



March 4, 2019

Chair Doherty and Members of the House Education Committee,

In late 2017 and early 2018, school and district administrators from across Oregon held regional meetings to ask the question: what should be our top priorities for the 2019 legislative session that will have the greatest positive impact on students? After several months of discussion, they identified early learning opportunities for low income students as one of their top priorities. In that spirit, the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) urges your support for House Bill 2897, to create a Early Childhood Equity Fund that will create culturally specific early learning opportunities across Oregon.

Today, many students – including low-income students and students of color – arrive at kindergarten without receiving any early childhood education. COSA believes that all students deserve to be successful in our public education system, and for that to happen, all students need to arrive at kindergarten ready to learn. House Bill 2897 will provide critical early learning opportunities for culturally and linguistically diverse students that are designed specifically for those students. The approaches of these programs are grounded in the unique cultural experiences of the students they serve, and they ground their instruction in the home language of the students.

School administrators know how important early learning opportunities are for the long term academic and social success of students. We believe Oregon must move quickly to expand early learning opportunities to students who need them all across the state. The Early Childhood Equity Fund created by House Bill 2897 should be a critical part of Oregon's statewide approach to early learning. We encourage your support of this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

The Confederation of Oregon School Administrators