



## LatinoNetwork

**Testimony of Anthony Castaneda, Policy Manager,  
Regarding HB 2166-1  
Senate Committee on Education  
February 23th, 2021**

Dear Chair Alonso Leon, Vice-Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the House Education Committee,

**Latino Network joins the Early Childhood Coalition and Oregon Partners for Education Justice in support of HB 2166-1 to cultivate the conditions for all students to learn and thrive in an equitable, inclusive, and just public education system.**

Latino Network is a culturally specific nonprofit serving children, youth, and families in Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington counties. Every year our organization provides transformative services to thousands of Latinos in the areas of education and mentorship, leadership development, and family stability.

**Every child deserves high-quality child care and early education regardless of their race, ethnicity, native language, or disability.** A child's brain goes through an incredible period of development from birth to five. Unnurturing environments or disruptions can cause harm during this critical phase in a child's development. Yet, Black children, Indigenous/Native children, and children with developmental disabilities experience the highest suspension and expulsion rates of any age. Exclusion from learning opportunities exacerbates the existing disparities in early childhood stemming from wealth and social capital.

**HB 2166-1 is a step forward in increasing support and providing the tools necessary to create a more equitable and inclusive learning environment for all of Oregon's young learners.** The amendment will establish the Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion Prevention Program. The aim is to reduce the use of suspension and expulsion in early care and programs by investing in training on culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches to child development. Part of the solution is ensuring that educators and providers have the training and resources to mitigate challenges as they arise.

**Furthermore, HB 2166-1 will also invest in exploring and establishing non-traditional pathways to licensure for educators.** The development of non-traditional pathways is a critical step in the recruitment and retainment of a more diverse educator workforce. Research by the



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[Center for American Progress](#) shows that the cost of college attendance, student debt, low salaries, out-of-pocket classroom expenses, and licensure exam fees are deterrents and barriers to diversification of the educator workforce. Non-traditional pathways will make Oregon's public education system a more inclusive and welcoming state for racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse educators.

**We urge the passage of HB 2166-1.**

Thank you for your time and leadership.