

A-Engrossed
House Bill 2815

Ordered by the House March 20
Including House Amendments dated March 20

Introduced and printed pursuant to House Rule 12.00. Pre-session filed (at the request of Governor Tina Kotek for Department of Early Learning and Care)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: The Act tells the DELC to create a statewide plan to support tribal children and tribal educators. (Flesch Readability Score: 60.1).

[Digest: The Act tells the Department of Early Learning and Care to study options to support early learning and care for tribes. (Flesch Readability Score: 64.6).]

[Requires the Department of Early Learning and Care to study options for supporting tribal early learning and care in this state. Directs the department to submit findings to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to early learning and care not later than September 15, 2026.]

Requires the Department of Early Learning and Care, in consultation with the nine federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon, to develop and implement a statewide early learning and care plan for children eight years of age or younger who are Native American or Alaska Native and enrolled in early childhood care or education programs in this state.

Requires the department to establish and administer a grant program to award moneys to the nine federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon for the purpose of implementing the objectives and strategies of the plan.

Requires the department to establish an advisory committee called the Oregon Tribal Early Learning Alliance to advise the department on the development and implementation of the plan and grant program.

Directs the Early Learning Council, in consultation with the department, to adopt rules necessary for the administration of the plan and grant program.

Establishes the Tribal Early Learning Fund in the State Treasury. Continuously appropriates moneys in the fund to the department for implementation of the plan and grant program.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to tribal early learning services; creating new provisions; and amending ORS 417.831.

3 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

4 **SECTION 1.** ORS 417.831 is amended to read:

5 417.831. *[(1) As used in this section:]*

6 *[(a) "Tribal advisory committee" means the committee established by the Department of Early*
7 *Learning and Care for the purpose of advising the Early Learning Council on the Tribal Early*
8 *Learning Hub.]*

9 *[(b) "Tribal Early Learning Hub" means the entity designated by the Early Learning Council, in*
10 *consultation with the tribal advisory committee, to coordinate early learning services provided to the*
11 *tribal communities of this state, as determined by rules adopted by the Early Learning Council in*
12 *consultation with the tribal advisory committee.]*

13 *[(2) The Early Learning Council shall implement and coordinate a system that coordinates the de-*
14 *livery of early learning services to the tribal communities of this state through the direction of the*
15 *Tribal Early Learning Hub. The Tribal Early Learning Hub shall be separate and distinct from the*
16 *Early Learning Hubs designated under ORS 417.827.]*

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 [(3) *The Department of Early Learning and Care shall establish a tribal advisory committee. The*
2 *tribal advisory committee shall consist of 21 members appointed by the Department of Early Learning*
3 *and Care in consultation with the nine federally recognized Indian tribes of this state as follows:]*

4 [(a) *Two representatives from each of the nine federally recognized Indian tribes of this state;]*

5 [(b) *One representative from the Commission on Indian Services, who shall be a nonvoting*
6 *member;]*

7 [(c) *One representative of the Early Learning Council, who shall be a nonvoting member; and]*

8 [(d) *One representative of the Department of Early Learning and Care, who shall be a nonvoting*
9 *member.]*

10 [(4) *The tribal advisory committee shall advise the Early Learning Council on the delivery of early*
11 *care and education services to the tribal communities of this state in a culturally specific manner. The*
12 *Early Learning Council shall adopt rules related to the Tribal Early Learning Hub in consultation with*
13 *the tribal advisory committee, including rules that prescribe the requirements for accountability and*
14 *services provided.]*

15 **(1) As used in this section and sections 2 and 3 of this 2025 Act:**

16 **(a) “Caregiver” means an individual who provides ongoing care for a plan child.**

17 **(b) “Plan child” means a child enrolled in early childhood care or education programs**
18 **who:**

19 **(A) Is eight years of age or younger;**

20 **(B) Is Native American or Alaska Native; and**

21 **(C) Has experienced disproportionate results in early childhood care or education due to**
22 **historical practices, as identified by the Early Learning Council by rule.**

23 **(c) “Tribal educator” means a teacher, child care provider, administrator or other school**
24 **or child care employee who:**

25 **(A) Is Native American or Alaska Native; and**

26 **(B) Provides early childhood care or education services to any children eight years of age**
27 **or younger.**

28 **(2) The Department of Early Learning and Care shall develop and implement a statewide**
29 **early learning and care plan for plan children. In developing the plan, the department shall:**

30 **(a) In a manner consistent with ORS 182.164 and Executive Order 96-30, consult the nine**
31 **federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon and state agencies with relevant expertise.**
32 **Consultation under this paragraph must be undertaken with respect for tribal sovereignty,**
33 **customs and culture.**

34 **(b) Solicit input from the advisory committee established under section 2 of this 2025 Act.**

35 **(3) The plan developed and implemented under this section must, at minimum, address**
36 **the following objectives:**

37 **(a) Support the developmental, child care and educational needs and goals of plan chil-**
38 **dren in a culturally appropriate manner.**

39 **(b) Increase access for plan children to early learning system resources and programs**
40 **administered by the department.**

41 **(c) Support culturally responsive curricula that honor the Native American experience**
42 **in Oregon, including tribal history, sovereignty issues, culture, treaty rights, government,**
43 **socioeconomic experiences and current events.**

44 **(d) Improve early childhood development and kindergarten readiness for plan children.**

45 **(e) Increase literacy and numeracy levels for plan children between kindergarten and**

1 **grade three.**

2 **(f) Provide education, training and professional development opportunities for educators**
3 **and child care providers who serve plan children.**

4 **(g) Foster parental and familial engagement in the development and education of plan**
5 **children.**

6 **(h) Support the preservation and revitalization of Native American language and culture**
7 **in Oregon.**

8 **(4) The plan developed and implemented under this section may provide strategies to:**

9 **(a) Support experiential curricula, including curricula on Native American language and**
10 **culture.**

11 **(b) Increase the number of educators or child care providers who are providing early**
12 **childhood care or services to plan children.**

13 **(c) Increase the number of tribal educators who are providing early childhood care or**
14 **education services to children eight years of age or younger who are not plan children.**

15 **(d) Prepare plan children for successful transitions, including from prekindergarten**
16 **through post-secondary education.**

17 **(e) Achieve any other outcomes identified by rule by the council in consultation with the**
18 **nine federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon.**

19 **(5) The department shall establish and administer a grant program to award moneys to**
20 **each of the nine federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon for the purpose of implementing**
21 **the objectives and strategies of the plan described in this section.**

22 **(6) The council, in consultation with the department, shall adopt rules necessary for the**
23 **administration of this section, including rules establishing eligibility criteria for receipt of**
24 **moneys under the grant program.**

25 **SECTION 2. (1) The Department of Early Learning and Care shall establish an advisory**
26 **committee called the Oregon Tribal Early Learning Alliance. The advisory committee shall**
27 **advise the department on:**

28 **(a) The development and implementation of the plan and grant program described in ORS**
29 **417.831.**

30 **(b) The distribution of moneys for technical assistance, professional development,**
31 **infrastructure or other support to plan children, caregivers, tribal educators or federally**
32 **recognized Indian tribes in Oregon under section 3 of this 2025 Act.**

33 **(c) Any other subject related to the delivery of culturally and linguistically appropriate**
34 **early childhood care or education services to plan children in this state.**

35 **(2) The advisory committee shall consist of 18 voting members and a minimum of nine**
36 **nonvoting members. The department, in consultation with the nine federally recognized In-**
37 **Indian tribes in Oregon, shall appoint:**

38 **(a) Two voting members from each of the nine federally recognized Indian tribes in**
39 **Oregon.**

40 **(b) At least two nonvoting members who are parents or caregivers of a plan child.**

41 **(c) At least two nonvoting members who are tribal educators or providers of early**
42 **childhood care or education programs that are operated by a federally recognized Indian**
43 **tribe in Oregon.**

44 **(3)(a) In addition to the appointments made under subsection (2) of this section, the de-**
45 **partment shall appoint five nonvoting, ex officio members as follows:**

1 (A) One member who is the Early Learning System Director, or the designee of the di-
2 rector.

3 (B) One member who is a representative of the Department of Education.

4 (C) One member who is a representative of the Department of Human Services with ex-
5 pertise in the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (25 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.).

6 (D) One member who is a representative of the Oregon Health Authority.

7 (E) One member who is a representative of the Higher Education Coordinating Commis-
8 sion.

9 (b) In addition to the appointments made under paragraph (a) of this subsection, the
10 Department of Early Learning and Care may appoint as a nonvoting, ex officio member a
11 representative from any state agency.

12 (4) The term of office and responsibilities of the members of the advisory committee shall
13 be determined by the advisory committee.

14 (5) A majority of voting members of the advisory committee constitutes a quorum for
15 the transaction of business.

16 (6) Official action by the advisory committee requires the approval of a majority of the
17 voting members of the advisory committee.

18 (7) If there is a vacancy for any cause, the Department of Early Learning and Care, in
19 consultation with the nine federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon, shall make an ap-
20 pointment to become effective immediately.

21 (8) The advisory committee shall meet at the times and places specified by a majority of
22 the voting members of the advisory committee.

23 (9) The advisory committee may adopt rules necessary for the operation of the advisory
24 committee.

25 **SECTION 3.** (1) The Tribal Early Learning Fund is established in the State Treasury,
26 separate and distinct from the General Fund. Interest earned on moneys in the Tribal Early
27 Learning Fund must be credited to the fund.

28 (2) The fund consists of moneys appropriated or otherwise made available by the Legis-
29 lative Assembly for deposit in the fund, interest earned on moneys in the fund and moneys
30 otherwise deposited in the fund from any source.

31 (3) Moneys in the fund are continuously appropriated to the Department of Early
32 Learning and Care to carry out the statewide plan and grant program under ORS 417.831.

33 (4) To further the objectives and strategies described in ORS 417.831, the department
34 shall retain up to five percent of the moneys appropriated by the Legislative Assembly each
35 biennium for deposit in the fund to provide technical assistance, professional development,
36 infrastructure or other support to plan children, caregivers, tribal educators or federally
37 recognized Indian tribes in Oregon.

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