

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Department of Education Preschool Expansion

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Education Subcommittee
Carrier: Representative McLain

On February 14th, the Education Subcommittee recommended acknowledging receipt of a report from the Department of Education on preschool expansion.

In 2021, the Legislature expanded access to four early learning programs offered through the Early Learning Division with \$68 million Other Funds from the Fund for Student Success. The Department of Administrative Services was asked to unschedule \$38 million of this amount pending a report from ELD on the roll-out of the expansion, the supply of qualified providers, the number of filled and total existing slots, and the distribution of the existing and planned slots across the state.

The Department reported on each of the four programs separately, as they differ from one another based on program structure and services provided. Each program conducted some type of survey to assess providers' interest in and ability to expand services beginning in September 2022, and used that information to inform the roll-out plans. The Subcommittee discussed the barriers that families face when seeking Preschool Promise services, provider wages and pay parity in the Healthy Families Oregon program, and how space limitations in early childcare facilities can hinder the transition from half-day Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten programs to full-day programs. The report was comprehensive, and addressed the requirements for rescheduling \$38 million Other Funds to support program expansion.

The Education Subcommittee recommends approval.