



STATE OF OREGON
Office of the Governor
TINA KOTEK

EARLY LITERACY AMENDMENTS

March 13, 2023

HB 3454 is a placeholder bill filed at the Governor's request. The Governor's office has spent recent months engaging with education stakeholders, federally recognized Tribes, and Representative Kropf's office to develop an amendment that focuses on strategies to improve early literacy across Oregon. The following amendment, informed by those conversations, will be used to merge HB 3454 and HB 3198 into one bill. This summary divides the amendment into two sections: school strategies and community strategies.

In addition to the legislative strategies highlighted below, there are two additional steps that Oregon needs to build a foundation of long-term improvements to our state's early literacy landscape: a) aligning teacher preparation to ensure elementary teachers are prepared to teach reading and writing, and b) building public awareness of the importance of early literacy and our collective role and responsibilities. We know these issues cannot be solved by budget and policy alone. As we learn from other states about what works, we must also recognize that building and implementing an intentional, thoughtfully designed, and comprehensive strategy will take more than one bill, budget line, or legislative session. We must commit to pursuing a combination of policy, budget, and leadership at the state and local levels both now and in the years to come. This bill is an important first step in that process.

SCHOOL STRATEGIES

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is directed to establish an Early Literacy Success Initiative grant program. The purposes of the initiative are to:

- Increase early literacy for students in prekindergarten and elementary grades;
- Reduce early literacy academic disparities for student groups that have historically experienced academic disparities;
- Increase support to parents and guardians to be full partners of their children's literacy skill and knowledge development; and
- Increase access to student- and family-centered early literacy support provided by public or nonprofit providers that are evidence-based, culturally responsive.

All districts are eligible for noncompetitive grants and must:

- Evaluate their early literacy program using criteria developed by ODE (technical assistance will be provided to small and rural districts to ensure equity in access to funding).
- Maintain an accurate, up-to-date inventory of literacy assessments, tools, and curriculum being used, including digital resources, to support literacy. The inventory must include the date of adoption and provide easily accessible ways for districts to compare their selections to resources that are research-aligned, formative, diagnostic, and/or culturally responsive. ODE will adopt rules to implement this and publish the inventory in an easily accessible online database.
- Develop two-way communication efforts that support engagement and district and school-level communication of its literacy strategy to families and the broader community.
- The district's Early Literacy Program Evaluation must be presented to the governing body of the grant recipient at an open meeting, including: (i) Oral presentation of the evaluation by an administrator of the

grant recipient to the governing body of the grant recipient; and (ii) Opportunity for the public to comment on the evaluation at an open meeting.

Allowable uses are limited to the following:

- Providing coaching to teachers and administrators in prekindergarten and elementary grades to improve early literacy instruction. Coaching must be research-based and include content that is based on the science of reading and writing and includes teaching strategies for diverse learners.
- Providing early literacy-focused extended learning programs that are culturally responsive, aligned with research-aligned standards determined by the State Board of Education.
- High dosage tutoring to students that integrate reading and writing which must be delivered by a qualified tutor. Ensure staff are trained to implement program requirements and work effectively with all students within their school population, including students who have been identified as English learners and students with disabilities.
- Purchasing training time for educators, school staff, and school leaders to attend the trainings; purchasing curriculum and materials (aligned to ODE rubric based on science of reading); hiring literacy specialists, coaches, or interventionists.

Timelines and Planning

- ODE shall make the first distributions for the 2023-24 school year. Strategic planning for this grant program must be aligned with strategic planning for distribution from the Student Investment Account.
- Eligible applicants shall develop a four-year plan for the use of grant money no later than the 2025-27 biennium. The plan must be updated every two years. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to further strengthen operational alignment across grant programs within the scope of their authority.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Parent, Caregiver & Family Engagement in Early Literacy

- Grants will be available to expand existing culturally and linguistically responsive early literacy programs with family and caregiver engagement. Allowable uses will also include training and coaching for direct service staff in early literacy using approaches that are aligned with Early Literacy Success School Strategy.
- Planning grants will be available to develop new program models for engaging parents and their children in early literacy, aligned with Early Literacy Success School Strategy. Prioritize equitable access statewide.
- Funding will be available for high dosage tutoring programs and training to tutors to qualify them for instruction in a manner consistent with Early Literacy Success School Strategy.
- There will be support for continuing, expanding, or seeding new language revitalization efforts – including materials like books and digital storytelling – by federally-recognized Tribes.

Appropriate funding to the following agencies for the following purposes:

- **Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC):** Expansion of the Early Childhood Equity Fund and Kindergarten Partnership Innovation Fund to ensure a statewide reach for the above allowable uses.
- **ODE:** Develop a grant program with the above allowable uses, aligned with these plans and ensuring a statewide reach: American Indian/Alaska Native State Grant, African American/Black Student Success Plan, Latino/a & Indigenous Student Success Plan, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Student Success Plan.