

Presentation to House Early Childhood and Family Supports Committee

March 14, 2017, Salem, Oregon

Presenters:

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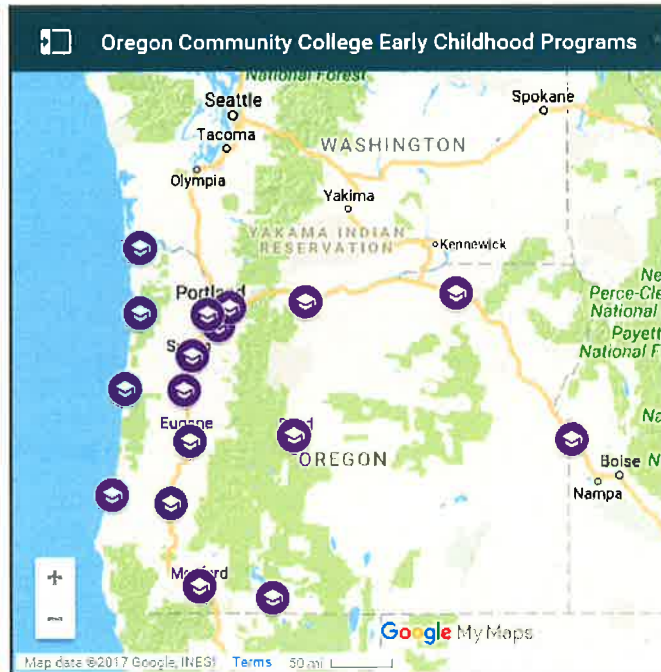
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In the past fifteen years, our colleagues in both community colleges and some of our four-year institutions have been moving this work forward through a number of venues and partnerships:

Including, but not limited to:

- The Grand Articulation Summit, hosted yearly by the Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children to look at workforce needs, promising practices and address student barriers.
- Aligning coursework with the Oregon Registry Online (ORO) Professional Development Step system, and the Core Knowledge Categories (CKCs) administered through the Oregon Center for Career Development (OCCD) housed at Portland State University.
- Supporting students in connecting with the Oregon Statewide Scholarship program for current qualifying early educators.
- Organization and participation in State Committees such as the Professional Development, Access and Outreach, Quality and Assurance, and Quality Credentials & Pathways Committees.
- Acquisition of Race to the Top in Early Childhood Education funds.
- Coordination with the Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Network throughout the state as the connection point for Professional Development for licensed, certified and exempt early educators and participation in the SPARK Quality Rating Improvement System.
- Regional participation in the Early Learning Professional Development Consortium.
- Oregon Career Pathways Certificates of Completion - first launched in 2004 through the National Governors Association's Pathways to Advancement Initiative.



<https://www.pdx.edu/occd/oregon-registry-and-community-colleges>

A brief survey of recent initiatives at community college early childhood education programs across Oregon:

Blue Mountain Community College – is working closely with the Blue Mountain Early Learning Hub and local agencies to make sure our classes, certificates, and degrees align with needs of the workforce. Faculty work with local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR& R) on a spring conference for the early learning workforce and offer credit with that. *Last year there were over 150 attendees.*

Central Oregon Community College - is working with regional partners (especially the local Child Care Resource and Referral) to support a diverse and historically underserved workforce as they pursue professional development through college coursework. Classes are being offered in Spanish as well as offering classes during nontraditional times (evenings and weekends) to accommodate the needs of our early learning workforce. Early Learning Professional Development Consortium participant.

Chemeketa Community College - is currently offering a weekend cohort that pairs early childhood college classes with contextualized reading, writing, and language support. The outreach for this cohort was done in partnership with their local HUB and CCR&R. Twenty-six students are currently enrolled in this program. The majority of these students are English language learners and have work and family responsibilities. This opportunity will allow them to complete early childhood certificates that they would not otherwise be able to access.

Clackamas Community College - has moved the majority of our courses to an online, or hybrid delivery system, is incorporating more free, online textbooks to help reduce the cost of college tuition for our students, and is offering ECE courses in Spanish to Spanish-speaking family child care providers to help them gain the content knowledge in a language they best understand so as to have the most immediate, direct impact on the children



in their programs.

Columbia Gorge Community College - maintains membership on their Advisory Committee from child care partners. From their input, the following actions have been taken: All ECE practicum students learn about and enroll in ORO, and are moving towards having all students take the state required Introduction to Child Care Health and Safety class.

Klamath Community College – was an Early Learning Professional Development Consortium participant.

Linn Benton Community College - has collaborated with their local CCR&R as they have restructured the Child and Family Studies Program for academic year 2017-18 and beyond, and created an online infant toddler class to support a future increase of infant toddler slots for Head Start.

Portland Community College - has responded to industry demands by actively engaging community stakeholders, updating curriculum to align with contemporary workforce needs and national standards, and reducing barriers that challenge a student's time-to-completion.

Rogue Community College – included students from Southwestern, Klamath, and Umpqua in coursework delivered in Spanish that was transmitted to early educators in all four community college districts for three terms as a project in the Early Learning Professional Development Consortium. Collaboration with the Child Care Resource Network (CCRN) – integrating coursework with QRIS efforts has provided amazing results with the family child care providers enrolled in the Spanish Cohort. This is now being implemented with the new English Cohorts.

Southwestern Oregon Community College – has worked hand in hand with our local CCR&R to establish and support cohorts of childcare providers that are now certificate and degree students. Cohort members receive payments of tuition, textbooks, content tutoring, and relationship based mentoring. Southwestern's certificate and degree coursework is online, including practicum and student teaching, for ease of access to our rural population base, and the degrees have articulation agreements with two of our Oregon universities for ease of transfer from community college to a bachelor completion program. Early Learning Professional Development Consortium participant.

Umpqua Community College – has had positive experience with the use of “Navigators,” or coaches within their program to support students on their pathway to completion. Early Learning Professional Development Consortium participant

This list is not intended to be inclusive of all the work that is being done in the community colleges in the field of Early Education, It represents a snapshot of some of the powerful work that is being done in the community college programs across the state to respond to the workforce development needs in their districts.

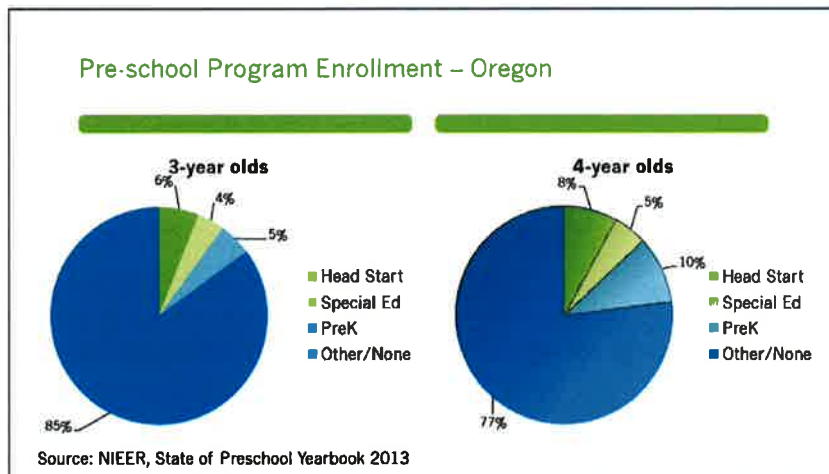


What we know about the workforce today:

The early childhood workforce is a complex constellation of early educators; not only Head Start and Early Head Start educators, licensed and registered home care providers, exempt providers (Friends, Family, Neighbors), private preschools, home visiting programs, and center based care.

- 52% of the workforce does not have a completed degree (Associate and Bachelor degrees).
- There was a 40% turnover in the workforce between 2012 and 2014. (*OSU workforce development report*)

In Oregon, most young children are not in Head Start.



Kauerz, K. (2014). Presentation at Early Years to Early Grades Summit. Portland, OR.

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Where are all these other children?

In family home child care, private centers, or home with family, friends or neighbors.

What we know prevents students from completing:

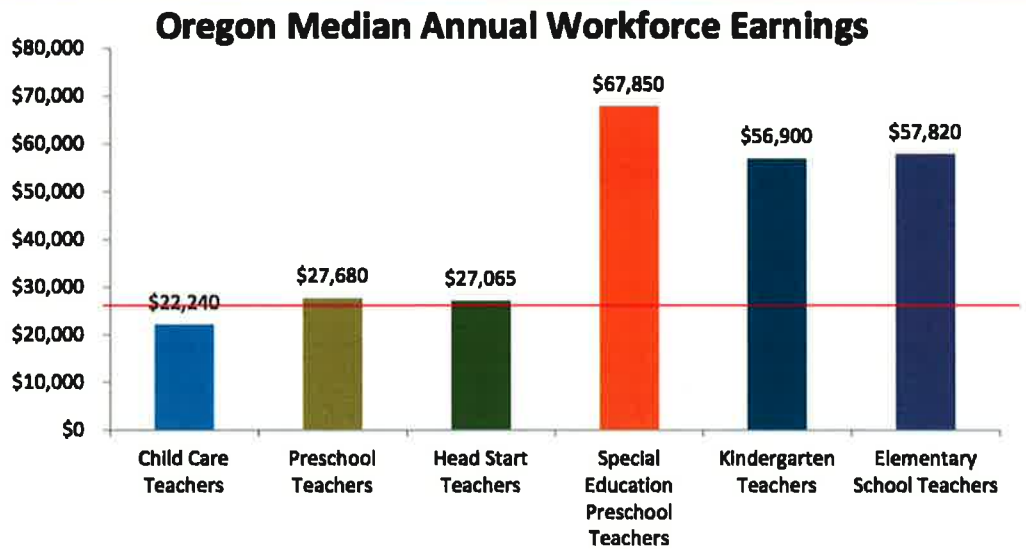
- Time: Because demand is so high for early educators to enter the workforce before their training is complete, a majority of our students are employed in the workforce work while attending college. This means part-time school attendance, resulting in approximately 5 years required to complete an Associate's degree. This time increases substantially for those who arrive at the program speaking a language other than English or those requiring general education support before participating in ECE degree requirements.
- Advising Support: Working full time, managing family and school is a huge undertaking. Students are

more likely to successfully transition into college and complete certificates and degrees when someone supports them through it. Having someone at the community college to support and coach students is essential to student success and completion.

- **Clear Pathways:** The inconsistency of seamless and clear pathways to universities is an ongoing challenge- there are not enough options across the state. We need clear pathways with no loss of credit or time for students. Transferability from Community Colleges to Universities is key to developing and sustaining a well-trained workforce.
- **Compensation:** Early Educators continue to lack a sustainable family living wage (image below). This is directly linked to the high rate of turnover in the workforce. Thus, it is important that early educators have little to no student debt when they complete their training.

Community Colleges are the gateway into the culture of higher education. Community Colleges are THE place in Oregon where Early Childhood Education is taught and presented effectively to the current workforce.

**High Quality Programs Depend on a Quality Workforce
Low Wages Undermine Quality**



*Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility for a family of three: \$26,124

www2.ed.gov

<https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/fact-sheet-troubling-pay-gap-early-childhood-teachers>



What we need:

Many of the initiatives you have heard described today have been funded through short-term grants that eventually come to an end- creating a cycle of program development and recruitment that unnecessarily diverts time and energy away from the work at hand. We need funding for sustainable, long term solutions that will:

- Support students in completing their associate degrees at community colleges. This means cohort models, advisors and coaches, tuition waivers and supplements, resources for textbooks, and substitutes that allow working providers to complete practicum requirements.
- Move students toward the bachelor's degree quickly and efficiently. This means support for true 2+2, applied baccalaureate, and even 3+1 models that acknowledge the need for the Associate degree as a part of a student's pathway.
- Allow students to take online courses at any Oregon community colleges and transfer those credits easily. This means supporting the infrastructure that would allow transfer of online classes between rural and urban Oregon community colleges without impact on a student's financial aid.

Across the state, community college early childhood education programs have proven we are adept at responding to the needs of the workforce effectively, even with the littlest bits of funding. What we need now is an investment in our initiatives and infrastructure. Dollars that can directly impact those in the workforce.

We have shown Oregon repeatedly that we can and will move the workforce forward. We ask Oregon to make a commitment to its future by investing in those who invest their lives and time in our most vulnerable and important resource, our children.