



Oregon Center for Creative Learning

The
Children's
Museum
OF SOUTHERN OREGON

The
Ivy
School

May 5, 2023

Honorable Members of the Ways & Means Committee:

Oregon Center for Creative Learning (formerly Kid Time) thanks you for your past support of our organization and the incredible impact it has had on our community. Quality, age and culturally appropriate spaces for children and families to gather is imperative, now more than ever, as we work to build social connections and provide pathways for upward mobility.

We come to you today with a \$4M request on an \$8M project to expand the capacity of our building. We have already secured \$2M, and are confident in raising the remaining funds if we are to receive this request. The response to the services we provide has been tremendous – this is a wonderful sign for the long-term health of the community. We all know that access to early learning opportunities provides an incredible return on investment for decades to come. However, we do not have enough space to accommodate those seeking our services.

This project has broad community support – a bipartisan coalition of all 4 regional Legislators, Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, The City of Medford, Peter Buckley & Southern Oregon Success, The Medford School District, The Children's Institute, Travel Medford, Amanda Kotler – Director of Nursing, Rogue Regional Medical Center (The region's largest employer), and many more.

Our facility serves as the hub of our larger collaborative operations. We are the largest provider of Preschool Promise in the region (one of the largest providers in the State). With 12 classrooms throughout the community. This project allows us to increase that capacity further.

Despite our best efforts, Southern Oregon still serves just 26% of the 0-5 population with preschool/childcare. To help serve the remaining 74%, we provide “preschool without the childcare component.” These are instructed, drop-in, early learning programs based on our curriculum and provided 6 days a week. We serve thousands of families regionally who otherwise would have no access to early learning programs. This project doubles our capacity to serve.

Increasing the early childhood workforce is imperative. We serve as a primary training ground for new educators coming into the field thanks to our close collaboration with Rogue Community College and Southern Oregon University. This project includes a professional development and classroom observation space to build the industry workforce for our organization and the region.

Having quality family resources is essential to economic development. This project helps surrounding businesses with employee recruitment and retention by increasing childcare and providing added family opportunities. This investment is regional economic multiplier. The added tourism benefits based on the previous project could yield \$3.5M in additional annual revenue to the community.

These funds will make help set a secure foundation for thousands of children in our community, every year, for many decades to come. I hope we can add your name to the many list of enthusiastic supporters. Thank you.

Sunny Spicer
Executive Director



 Sunny@tcmsso.org

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 www.tcmsso.org



Oregon Center for Creative Learning
The Children's Museum
The Ivy School

Oregon Center for Creative Learning

FORMERLY KID TIME DISCOVERY EXPERIENCE

Addressing The Early Learning Crisis In Southern Oregon

PROJECT BUDGET: \$8M

INCLUDING:

- **State Request \$4M**
- **Secured:** \$1M Federal HUD EDI Grant
\$1M Community Donation
- **Planned:** \$2M Private Foundation Grants & Donor Gifts

KEY STATE INDICATORS

- Enhancing Workforce Development
- Regional Economic Development
- Building Early Childhood Capacity

PROPOSAL

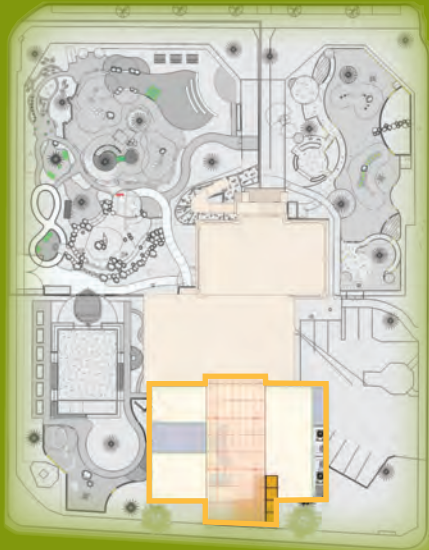
Build 12,000 sq ft addition to complete this regional family resource that is a catalyst for economic development

THE NEED

Southern Oregon faces a critical shortage of resources that serve the education, social, and cultural needs of children and families. OCCL is a community hub that serves thousands of children and their families each month. With your support, we can build on over 20 years of success and meet the following needs:

- Support workforce development in Southern Oregon through addition of new positions and onsite training and internships for early childhood educators
- Increase professional development opportunities for educators through onsite classes and trainings
- Increase the number of early childhood educators in the region and stabilize the early childhood workforce
- Increase the number of visitors to Southern Oregon with a world-class facility, supporting economic development goals for the region
- Increased capacity for early childhood development resources, including low- and no-cost preschool

OCCL has attracted visitors from every county in Oregon, states across the country, and at least eight countries around the world since its opening, providing an important tourist destination. After a significant renovation project of the Historic Carnegie Library Building in downtown Medford, this final phase of expansion will add an additional 12,000 square feet of space for classes, exhibits, and professional development opportunities.



The proposed two story addition on the current facility (the Historic Carnegie Library located in Downtown Medford) **will add an additional 12,000 sq. feet, offering unique opportunities that can't be realized without additional space:**

- A professional development and observation space to help build the teaching workforce and address the critical shortage of qualified early childhood educators
- The observation space doubles as workspace for professional therapists and service providers working with children in need of early intervention services
- Increased family education space doubling our capacity to serve families with parent education, parent engagement, and drop-in early learning programs
- 3 additional preschool classrooms with a total of 60 full-time slots- increasing the building capacity by 63%



Sunny Spicer, Executive Director

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• tcmsso.org

Oregon Center for Creative Learning is a nonprofit children's museum & early learning center in downtown Medford.

OREGON CENTER FOR CREATIVE LEARNING PROVIDES:

- Regional Community Hub of Educational & Recreational Activities
- Quality Educational Experiences
- Family activities
- 5 STAR SPARK Preschool/Childcare including subsidized programs
- Preschool without the Childcare Component
- Free Instructed Programs
- Literacy Programs
- Music & Arts Activities
- STEAM Programs
- Interactive Play
- Outdoor & Nature Exploration
- Clay Studio
- Culinary Teaching Kitchen & Nutrition Education

We serve families of all income levels, offer bilingual and multicultural programs, and collaborate with a host of regional organizations serving children and families!



ESTIMATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTAL IMPACT OF THIS PROJECT (based on previous project analysis):

- 100 construction-related jobs and added \$17M to our local economy in direct support, business to business transactions, etc.
- \$5M in annual benefit from educational programs and added jobs in childcare.
- \$3.5+ annually in jobs, tourism and hospitality, and downtown revitalization.



Our proposed project increases capacity for all families, with 70% of those currently served receiving some form of financial support.

 PARENT TESTIMONIAL

The Ivy School has changed not only my son's life but has helped me transform mine. I would not have been able to send him without the scholarship we received. I have been clean and sober for four years, and because he is able to attend school, I was able to also go back to school. I graduated two weeks ago at the top of my class and became a peer support specialist. While he is in school, I can go to work and therapy appointments and connect with other resources in the community that have **helped me be the best mother, employee, and citizen that I can be.**

The Ivy School has truly changed our lives. It was so hard to find a daycare, school or program in our valley that had availability and was high quality. I feel truly blessed to be given a second chance in life. A second chance for my son to succeed and a second chance for our family unit to succeed.

I am truly grateful that he is able to go to The Ivy School not just for my son, but also to support my freedom to pursue my own success.





OREGON STATE LEGISLATURE

March 28, 2023

Re: Funding request for Oregon Center for Creative Learning

To Senator Elizabeth Steiner & Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

The Medford region legislators are united in our request for \$4 million in lottery bond and/or other funds for Oregon Center for Creative Learning (formerly Kid Time), a nonprofit early learning center located in downtown Medford. This appropriation will play a vital role in the OCCL's structural addition to the historic Carnegie Library building, nearly doubling the size of the facility. This appropriation request is a top priority for our legislative delegation.

OCCL is a nonprofit 501(C)3 organization that provides family learning opportunities, early childhood programs and arts/cultural experiences to thousands of children throughout the Southern Oregon region. Since the recent move and renovation to the 1900's era Carnegie Building, OCCL has experienced rapid growth, and serves thousands who otherwise would have little or no access to quality early learning activities, family engagement opportunities and childcare.

Thanks in part to a \$2M grant provided by the state in 2020, the newly renovated Carnegie Building provides a vibrant hub where children and families from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and with varying abilities come together for meaningful learning and social experiences. This additional funding request will build on the success of the initial renovation by adding necessary space to accommodate our growing community.

The initial investment in 2020 has made our already popular programs even more popular and our community is eager for more. The 2020 investment leveraged and inspired an additional \$7M+ in contributions. In turn, Southern Oregon benefited with 103 construction jobs impacted and a total regional economic benefit of \$17.3M. The new jobs created in childcare yield an additional \$6M of economic benefit to the community with 41 jobs created or supported. The added jobs in the Discovery Center yield 13 onsite and 13 additional jobs with an estimated \$3.2M annually in economic benefit to the area in tourism, hospitality and other supported business to business transactions. This new project will have a similar economic impact with the scope and investment being similar. The OCCL proposal will generate multiple benefits, including downtown revitalization, increased access for youth and education programs, a sought after travel destination, improved graduation rates, decreased crime, economic development and the infusion of 120,000 annual visitors to downtown Medford.

This project is aligned with many of the statewide efforts underway including the Student Success Act, and it meets the goals defined in Raise Up Oregon in being child, family, and community centered. The proposal is supported by the Medford School District, Asante (the region's largest employer), Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc, law enforcement, healthcare professionals, business, and a wide variety of others.

The total project cost is \$8,000,000. This project has secured a \$1M Federal HUD Economic Development Grant, and just over \$1M in community and grant funds to date. Again, this partnership reflects the strong support and respect that OCCL has earned through over two decades of service in the community. We have attached background information on the organization, the current proposal and progress to date.

Thank you for your consideration of this important and wonderful program for our community. We appreciate your guidance, and we look forward to your support and guidance on our request. We stand ready to provide any additional information that you will need.

Sincerely,



Representative Pam Marsh



Senator Jeff Golden



Representative Kim Wallan



Representative Emily McIntire

CC:

Senator Fred Girod
Representative Paul Holvey
Senate President Rob Wagner
Senate Majority Leader Kate Lieber
Senate Republican Leader Tim Knopp
Speaker of the House Dan Rayfield
House Republican Leader Vikki Breese-Iverson



MEDFORD
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

To: Senator Girod & Representative Holvey
Ways & Means Capitol Construction Co-Chairs

Senator Steiner & Representative Sanchez
Ways & Means Co-Chairs

FROM: City of Medford

DATE: March 24, 2023

RE: Support for Funding Request

This letter is to garner your support for the \$4M state funding request for the Oregon Center for Creative Learning (formerly Kid Time).

Located in Jackson County, Oregon, the City of Medford has a population of 86,367 and serves as the County seat. Medford is the demographic and economic hub of the Southern Oregon region. With the continued growth in healthcare, retail, and manufacturing, the City anticipates a continued growth rate of 1.8% per year. The City of Medford partnered with OCCL to create a family destination in the Carnegie Building, which has already improved economic development outcomes for Southern Oregon. With this growth, we continue to need additional Preschool/childcare opportunities which are essential for employee recruitment and retention efforts along with adequate family resources/family tourism and workforce development. This project is a key factor in those efforts.

We are not alone in our support of this project – accompanying letters from the region's largest employer, Asante, our public school district, our regional economic development organization, and our regional travel organization just to reference a few, all join in to endorse this effort because of the collective benefit to our region.

One of the major advantages to having a program such as OCCL is that although Medford is a thriving community, we still experience 9% student homelessness. There is an estimated 100% poverty level in seven elementary schools located on our west side in the vicinity of OCCL. Positive experiences and healthy adult interactions like those found at OCCL can remediate childhood trauma often caused by these circumstances. Early childhood interventions have the greatest success at reducing societal costs associated with adverse childhood experiences, improving long-term graduation rates, reducing crime

rates and decreasing substance abuse.

OCCL has a long history of partnering with local schools, nonprofit organizations and government agencies to provide high quality services to families across a broad economic spectrum. Early care and education providers are often the first adults to recognize emerging developmental disabilities and delays in young children. When disabilities are detected early and young children receive the right level of early intervention, the impact of delays and disabilities are reduced, and children need fewer special education services in preschool and K-12. Kid Time educators work with families in an alternative setting that is welcoming and accessible to all. This project will make these educators more available to more families at a critical time.

High cost of housing and commercial property in our region make it difficult to develop and maintain adequate facilities for early childhood opportunities. The City recognizes its vital contribution to the community and has entered into an in-kind agreement to lease our 15,242 square foot historic Carnegie library building for \$1 per year for up to 50 years. Based on a market analysis, this equates to \$137,000 per year for a total of \$3.425 million the first 25 years in in-kind donation from Medford. We have continued to offer additional support to this project through scholarships for children, staff support on construction efforts and more.

OCCL aligns with state goals around early childhood and we are asking for your funding support as well. Investing in early childhood is good for kids, their families, our communities, and our state. This project will continue to show a return on investment for many generations to come.

Respectfully,


Brian Sjothun
City Manager

March 10, 2023

Oregon Legislature

RE: Support for The Children's Museum of Southern Oregon/The Ivy School

Honorable Members of the Oregon Legislature:

Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc. (SORED) strongly offers our letter of support for a funding allocation to the Oregon Center for Creative Learning in Medford. Comprised of both the Children's Museum of Southern Oregon and the Ivy School, this local amenity is incredibly busy with visitors from multiple states, and moreover, their pre-school program has a significantly long wait list.

The Center for Creative Learning, located in a historic Carnegie library facility, has already secured a \$1 million federal grant to expand and is in need of additional resources for which they are requesting a \$4 million allocation from the State of Oregon. SORED support for this project aligns with two key initiatives identified in our 2020-2025 One Rogue Valley Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS): Tourism and Placemaking.

INITIATIVE 4. TOURISM Support the organizations and places that strengthen the tourism and experiential environment in Southern Oregon.

- 4.1. Support initiatives to expand tourism in Southern Oregon.
- 4.3. Leverage the region's thriving arts and culture industry to promote the region's amenities outside the Rogue Valley and within the region.

INITIATIVE 5. PLACEMAKING Nurture an environment that preserves Southern Oregon's quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors.

- 5.2. Support city-specific quality-of-place initiatives that contribute to the unique identity of Southern Oregon's communities and encourage the development of vibrant downtowns.
- 5.2.4. Champion placemaking projects that create community amenities for residents, including youth.
- 5.2.5. Support the preservation and revitalization of historic and historically significant buildings, especially in underserved areas and urban renewal Districts.

We highly recommend your consideration and funding of this request to ensure local resources and programs for preschoolers are diverse and available, to allow families in our region have peace of mind and quality childcares options as they return to the workforce. Amenities such as the Oregon Center for Creative learning in Medford are critical to our regional economic vitality. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Colleen Padilla, Executive Director
colleen@soredi.org | (541) 601-6918

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FOUNDING UNDERWRITER
Jackson County
Josephine County
City of Grants Pass
City of Medford

EXECUTIVE UNDERWRITER
AllCare Health
Asante
Avista Utilities
Banner Bank
Breeze Capital Management, LLC /
Standard Financial
Brophy Schmor, LLP
Cow Creek Band of Umpqua
Tribe of Indians
ECS Composites
First Interstate Bank
Harry & David Operations
Hunter Communications
Lithia Motors, Inc.
Moss Adams, LLP
PacifiCorp
People's Bank of Commerce
Plexis Healthcare Systems
Regence BlueCross BlueShield
Rogue Credit Union
Tribal One
Umpqua Bank
US Bank

UNDERWRITER
Amy's Kitchen
Ausland Group
Boise Cascade, LLC
Britt Music and Arts Festival
Carestream
Cascade Wood Products
Coldwell Banker Commercial NW
Cummins, Inc.
Cutler Investment Group
Dutch Bros
Evergreen Federal Bank
Fire Mountain Gems & Beads
Jackson County Fire District #3
JB Steel, Inc.
KDRV
KeyBank
Knife River
KOGAP Enterprises, Inc.
Lava Lanes
Linde Group
Mahar Homes, Inc.
MasterBrand Cabinets, Inc.
Medford Fabrication
Met One Instruments
Morgan Lodging, LLC
Murphy Company
Naumes, Inc.
Navigator's Hospitality, LLC
NIC Industries
NiceBadge
OMEP - Oregon Manufacturing
Extension Partnership, Inc.
Oregon Tech
ORW Architecture, Inc.
Outlier Construction
Pacific Retirement Services
Providence Medford Medical Center
Rentec Direct, LLC
Rogue Community College
Rogue Disposal & Recycling
(Rogue Waste)
Rogue Valley Precast
Rogue Workforce Partnership
S & B James Construction
South Ashland Business Park, LLC
S.O. Education Service District
Southern Oregon Sanitation
Southern Oregon University
SPACE, LLC
Tekmanagement
Valley Immediate Care
ZCS Engineering & Architecture

Dear Honorable Members of the Oregon Legislature,

It is my understanding that The Children's Museum of Southern Oregon and The Ivy School are requesting funds to expand the museum and preschool space. They will also offer an education space for instructing teachers in the community on early childhood education. They have had fifty thousand visitors in less than six months since they have been open.

As a mother of a five-year-old, The Children's Museum of Southern Oregon provides a safe space for my child to learn and grow through play. He loves the different exhibits, and you can see him flourish in a creative, supportive environment. I am so grateful to have this asset in our community.

As a healthcare employer and one of the largest employers in Southern Oregon, we are in the midst of a crisis that is compounded by significant staffing deficits and record high volume of patients. Building and supporting our workforce is critically important to continue to care for our community. To recruit and retain talent, we need to ensure there is adequate early childhood development opportunities. This will increase access to early learning which supports my colleagues with childcare, as well as promotes the museum as a family friendly space to make our community more attractive to applicants with families.

This expansion will allow additional preschool classrooms, as well as expand the museum programming space. This would include a roof top education and event space, large indoor space where traveling exhibits can be features as well as additional STEAM programming and move a teaching kitchen and clay studio into the museum space. These resources are vital for our community and so necessary. These services foster engagement and create a sense of belonging for parents in the workforce. This is my letter of full support of their desire to expand and receive additional funding.

Sincerely,



Amanda Kotler

Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer- Asante



March 28, 2023

Honorable Members of the Oregon Legislature

I served as the House Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Ways & Means from December of 2008 until June of 2016.

Those were very challenging years for our state, going through and building back after the Great Recession. If there is one thing I regret about the decisions made during my tenure as Co-Chair it is this: we did not invest nearly enough in early childhood education and services. We never have, and it is doing a tremendous disservice to our children, our families, our communities and our state.

Since retiring from the legislature, I have worked with Southern Oregon Success, a collaboration of all levels of education, health care, mental health care, human services, public safety and workforce development in Jackson and Josephine counties. Our collaboration is committed to the success of every child, and there is no doubt whatsoever that investing as early as possible has the greatest positive impact.

The Oregon Center for Creative Learning is the flagship for our region's effort to ensure every child has the opportunity to enter Kindergarten ready to thrive. The museum and the Ivy School are absolutely vital to the success of our efforts.

Their work has expanded rapidly in the past several years, but the demand has increased even faster. They need to increase capacity to address the need and to help keep our region moving forward, for the benefit of our kids and for us all.

The relatively small investment requested from the lottery bond package this year will be more than matched by the outcomes that will be realized for children in Southern Oregon for many years to come. I urge you to please make this investment.

Thanks & Onward,



Peter Buckley
Southern Oregon Success

March 15, 2023

Honorable Members of the Oregon Legislature:

As the superintendent of the Medford School District, it is my pleasure to write this letter of support on behalf of Oregon Center for Creative Learning's (OCCL) request for \$4 million towards the expansion of their facilities in downtown Medford.

With both the Children's Museum of Southern Oregon and the Ivy School, OCCL is an important hub of learning in our region that parents rely on. We know that access to high quality early childhood education is a positive game changer for students, and the programs offered by OCCL are among the best in the business. Here in Medford, it is a high priority to increase access to early childhood programs as we know that investments early on will have the greatest impact on the future of our students. This is why the Medford School District partners with OCCL's Ivy School to expand access to quality preschool.

Currently, we are able to serve approximately 100 students in our preschool partnership with OCCL, which we began because there are simply not enough high quality early childhood slots for children prior to entering kindergarten. This is not adequate, as the majority of students we see are not able to access high quality early childhood education. Throughout our region there simply are not enough facilities, or facilities lack the capacity to serve the population in our community. Still, the more children that gain access to the types of social emotional and early learning experiences found in the programs offered in the Children's Museum and Ivy School, the less we will need to intervene with students in order for them to reach their full potential.

This project will go a long way to reach our collective goal of serving more children when they need it most – in the early years. We also find that when parents are engaged in the learning process, our students are more likely to thrive. OCCL is unique in its approach in that the parents are equally involved and mentored from the start. They are more likely to stay involved in their child's education making the transition to kindergarten and through the K-12 system a positive one. This project is a wonderful example of community collaboration and it receives our full support. Should you have any questions, please let me know.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bret A. Champion".

Bret Champion, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Medford School District



101 E. 8th Street
Medford, OR 97501
Phone: 541-779-4847
www.travelmedford.org

March 20, 2023

Honorable Members of the Oregon Legislature,

Travel Medford, the official destination marketing organization (DMO) for the city of Medford and the largest DMO in Southern Oregon, strongly offers this letter of support for the \$4 million funding request by Oregon Center for Creative Learning. Their Children's Museum of Southern Oregon is an incredibly busy destination for visitors to our region, drawing families from all corners of our state, across the country and even around the world.

Located in Medford's Historic Downtown District, near a number of businesses and cultural attractions, this project is important to the ongoing revitalization of Medford. OCCL has already secured \$2 million to expand this popular destination and community asset and more resources will attract more visitors to the area and positively boosting the local economy.

The Children's Museum of Southern Oregon is a pillar institution with reach beyond Medford. It is the one of the largest children's museums in the state and offers invaluable family and educational serves to tourists in the Rogue Valley and Southern Oregon, which aligns with our goals at Travel Medford. The family-friendly point of interest attracts a targeted demographic for visitors and aids in the expansion of their projects, which strengthens our tourism infrastructure and helps Medford become a premier tourist destination.

I wholeheartedly recommend your consideration and funding of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T.J. Holmes".

T.J. Holmes
Senior Vice President, Travel Medford
541-608-8533 | tjh@travelmedford.org