

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal impact statement issued

Action: Do Pass and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means by prior reference

Vote: 5 - 0 - 0

Yeas: Kruse, Metsger, Morse, Westlund, Walker

Nays: 0

Exc.: 0

Prepared By: Dana Richardson, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 2/15

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Dedicates \$40 million from the General Fund to the Department of Education for the Oregon Prekindergarten Program. Declares an emergency; effective July 1, 2007.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Parent involvement in Head Start programs
- Priority investment areas
- High school graduation rates for Head Start participants

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: The Federal Head Start program was initiated in 1965 as a comprehensive child development program to serve children from 3 to 5 years of age. The programs are child-focused and have the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in low-income families. In 1988, the Oregon Prekindergarten Program was established to provide services to eligible 3 to 4 year-old children in collaboration with the federal Head Start program. It includes all statewide administrative activities carried on within the Department of Education to allocate, award, and monitor state funds appropriated to create or assist Oregon prekindergarten offerings.

ORS 329.160 requires funding for 50 percent of eligible children for Oregon prekindergarten programs as of 1999 and funding for all eligible children by 2004. An eligible child is one who is at least three years-old and considered at-risk but not a participant in a federal, state, or local program providing similar comprehensive services.