

February 7, 2025

Representative Zach Hudson, Chair
House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Support for HB 3011 – Strengthening Oregon’s Early Childhood Education Workforce

Dear Representative Hudson and Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of Montessori Northwest, a non-profit private career school, to express our strong support for HB 3011. Since 1979 we have been preparing highly qualified educators and graduated more than 1600 Montessori teachers. We see firsthand the shortage of accessible, affordable, and high-quality childcare and early education options that Oregon faces is increasingly urgent and severe.

This crisis is exacerbated by a lack of trained professionals to staff these essential services. HB 3011 directly addresses this issue by funding publicly supported post-secondary ECE degree programs and campus childcare centers that serve as hands-on learning labs for students pursuing ECE-related degrees. We must invest in ECE workforce development.

Montessori education strongly emphasizes child-centered learning, fostering independence, and nurturing each child’s unique development. However, the effectiveness of any early childhood program depends on a well-trained, well-supported workforce. Unfortunately, many aspiring educators are deterred by low wages, high educational costs, and limited resources for professional development. In the past four years, we have seen our learners’ demographics shift from 25% being sponsored by a school to 75%. Our community of schools is struggling to staff their classrooms. By investing in ECE programs, HB 3011 ensures adults can access quality education, gain practical experience, and enter the workforce prepared to support Oregon’s youngest learners.

Furthermore, the bill’s investment in ECE infrastructure will help expand a mixed-delivery model that accommodates diverse educational philosophies, including Montessori. This inclusive approach will strengthen the ECE system, offering families more choices and ensuring that all children receive high-quality early learning experiences.

HB 3011 is not just an investment in education—it is an investment in Oregon’s future. A robust ECE workforce enables working families to thrive, supports economic growth, and ensures that every child, regardless of background, has access to the early learning opportunities they need to succeed.

I urge you to support HB 3011 and advocate for this critical funding. Thank you for your time and commitment to Oregon’s children and families.

Sincerely,

Angelika Steinberg
Executive Director
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