



March 30, 2023

Paul Andrews High
Desert ESD

Ben Bergantz, Pacific
Crest Affordable
Housing

Lori Colvin, Healthy
Families of the High
Desert

Caroline Cruz,
Confederated
Tribes of Warm
Springs

Tamara Harris,
FQHC/Mosaic Medical

Leticia Hernandez,
Parent & Diversity Rep.

Amy Howell, COCC

Teresa Martin, The
Children's Learning
Center

April Munks,
Department of Human
Services

Shay Mikkleson,
Jefferson County ESD

Oscar Tatom, Parent

Kristen Tobias,
Pacific Source

Patty Wilson,
NeighborImpact

Ex-Officio Members:

Shannon Lipscomb, OSU
Cascades

Carmen Madrid, COHC

House Committee on Education

RE: House Bill 3198 and proposed amendment to merge HB 3454

Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Hudson, Vice-Chair Wright and members of the Education Committee:

I am pleased to submit this letter sharing the impact of current investments in Central Oregon as you consider House Bill 3198 and proposed amendment to merge HB 3454 and HB 3198 to expand early learning and literacy services through the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC).

Funding from the Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation (KPI) and Early Learning Equity Fund currently support services to 2200 children across the region with emphasis on traditionally underserved populations. Current efforts include school readiness program Juntos Aprendemos for emerging English language/bilingual students and families; frontier school readiness program for Post/Paulina upper country; access to books for rural children birth to school age; UpStart, an online school readiness program where other services are not available; and, work with tribal Papalaxsimisha program to promote native language and culturally appropriate early literacy services for Warm Springs families. Professional development investments support Social Emotional and Growth Mindset training and coaching for regional early learning and K-3 leaders and implementation of the regional Early Learning Conference annually.

A Paulina parent recently shared her appreciation in being able to co-design options for her 4 year old entering the frontier K-8 school in the coming year. "Thank you for listening to the needs of this special community. We definitely need some options to help get our kiddos ready and excited to learn in Kindergarten."

An expansion of KPI and Equity Funds in Central Oregon would accelerate our efforts to provide literacy and school readiness services and expand transition services to Kindergarten for up to 1000 additional underserved children and families. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Please contact me if you have questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brenda Comini".

Brenda Comini, Director
Early Learning Hub of Central Oregon