



PO Box 12366  
Salem, OR 97309  
(503) 485-3219  
parentinghub@earlylearninghub.org  
[parentinghub.org](http://parentinghub.org)

April 3, 2023

Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Hudson and Wright, Members of the Committee,

My name is Lisa Harnisch, I am the executive director of Marion & Polk Early Learning Hub and am the Co-Chair of the Oregon Early Learning Hub Association.

I am here today in support of HB 3198 and the -3 amendments.

During the Informational Hearing on these concepts, Governor Kotek spoke to the need for early literacy investments to support the building blocks for literacy, which often are initiated by parents as a child's first teacher through singing, storytelling, and play in the home.

The science is clear – because the brain grows the fastest between ages 0 to five, the opportunity to set children up for third-grade reading proficiency starts at birth. Investments in these early years have the highest return on investment.

There are many community-based organizations, childcare providers, preschools, and Tribal communities currently supporting this work, but with too few resources to do it comprehensively. As an Early Learning Hub leader, I am all too familiar with the need for additional support for literacy strategies that begin at birth.

HB 3198 as amended proposes expanded investments in literacy supports for families with children age 0-5. By having a comprehensive birth to five literacy plan at the state and regional levels, we will be able to have culturally relevant and age appropriate strategies. The Early Learning Hubs currently invest Kindergarten Partnerships and Innovation grants and support community-based organizations in accessing and leveraging funding such as the equity fund to deliver child centered approaches to literacy.


A few examples of existing literacy strategies include Reach Out and Read, Ready for Kindergarten, parent education, Dolly Parton Imagination Library, and other various partnerships with local libraries, education and support for childcare providers.

The proposed enhanced funding would expand our opportunities to support parents and community-based organizations as they construct the building blocks for literacy.

We are grateful this legislation addresses literacy comprehensively. Our work from birth through age 5 is only successful if we are able to send children to schools that are ready to support literacy through comprehensive data-informed strategies.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, your Early Learning Hubs urge your support of HB 3198 and the -3 amendments.

Sincerely,



Lisa Harnisch

