



April 13, 2017

Dear Chair Lively, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

We, the Coalition of Communities of Color, are writing to express our strong support for the -1 Amendment to HB 3069- creating an Early Childhood Equity Fund. Oregon's diverse populations are growing and more and more children of color are entering the early learning community. We know how important it is to invest in the earliest years of a young child's life to set strong foundations for their future learning. In Oregon, many of our families have diverse cultural and linguistic needs and don't have access to programs designed to meet those needs. Creating an Early Childhood Equity Fund to invest in culturally-specific early learning programs is a critical step toward expanding access and reducing racial disparities in educational outcomes for children across the state.

The Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC) is an alliance of 19 culturally-specific and pan-immigrant and refugee community based organizations working to advance racial justice by addressing socioeconomic disparities, institutional barriers, and inequity in services. The CCC also engages in culturally-specific, community-based research to ensure that data is adequately capturing the lived experiences of communities of color. *Unsettling Profiles*, a report by the Coalition of Communities of Color and PSU, found that children of color experiences significant disparities in access to preschool education. The report also found that even when children of color were involved in early childhood education, they were still perceived as being less prepared for kindergarten than their white counterparts. Many organizations with culturally-specific early learning programs have already established a track record of achieving better outcomes for children of color and their families, which is why we are calling on this legislature to help culturally-specific organizations expand on this success.

HB 3069-1 addresses a significant barrier to achieving better outcomes for children of color and provides a great opportunity to expand access to proven culturally-specific programs designed and led by communities of color. The CCC hopes you will support HB 3069-1 and join us in our collective efforts to advance racial equity in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Julia Meier

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julia Meier", written in a cursive style.

Executive Director

