 and HB 3380 investing in an Early Childhood Preschool System.

Sincerely,

Nancy Anderson
Assistant Director Student Services
Contractor Region 6
David Douglas School District

Visit our web page: www.ddouglas.k12.or.us E-mail: David_Douglas@ddouglas.k12.or.us

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