

HB 3040 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Education

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Meeting Dates: 3/19

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires the Oregon Department of Education to study methods to improve early literacy. The measure requires the ODE to submit a report to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2026.

Fiscal impact: May have a fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

Revenue impact: May have a revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 The amendment replaces the measure. It modifies the Early Literacy Success Initiative grants to include professional development for instructional assistants and other staff and changes reporting requirements. It also modifies the interventions the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) can use when a school district does not meet the goals in its early literacy success plan. The amendment establishes a program to support school districts, schools, and educators in effectively using early literacy research-aligned textbooks and material. It requires ODE to create and submit a report on the program to the Governor and the Legislative Assembly by February 1 of each year, and allows ODE to use moneys in the Statewide Education Initiatives Account to fund the program.

Detailed Summary

Section 1

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- Requires researched-aligned literacy strategies curriculum to be applicable in prekindergarten through grade five.
- Allows funding to be used for the professional development of instructional assistants and other staff.

Section 2

- Modifies the requirements for communicating and engaging on the Early Learning Success Plan.

Section 3

- Requires a school district's annual report to include professional training and coaching provided to instructional assistants and other staff.
- Requires the report to include both school- and school district-level data on the number and percentage of students participating in high dosage tutoring.
- Modifies the Oregon Department of Education report submission date from December 31 to February 1 of each year.

Section 4

- Allows the ODE to require a school district or public charter school to adopt textbooks or other instructional materials from a list adopted by the State Board of Education.
- Allows ODE to require school districts or public charter schools to participate in school or school district training and improvement activities.

Section 5

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- Requires ODE to consult with federally recognized tribes only for rules regarding language revitalization efforts by those tribes, instead of all rules regarding Early Literacy Success Community Grants.

Section 6

- Adds Section 7 to the Oregon Revised Statutes.

Section 7

- Requires the Oregon Department of Education to establish and administer a program to support school districts, schools, and educators in selecting, adopting, and effectively using evidence-based research-aligned textbooks and instructional materials.
- Allows ODE to enter contracts, partnerships, or other agreements to administer any part of the program.
- Establishes requirements for the program including ongoing training, professional development, coaching provided by ODE, and the sharing of best practices and successful strategies across school districts.
- Requires ODE to equitably allocate resources and support across school districts based on the school district's size and capacity..
- Requires ODE to report to the Governor and the Legislative Assembly on the number of school districts participating, the effectiveness of the training, professional development or coaching, and the impact of the program on early literacy outcomes.
- Requires the department to regularly review the program and consult with educators, school districts and other entities to ensure the program meets the purposes of the program.

Section 8

- Modifies the allowed uses of the Statewide Education Initiatives Account to include the program in Section 7.

BACKGROUND:

American educators and policymakers have been debating how best to teach reading since at least 1841, when Horace Mann described the letters of the alphabet as "skeleton-shaped, bloodless, ghostly apparitions" (Lecture on the Best Mode of Preparing and Using Spelling-Books, 1841), while Noah Webster was a noted proponent of phonics education. The debate continued throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. In general, proponents of phonics advocated for teaching children to decode words based on the sounds of individual letters, while proponents of the whole language approach advocated for children to learn to recognize whole words based on context.

In 1997, Congress directed the Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to consult with the Secretary of Education and convene a national panel to assess the status of research-based knowledge regarding the effectiveness of various methods of reading instruction. In 2000, the National Reading Panel appointed as a result of the Congressional mandate delivered its [report](#). In general, the Panel [found](#) that "systematic phonics instruction produces significant benefits for students in kindergarten through 6th grade and for children having difficulty learning to read." As a result, the No Child Left Behind legislation enacted in 2001 contained "Reading First" provisions relating to reading instruction based on scientifically based research.

Debates over how to teach reading continued throughout the late 20th century, with the "balanced literacy" approach favored by Dr. Lucy Calkins at Columbia Teachers College influencing reading instruction throughout the United States. This approach arose as a compromise between phonics and whole language. However, Dr. Calkins has recently changed her published reading curriculum to include structured phonics.

In 2023, [House Bill 3198](#) established the Early Literacy Success Initiative, the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan, and the Early Literacy Success Community Grant Program.