



April 10, 2019

Senator Arnie Roblan
Representative Barbara Smith Warner
Co-Chairs, Joint Committee on Student Success

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OREGONCF.ORG

Dear Senator Roblan and Representative Smith Warner:

We applaud the work of the Joint Committee on Student Success over the last months to develop recommendations for improved outcomes across the education spectrum. We are especially pleased to see the committee's recommendation for a significant investment in a comprehensive early childhood system. However, we are deeply concerned that investments targeted to the birth to three years are not included. Those years are foundational. We will never achieve our kindergarten readiness goals if we do not reach our state's youngest children and their parents.

More specifically, we are writing to urge you to include the \$2 million recommended by Governor Brown and the Early Childhood Coalition to fund community-based parenting education programs that support and engage parents as their children's first and most important teachers. This is a relatively modest investment that will have life-long benefits for children. Together with foundation partners, Oregon Community Foundation has been investing in high quality parenting programs for more than a decade. These investments have increased access to parenting education and built an infrastructure that is nearly statewide and can be leveraged with public dollars.

We have learned through our grantmaking about the power of parenting education to build family resilience, strengthen parent-child bonds and equip parents to prepare their children for success in school and life. Parenting classes and workshops are a strategy to support families who may not access other programs, especially in the critical birth to three years. A truly comprehensive approach to kindergarten readiness must include family support.

Sincerely,

Max Williams
President & CEO

Lane Shetterly
Chair, OCF Board Education Committee

cc: Members of the Joint Committee on Student Success