



where great stories begin™

**March 10, 2015**

**To:** The Honorable Rod Monroe, Co-Chair, The Honorable Betty Komp, Co-Chair and Members of the Joint Subcommittee on Education

**Subject:** Investment in Reach Out and Read Oregon (as part of HB 5016)

Co-Chairs Senator Monroe and Representative Komp, and members of the committee,

My name is Maria Sleeman and I am the Program Manager for Reach Out and Read Oregon. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I have been asked to briefly discuss what the investment of \$100,000 in Reach Out and Read Oregon for the 2013-2015 biennium has accomplished to date.

As a reminder, Reach Out and Read is an evidence-based non-profit preparing our youngest children to succeed in school. Reach Out and Read trains and supports medical providers who provide developmentally appropriate books to children and education to parents about the importance of reading aloud. The program begins at the six-month checkup and continues through age five, with special emphasis on children in low-income communities. Healthcare providers offer a nearly universal point of access as over 95% of children under age five see a doctor at least once a year, which isn't true of any other early childhood setting.

In the past 15 months, state funding has helped to support the existing 88 Reach Out and Read Oregon sites serving 66,500 children and providing parent engagement to nearly 100,000 caretakers through 133,000 well-child checks annually. State funding has also been responsible for reaching 12,000 additional children and providing parent engagement to approximately 18,000 additional caretakers during 24,000 well-child visits at 16 new Reach Out and Read sites. We now serve over 26% of children in Oregon in our target age range.

With \$300,000 in state funding for the 2015-2017 biennium, Reach Out and Read Oregon would be able to continue to support existing Reach Out and Read sites and children served in Oregon, as well as grow the program by at least 25%. At least 16,625 additional children would be served through 33,250 additional well-child visits annually. With this funding, by the end of the biennium ROR would be serving nearly one third of the children in Oregon ages six-months through five years of age.

Research findings from 15 published studies clearly demonstrate the model works. Participating children demonstrate a impressive six-month expressive language edge over their peers, a three-month receptive language edge over their peers, enter Kindergarten with larger vocabularies and stronger language skills, have a home library of at least 10 children's books where sometimes there were none, read together more often with their families and grow up to become readers. Participating parents are more likely to report reading to their children as a favorite activity, are four times more likely to incorporate reading aloud with their children into their daily routine (10 times more likely where English is not the primary language), learn new ways to stimulate their children's literacy development, are supported as their children's first and most important teachers and have more books in their home. Reach Out and Read improves developmental milestones and increases readiness to succeed in school.

Thank you for your time.

Maria Sleeman, Program Manager, Reach Out and Read Oregon

23878 SW Shady Grove Dr. | Sherwood, OR 97140 | 503.580.8750



where great stories begin™

## Reach Out and Read - Oregon Coalition

ROR is an evidence-based non-profit preparing our youngest children to succeed in school. ROR trains and supports medical providers who provide developmentally appropriate books to children and education to parents about the importance of reading aloud. The program begins at the 6-month checkup and continues through age 5, with special emphasis on children in low-income communities.

### Evidence & Outcomes

- ROR is a proven intervention supported by **15 independent published research studies**
- Children served by ROR:
  - Demonstrate a **six-month expressive language edge** over their peers
  - Demonstrate a **three-month receptive language edge** over their peers
  - Enter Kindergarten with **larger vocabularies and stronger language skills**
  - Have a home library of at least **10 children's books** where sometimes there were none
  - **Read together more often** with their families
  - Grow up to **become readers**
- Parents served by ROR:
  - Are more likely to report **reading with their child as a favorite activity**
  - Are **four times more likely to incorporate reading** aloud with their children into their daily routine (**10 times more likely where English is not the primary language**)
  - Learn new ways to **stimulate their children's literacy development**
  - Are supported as their children's first and **most important teachers**
  - Have **more books** in their home
- ROR **improves developmental milestones** and **increases readiness to succeed** in school.

### The Need

- Since the ROR Oregon coalition began 3 years ago, the program has increased the number of children served by 160%. This exceeds the National average for state growth by far, which is 5-10% per year, and has been attainable through a private and public funding mix.
- In the past 15 months, state funding has helped to support all existing children, caretakers and sites served by ROR each year. State funding has also been responsible for reaching 12,000 additional children and providing parent engagement to approximately 18,000 caretakers during 24,000 well-child visits at 16 new sites.
- **State funding of \$300,000 for the 2015-2017 biennium** would help make it possible for ROR Oregon to continue to support the existing 88 sites serving 66,500 children through 133,000 well-child checks annually as well as grow the program by a minimum of 25%. At least 16,625 additional children would be served through 33,250 well-child visits annually. With this funding, by the end of the biennium ROR would be serving nearly 1/3 of the children in OR ages 6 mos - 5 yrs.

---

**THE ANNUAL IMPACT: 66,500 CHILDREN SERVED. 133,000 BOOKS DISTRIBUTED. 88 OREGON SITES. REACH OVER 26% OF OREGON CHILDREN AGES 6 mos to 5 years.**

---