

HB 3561 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Higher Education

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Meeting Dates: 3/14, 3/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Expands definition of early childhood care and education to include early childhood behavioral and mental health services for purposes of administering scholarship program and grant program for early childhood care and education professionals. Requires recipients of early childhood care and education scholarship to accept all other aid and scholarships made available to them. Permits award methodology to consider other aid and scholarships received by applicant, converting scholarship to last-dollar program. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Need for behavioral and mental health professionals in early childhood care and education

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

House Bill 2025 (2019), in addition to establishing the Preschool Promise Program, created scholarship and grant programs to ensure an adequate supply of highly qualified early childhood care and education professionals in Oregon. ORS 329.181 delegates responsibility for administering the programs to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission and the Oregon Department of Education's Early Learning Division, which will become the Department of Early Learning and Care on July 1, 2023. However, the programs have not yet been funded and therefore have not been implemented.

House Bill 3561 gives the Higher Education Coordinating Commission authority to convert the state's scholarship program for students pursuing degrees in early childhood care and education to a last dollar program, which calculates awards according to the amount of aid and scholarships received from other sources.