



Wonderschool

Date: February 6, 2024

To: House Economic Development & Small Business Committee

RE: Wonderschool Testimony HB 4098

Chair Bynum and Members of the House Economic Development & Small Business Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 4098 on behalf of Wonderschool. Wonderschool was founded in 2016 with the mission of creating an ecosystem that empowers early educators to build sustainable businesses and enable families to easily find high quality childcare while addressing the childcare gap.

Access to high quality child care is critical infrastructure to ensure the economic vitality of a community through a robust workforce. Childcare access not only helps companies to retain talent, but it also helps them attract new talent. Wonderschool partners with states to recruit and empower providers to create new child care businesses, allowing parents to return to the workforce while simultaneously preparing children for kindergarten.

Wonderschool is deeply appreciative of the work of Representative Walters and fellow stakeholders on HB 4098, which seeks to leverage federal funding to increase the number of childcare providers throughout the state. So many communities throughout Oregon – and throughout the country – are childcare deserts, meaning parents often do not have the ability to return to the workforce after having children. This bill will allow parents who serve Oregon’s growing semiconductor industry to return to work after the birth of a child, while knowing that their children are safe and well cared for by expert, licensed childcare providers. Access to childcare is a critical element to growing Oregon’s semiconductor industry, and we are grateful for the legislature’s commitment to prioritizing support for childcare providers and the families they serve.

We thank the committee for their continued efforts to strengthen the childcare system in Oregon and look forward to working with the sponsors of this bill and fellow stakeholders to develop and implement sustainable programs in our highest need communities following the passage of HB 4098.

Thank you,

Wonderschool