

To: House Early Childhood Committee
From: Dana Hepper, Children's Institute
Date: Tuesday, February 3, 2026
Re: Support for HB 4057

Chair Hartman and members of the Committee,

My name is Dana Hepper, and I am the Director of Policy & Advocacy at the Children's Institute. Children's Institute is a member of the Child Care for Oregon Coalition, and I had the opportunity to work with the Child Care Caucus and state agencies to inform HB 4057. Today I am here to speak in support of this legislation.

Ivy has given a great overview of why Child Care for Oregon supports Sections 1 & 2 of the bill related to referrals.

So I'll focus my remarks on the reasons to support Section 3 regarding streamlining background checks. Specifically, we support the -1 amendment to the bill that makes some modifications to the bill language.

Public School districts play a significant role in delivering preschool to Oregon children. In fact, [Children's Institute recently surveyed](#) all Oregon school districts, and 49 school districts responded that they are currently delivering preschool in their community. 53% of school districts require their lead teachers have a teaching license through the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission.

On and off for about 10 years, I have attended meetings for a variety of workgroups, committees, and ad hoc conversations seeking to strengthen systems alignment between early learning and k-12. Some of the most common topics that are brought up are the differing requirements for background checks, transportation/bus safety standards, and fire & health building inspections. To date, these countless meetings haven't resulted in action to reduce administrative burden for programs operating under both K-12 and early learning regulations.

This is why I was excited to see the background check piece lifted up for action in this legislation. Here is the current state of affairs:

- Federal law requires anyone working in a child care facility to participate in the [Central Background Registry](#). This must be renewed every 5 years.
- TSPC requires a different background check for teaching licenses, with initial licenses renewed after 3 years and professional licenses renewed every 5 years.
- ODE requires another background checks for non-certified school district employees upon hire.

With 49 school districts operating early learning programs, many educators and school staff may be subject to both the federally required child care background check and a TSPC or ODE

required background check. They may also have these duplicative background checks on staggered schedules.

The Federally required Central Background Registry for child care is a very rigorous process designed to ensure those cleared to work with young children will be safe and do not have a documented history of significant crimes or child abuse across any state they have resided in.

Simply encouraging agencies to finally address unnecessary duplication should not with additional costs or staffing - just direction from the legislature and shared commitment to make progress.

HB 4057 creates an opportunity to streamline the background process for educators and agencies. We urge your support.