



IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

BUILDING NEW BEGINNINGS

10301 NE Glisan Street

Portland, Oregon 97220

www.irco.org

MAIN OFFICE

AFRICA HOUSE

EASTERN OREGON

GREATER MIDDLE EAST
CENTER

PACIFIC ISLANDER &
ASIAN FAMILY CENTER

SLAVIC AND EASTERN
EUROPEAN CENTER

April 3rd, 2023

Re: HB 3198 – Early Literacy

Chair Neron, Vice Chairs Hudson and Wright, and members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 3198, a bill with key investments in the community that we hope will contribute to the work of the Early Childhood Equity Fund and Early Childhood Equity Collaborative.

The committee must support the passage of this bill along with any investments for culturally specific early literacy programs and community-based initiatives.

IRCO is a grantee of the Early Childhood Equity Fund along with other culturally specific non-profit organizations that serve Black, Indigenous, people of color, and immigrant and refugee communities.

This initiative is part of the state's robust promises to lower achievement and literacy gaps among the children of historically disenfranchised or underrepresented communities.

IRCO, using the fund, has increased our capacity to serve children through our culturally specific home visiting programs, preschools, workforce development, parent leadership, and other community-based programs and advocacy.

Along with family and caregiver engagement, our programs train and coach direct service staff in early literacy, develop new program models for engagement and care, and prioritize equitable access statewide.

IRCO early learning programs are already aligned with HB 3198's proposed initiative's goals and the Early Literacy Success School Strategy. Our work addresses this bill's stated goals of reducing academic disparities for groups that have historically experienced these disparities; increasing support to parents to enable them to be full partners in the development of their child's literacy; and increasing student access- and family-centered early literacy support.



**IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION**

BUILDING NEW BEGINNINGS

10301 NE Glisan Street

Portland, Oregon 97220

www.irco.org

MAIN OFFICE

AFRICA HOUSE

EASTERN OREGON

**GREATER MIDDLE EAST
CENTER**

**PACIFIC ISLANDER &
ASIAN FAMILY CENTER**

**SLAVIC AND EASTERN
EUROPEAN CENTER**

With your continued support and investment in existing programs like the Early Childhood Equity Fund, community-based organizations like ours will continue to expand the state's culturally and linguistically responsive early literacy infrastructure.

I thank you for your support of our BIPOC, immigrant, refugee, and migrant children in the State of Oregon and the opportunity to address this body.

Alexander Riedlinger

Policy Advocacy Coordinator

Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization