

May 9, 2025

Co-Chairs Girod and Nosse and members of the Subcommittee,

Oregon's child care crisis continues to create significant challenges for families across the state—**particularly for those raising children with disabilities**. In our region, families face a persistent shortage of **inclusive, high-quality early learning options**, leaving many without access to the care and support their children need.

To address this need, **Northwest Regional Education Service District** has repurposed a 50,000-square-foot office building in Hillsboro—located in a documented child care desert—into an inclusive early learning facility. The renovation is well underway, and the building is nearly ready to welcome children and families. However, a **\$2 million investment is still needed to close the remaining funding gap**. As an education service district, we are unable to allocate additional funds toward the project without impacting the direct services we provide to children.

**Executive Director Stacy Rager presented this project to you earlier today, May 9th.** I would like to reiterate how critical this facility is—not only to the families we serve, but to the broader community. The need for inclusive early learning spaces is urgent, and **this project represents a timely, community-driven solution.**

This facility has been designed to co-locate child care, preschool, and **Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE)** services. Once operational, it will include:

- 11 inclusive classrooms with natural light and outdoor play access
- 5 evaluation rooms to support developmental assessments and eligibility determinations
- 3 consultation rooms for family coaching and early support services

A professional development center to strengthen the early childhood workforce across Northwest Oregon

In addition to direct services, this facility will serve as a **central space for community events, family engagement, and cross-sector collaboration**—strengthening the web of support that surrounds young children and their caregivers.



Despite strong local commitment and the successful use of **federal relief funds and a public bond sale**, we now face a final **\$2 million shortfall**. Our prior applications for seismic and infrastructure grants were unsuccessful due to technical eligibility issues and high demand—not lack of community need or project merit.

This facility is a strategic investment in Oregon's early learning infrastructure, with particular benefit to children with disabilities and families furthest from opportunity. We respectfully request your support to help close the funding gap and open the doors to families who are waiting.

**Thank you for your time and consideration.** I am available to provide any additional information you may need.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Vanderschuere  
Director of Early Learning

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