



NO on SB 427

From the desk of
Representative Tracy Cramer

Tracy Cramer

Oregon Preschool Promise Program Waste

Jeff Myers

Nov 29, 2022

Oregon's [Preschool Promise \(PSP\) program](#) was launched in 2016 and was designed to provide free, high-quality preschool options to low income Oregon families. Unfortunately, the program has been plagued by many issues and it is only getting worse as public officials blindly push forward. I fully support the *intent* of the program, but do not support the *execution and outcomes*.

On September 19, 2022 – this [Fox News Article](#) first broke the story about millions of dollars being wasted each year by a fraudulent and corrupt grant program called “Preschool Promise” run by the Oregon Department of Education – Early Learning Division. This was the culmination of several months of work I had started, and I was and am still thankful to have partnered with Kelsey Koberg at Fox News on this.

The very next day, [stories poured in from the Oregonian](#) and many other news sources regarding the delays in starting the program this school year due to multiple issues created by the Early Learning Division (ELD). I can honestly say it was a coincidence that these two big stories hit within a day of each other. The timing was incredibly bad for ELD Director Alyssa Chatterjee, as she was scheduled to present to the Oregon House Interim Committee on Early Childhood the next day, September 21st.

The following week another [story on Preschool Promise waste was published by Christina Giardinelli](#) from the local news station KATU. I was happy to contribute to her story, and was not surprised at the additional types of waste and abuse she discovered in her own research.

CARES Act provided something called the COVID-19 Childcare Stabilization Grant. Providers were also eligible to apply for two rounds of PPP loans.

Along with receiving the Preschool Promise grants, a provider could receive both PPP loans as well as the COVID-19 Childcare Stabilization grant. As you can see in the screenshot, this provider (Village Childcare Enterprises LLC) received all of these grants and loans, totaling over \$1,000,000 in two years while only having 2 enrolled Preschool Promise students the first year and 4 enrolled the second year. Village Childcare Enterprises LLC is owned by Leslee Barnes, [who in April 2021 became the Director of the Multnomah County Preschool for All program.](#)

This is just the beginning of unraveling the corruption within Oregon's Early Learning Division. Please contact me if you have any tips or other information to share about these or related programs.

The sources for the dashboard and spreadsheet came from:

- Preschool Promise & COVID-19 Childcare Stabilization data: [ELD Public Records Requests](#)
- PPP loan data: [FederalPay.org](#)