

HB 2801 Background

Addresses:

Need to improve 3rd grade reading proficiency. Children who don't read on grade level by end of 3rd grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school. (America's Promise Alliance – 2014.)

- Almost 1/3 of all children in Oregon are not meeting 3rd grade reading benchmarks.
- Annie E Casey Kids Count data for Oregon shows that those children who are not reading by 4th grade are primarily those in schools serving high percentages of low income families, English Language Learner and African American and Latino students. (US Dept. of Education).

Need to engage vibrant community of 50+ volunteer workforce -- an under-utilized vehicle for highly skilled adults to put their time and effort into targeted interventions aimed at literacy for children.

Opportunity to connect evidence-based intergenerational model (Experience Corps- national model) and other evidence-based models **with unmet needs across Oregon.**

How do we know this is effective?

For children: Washington University in St Louis - demonstrated in control study – that students who received Experience Corps tutoring made 60% more progress in key reading skills than control group. Results include: better test scores, better behavior and high teacher satisfaction with results.

For mentors: Johns Hopkins 2009 study showed lower disease and disability in older adult mentors including positive outcomes in cognitive, physical and social indicators key to health and wellness. Local studies done by Regional Research Institute at PSU mirror these findings (January 2011).

What is the model? 1:1 tutoring and small group work 8 – 10 hours each week by mentors who receive high quality training, and specific preparation for working with diverse communities of color, immigrants and refugees, and English Language Learner tutoring strategies.

What is current span of program? Established nationally and in Portland in 1995 (Portland was one of five pilot cities nationwide) – only able to support 10 schools with total of 60 volunteers and serve approx 300 children in high need districts mostly on east side of Portland. 60% of students are from communities of color. 22% of mentors are from communities of color. Current new pilot connects early childhood programs with mentors to offer continuity of support at earlier stage. (N. Clackamas School District pilot 2015.)

How is this different than other Oregon Reading Program investments? **Unique aspect of intentional capacity of 50+** age group leverages life experience, increased time investment, relational aspect of intergenerational connection and more specific and intensive training requirements for mentors that are aligned with school curriculum and approach.

What is the Vision? With expanded funding available across the State, this effective model can be a significant driver in student success and a healthier community.

- Create pool of funds for non-profits with proven success in intergenerational literacy models to obtain support to continue and expand reach to higher number of students.
- Create opportunity for resource-poor areas to engage intergenerational capacity to apply for funding to start programs.
- Provide technical assistance for current successful programs to collaborate with ODE to launch independent new programs in new communities.

How will vision be accomplished?

Identify minimum of \$500,000 set aside as part of Oregon Early Reading Program to:

1. Support strongest models that have proven success in this area.
2. Seed new programs in highest need communities, including rural and/or culturally specific communities where literacy rates are lowest.
3. Provide training/technical support capacity so that new programs gain skills from successful programs and are able to most efficiently gain traction and results.
4. Builds on results - 69% of students progressed to grade level or showed accelerated progress towards grade level reading.
5. Sustainable at a cost of approximately \$20,000 per school, providing 250 children in-class literacy support and 28 children 1:1 academic mentoring per year, per school.
6. Potential of leveraged funding from: school districts, local foundations, national funders interested in literacy and intergenerational programs, city, county and federal grants to increase reach beyond number of students served.