

## Analysis

### Oregon Department of Education

#### Report on Development of the Summer Learning and Child Care Program

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**Analyst:** Doug Wilson

**Request:** Acknowledge receipt of a report required by budget note on the development of the Summer Learning and Child Care program.

**Analysis:** HB 5042-A, passed in March 2021, included a \$250 million General Fund one-time set of initiatives to provide academic learning and enrichment for school aged students and preschoolers during the summer of 2021. A budget note was included instructing the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to report to the Education Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee by May 15th on the development of this initiative and the expected participation by school districts. Much of the funding allocated for this initiative was to be un-scheduled pending this report.

The pandemic has caused schools to teach most students remotely through distance learning. The result has been that many students have fallen behind in their academic achievement. It has had a disproportionately impact on students who are low income or from historically underserved populations. The 2021 Legislature approved \$250 million General Fund and \$21.2 million in Federal Funds to assist students get back on track as well as to provide summer enrichment classes. Those funds directed to school districts, other than those dedicated to wrap-around child care, require that the districts pay for at least 25% of the cost of these programs with the state contributing the remaining 75%. Briefly the initiative included:

1. \$71.9 million General Fund for school district summer academic support grants for high school students to make up academic credits;
2. \$93.7 million General Fund for summer enrichment/academic program grants for students in kindergarten to 8th grade for extracurricular classes and activities;
3. \$30.0 million General Fund and \$10 million in federal child care funds for wrap-around child care for low-income students in Kindergarten through 5th grade who are participating in a summer enrichment program;
4. \$12.0 million General Fund and \$11.2 million in federal child care funding summer programming in the Preschool Promise program, Oregon Prekindergarten program, Early Childhood Equity Fund, Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation program, and the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program,
5. \$41.2 million General Fund distributed to the Oregon Community Foundation for summer activities grants to public and non-profit community organizations and for parent child support grants; and
6. \$1.2 million General Fund for ODE and Early Learning staffing and other administrative costs.

This spending is spread between the current biennium and 2021-23. This funding is one-time and if not spent will be returned to the General Fund. Funding going to school districts is placed in the newly establish Summer Learning Program account.

#### ***School District Summer Learning Programs***

ODE has developed a set of programs to meet the legislative direction as well as released a guide for summer learning best practices to assist school districts and public charter schools. During April, ODE

heard from over 650 education and community partners on the proposed grant programs outlined above. These partners want to extend the time period that these funds can be used to the summer of 2022 because they feel they can't spend all of the almost \$200 million allocated to them for this summer. This is partially due to concerns about finding adequate staff given the fatigued educator workforce as well as to not having sufficient alternative activities in some areas of the state.

Eligible costs for the school district summer learning programs include staff costs, curriculum, supplies, COVID-19 related costs, third party contracts, transportation costs and meals. Costs eligible for reimbursement from ODE must be spent between May 1, 2020 and September 30, 2020. Any funds that are not reimbursed to school districts for expenses during that time period will be returned to the General Fund. ODE used a simplified application where a district could apply for one or all three summer learning programs and the application period was from April 26th to May 10th. As of the end of May 10th, 152 districts and 35 charter schools applied for summer learning program representing 91% of the students across the state. The applications detailed that 49,000 high school students and 190,000 K-8 students would be served. It should be noted that this represents what the districts applied for. Given the challenges of finding staff and other issues, districts may not reach this number of students. ODE has set up a simple reporting system similar to what is being used for the federal COVID related assistance.

### ***Child Care Programs***

Funding for Preschool Promise, Oregon Pre-Kindergarten, and the Early Learning Equity Fund will be distributed to existing program to extend programming to children and their families during the summer months. Eligible costs are similar to those above for school districts. Fund for the Kindergarten Readiness programs will be distributed to the Early Learning Hubs expanding kindergarten transition program this summer. The federal funds will be transferred to the Department of Human Services for summer expansion and emergency childcare grants for the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program. The funds will be distributed to; (1) current providers that are open and operating as an emergency childcare facility, (2) family, friends and neighbor providers, and (3) those providers who are closed but actively planning to open by September 2021.

### ***Oregon Community Foundation***

The Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) will receive (1) \$40.0 million for distribution to subgrantees including community-based organization, Tribes, non-profit organizations and other entities for summer enrichment programs for students from kindergarten to grade 12, and (2) \$1.2 for parent-child summer programs for children up to age 5. Priority will be given to those entities that provide needs to low-income students, students of color, and students living in under-resources rural communities. Funds were disbursed on May 4th. The agreement requires OCF will ensure a number of requirements including; (1) providing opportunities across the entire state, (2) addressing students who have disproportionately affected by COVID, (3) providing a variety of indoor and outdoor activities, and (4) that the sub-grantees provide a signed certification that assures they will carry necessary insurance. OCF is required to provide progress reports to ODE and information on the distribution of funds (e.g., regionally and population served), types of services, and the number of awards. OCF has opened their Request for Proposal (RFP) process and as of May 10th have received more than 100 proposals for the summer enrichment programs and 25 applications for the parent-child program.

**Legislative Fiscal Office Recommendation:** Approve the request and instruct the Department of Administrative Services to reschedule or make available the funds passed as part of HB 5042-A.