

2017



# OREGON PRESCHOOL LEGISLATIVE REPORT

PREPARED FOR THE OREGON STATE LEGISLATURE  
BY THE EARLY LEARNING DIVISION



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# Oregon Preschool Legislative Report

## 2016-2017

### Executive Summary

ORS 329.172 (HB 3380), ORS 329.165 and 417.796 requires the Early Learning Division to report to the Legislative Assembly on various components of the Preschool Promise program and the Oregon Prekindergarten program. The Early Learning Division submits its *Oregon Preschool Legislative Report, 2016-2017* in fulfillment of the reporting requirements.

The report describes Oregon's publicly funded preschool programs, Oregon Prekindergarten (OPK) and the 2016 implementation of Preschool Promise. Key highlights of the report describe costs, funding, enrollment, and children and families served by OPK and Preschool Promise.

Additionally, we address program requirements, the positive impacts OPK teachers and staff have on quality early learning experiences for children, as well as child progress and outcomes. The report also details Preschool Promise program requirements, the roles and responsibilities of Oregon's Early Learning Hubs, funding models for Hubs and providers, and provides a comprehensive review of program implementation successes and challenges for the Preschool Promise program.

Oregon faces long-term challenges meeting the statutory goal of full funding for all eligible families. Oregon's publicly funded Oregon Prekindergarten and Preschool Promise programs combined with federal funds for Head Start, provides access for six out of ten Oregon eligible families in OPK and 1,300 eligible children through Preschool Promise. While Preschool Promise has greatly expanded Oregon's ability to provide high-quality preschool opportunities in this state, there remain more than 21,000 three- and four-year olds from low-income families who have neither access to Preschool Promise or OPK.

The reports also addresses the critical role Oregon's early learning workforce plays in providing quality early learning experiences for Oregon children and families. It covers salaries, education levels and turnover rates for the workforce and describes the significant and systemic challenges posed by low levels of compensation in the field of early childhood.

In addition to providing access to quality comprehensive early learning services that meet varying needs of children and families, Oregon is at the precipice of addressing the needs of its early learning workforce to support culturally and linguistically relevant classroom environments, curricula and instruction; opportunities for professional development, educational attainment, and challenges presented by low wages and associated high turnover rates.

The Early Learning Council and Early Learning Division is committed to partner with policymakers, early learning providers and stakeholders to build upon successes and the investments made over

the last several years to expand access and improve the quality of early learning for Oregon's most vulnerable children.

The Oregon Preschool Legislative Report, 2016-2017, was prepared by the Oregon Department of Education, Early Learning Division. Copies of the full report may be obtained by contacting the Early Learning Division at (503) 378-2792 or [karol.collymore@state.or.us](mailto:karol.collymore@state.or.us). The report may be downloaded from the Early Learning Division website at [oregonearlylearning.com](http://oregonearlylearning.com).

## Introduction

ORS 329.172 (HB 3380), ORS 329.165 and 417.796 requires the Early Learning Division to report to the Legislative Assembly on the Preschool Promise and the Oregon Prekindergarten programs. The Early Learning Division submits this report in fulfillment of the reporting requirements.

## Oregon's Pre-K Landscape

In 1987, the Oregon Legislature enacted Senate Bill 524, which established the Oregon Prekindergarten (OPK) program, modeled after and designed to work side by side with federally-funded Head Start programs. Oregon's 28 Head Start grantees include school districts, educational service districts, and community action organizations. By Oregon law, entities eligible to compete annually for state funding include school districts and nonsectarian organizations. Oregon law allows for 20 percent of the children to come from families not in poverty and requires that at least ten percent of the children served have identified disabilities.

Most recently, in the 2015 legislative session, the Oregon Legislature enacted HB 3380 creating a new preschool model, now named Preschool Promise, for families whose incomes are at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level in a mixed-delivery model that supports parent choice of provider settings.

OPK and Preschool Promise programs provide quality preschool opportunities for Oregon's lowest income families. These programs support attainment of Oregon's stated 40-40-20 goal, progress in closing academic achievement gaps, and attaining a 100 percent high school graduation rate by 2025.

## Overview of Oregon's state-funded preschool programs

**Oregon Prekindergarten** is Oregon's largest program. OPK provides preschool education, child health and nutrition, and family support services throughout the state to the lowest income and highest need preschool children ages three to five years.

OPK is free to families whose children are at least three years old, not old enough for kindergarten, and who meet income or other eligibility qualifications<sup>1</sup>. Program services include health, education, parent involvement, mental health, social services, nutrition, and other services for children and families.

Federal Head Start provides grants to local organizations to provide comprehensive services for eligible children, based on a framework of learning goals and performance standards. By Oregon statute<sup>2</sup>, OPK follows national Head Start performance standards, operating procedures, and grantee re-competition guidelines. In 2012, the Oregon Legislature designated the Head Start Early

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<sup>1</sup> Following federal Head Start, Oregon children who are homeless or in foster care automatically are eligible for participation in OPK.

<sup>2</sup> ORS 329.195(1)(c)

Learning Outcome Framework as our state preschool learning standards. OPK's alignment with national Head Start results in high quality, and research-based early learning programs for Oregon families challenged by poverty. ELD funds 21 OPK programs that also receive federal Head Start funding. In addition, ELD funds seven OPK programs which do not currently receive federal funding, providing an additional 1,900 enrollment slots. Alignment with federal standards, procedures, and monitoring ensures non-overlapping delivery of services and cost-savings for state funds.

The 2015-17 legislatively approved budget for Oregon Prekindergarten was \$145 million funding 8,156 enrollment slots for children in OPK. When combined with federal and other funding sources, total OPK-funded enrollment for 2015-16 was 13,641. An estimated 12,201 of the enrollment slots were filled by age eligible children living at or below the federal poverty level. The remaining slots were filled by children with other identified risk factors.

**Oregon Early Head Start.** Oregon funds 64 slots for children under three years old, whose parents live in poverty, at about \$11,500 for each slot. ELD funding supplements the federal Early Head Start program, which serves about 2,000 young children and their families in Oregon. Early Head Start provides early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families, and pregnant women and their families.

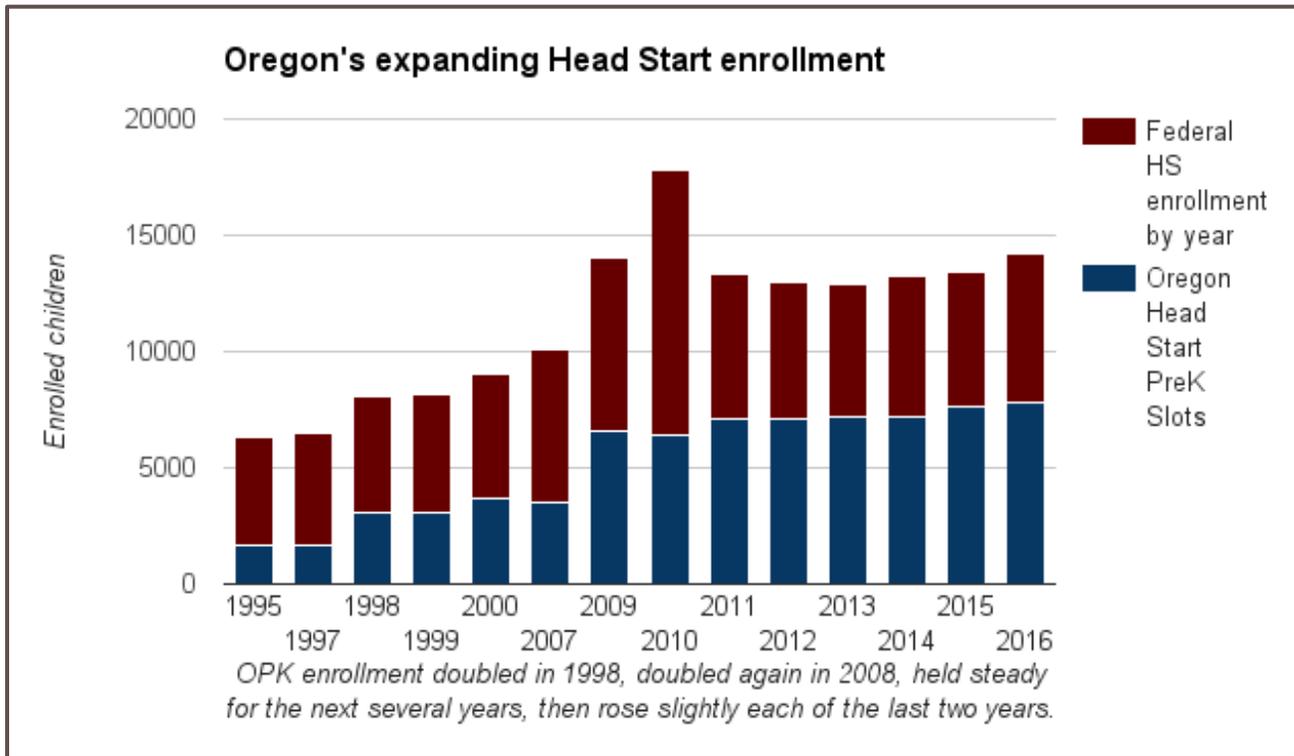
**Preschool Promise.** Preschool Promise, a new publicly funded high quality preschool program for families whose incomes are at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level expands on and complements existing preschool options for children and families experiencing poverty. The investment in Preschool Promise builds off investments the legislature has made in the Oregon Prekindergarten program in recent years.

In the first year of implementation, Preschool Promise served 1,300 three- and four-year old children whose family's income is at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. This program complements the OPK program by reaching families at a higher income threshold and in a mixed-delivery model that supports parent choice of provider settings. The "mixed delivery" approach recognizes that high-quality early learning experiences can take place in a wide variety of settings, giving families the ability to choose the setting that works best for them and their child. The settings include elementary schools, Head Start programs, licensed center- and home-based child care programs and community-based organizations. Preschool Promise offers a full day of developmentally appropriate instructional practices based on research-based curriculum, includes parent involvement opportunities and connects families to additional community resources and services.

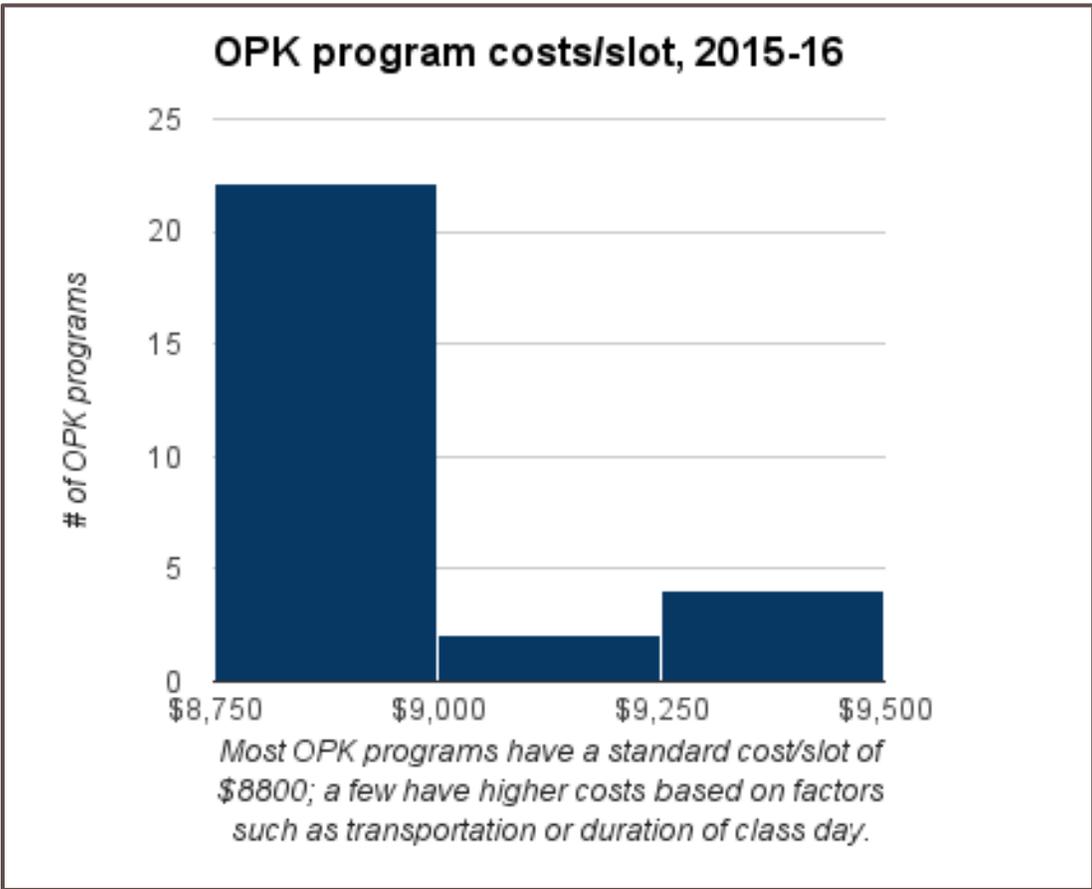
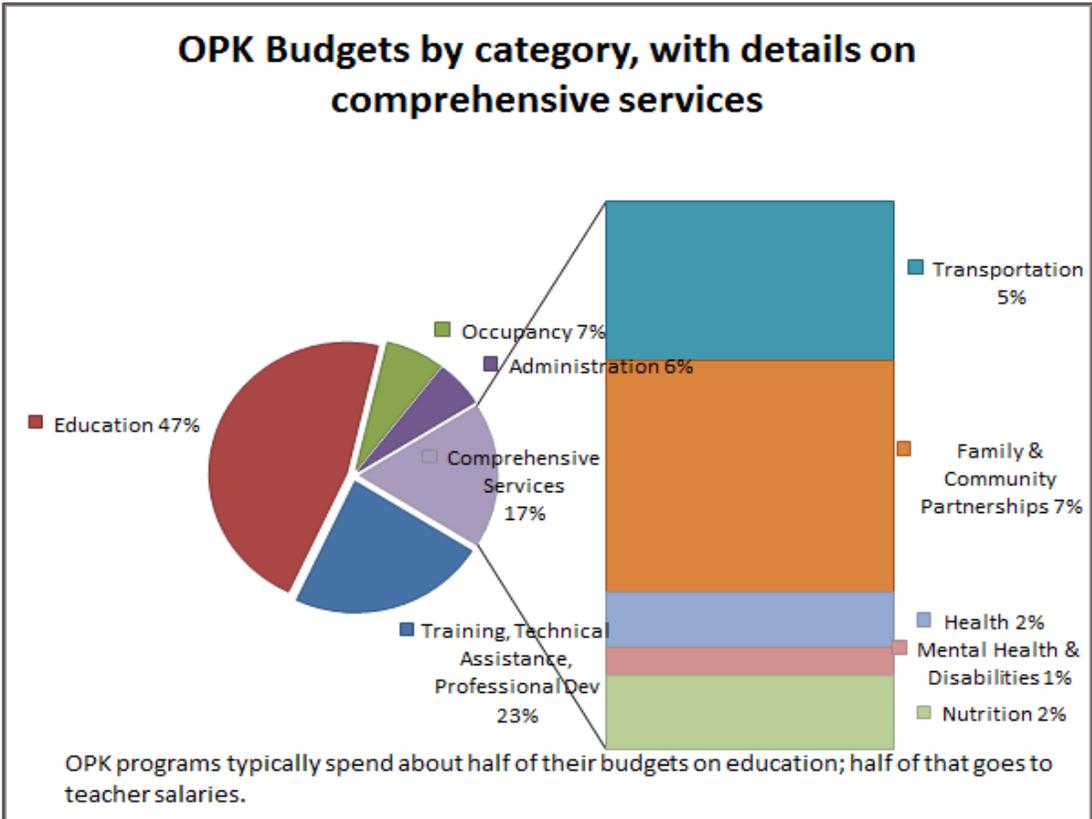
### **Children Enrolled in and Served by publicly funded preschool programs**

**OPK: Total number of children served** in collaboration with our federal Head Start partners, OPK has provided opportunities for large numbers of eligible families over the years.

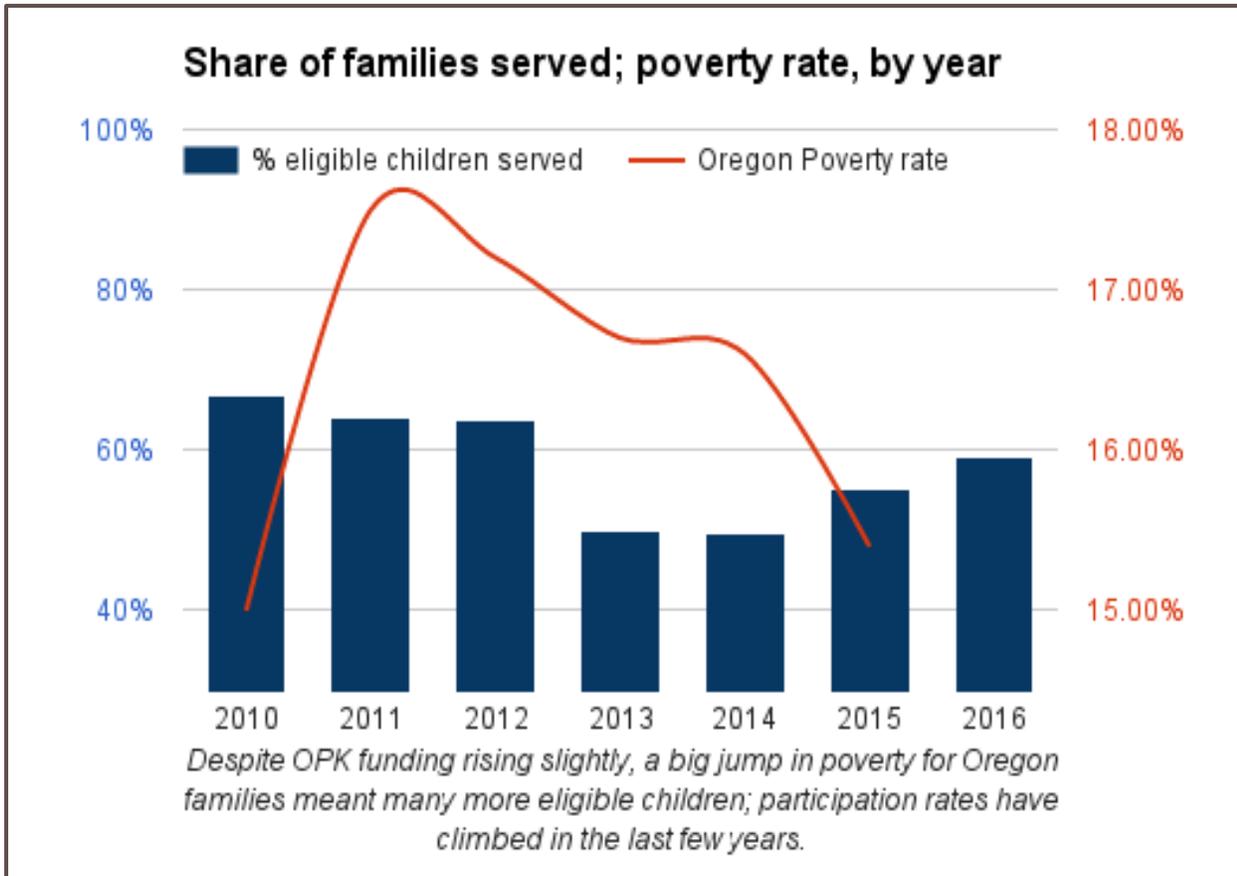
**Enrollment.** Oregon funds 8,000 slots for low-income families participating in Head Start. Combined with our federal partners, nearly 14,000 low income Oregon families receive comprehensive services in Head Start.



**Cost.** For the current biennium, OPK total funding level was \$145 million – ELD funds OPK grantees on average at \$8,900 per slot. The average per child cost for OPK is currently about 20 percent lower than the average federal per child cost in Oregon. OPK grantee spending shows some variation across categories. Some programs for example do not transport children to centers, which can reduce costs but potentially limit access. ELD analysis shows that grantees typically spend half of the funds on education ( $\frac{1}{4}$  on teacher wages;  $\frac{1}{4}$  on curriculum, supplies, materials, etc.) with another quarter of OPK funds supporting training and professional development. A notable expenditure, equal to almost one in five dollars, supports comprehensive services to participating families. These services, which distinguish OPK from typical center-based preschool programs, include health screenings, family home visiting, nutrition assistance, and mental health aid for children coping with trauma and other sources of challenging behavior.



**Access.** Current funding provides slots for six out of ten Oregon families challenged by poverty – a share that has fluctuated some the last decade. The dip in the share of eligible children served echoed effects of the Great Recession, which saw employment drop and poverty rise for Oregon families; though OPK enrollment held steady, the number of eligible families grew sharply.



### Preschool Promise: Total number of children served: Total Investment

**Enrollment.** In the first year of implementation, the Preschool Promise program is directly funding preschool for over 1,300 children.

In this program year, 67 percent of the Preschool Promise families have incomes that range between 100-200 percent of the Federal Poverty Levels and the remaining 33 percent have incomes below 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. The families whose incomes are below 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level meet Head Start income eligibility requirements.

There are an additional 443 children in Preschool Promise classrooms that are funded by other sources (blended classrooms). Approximately 73 percent (n= 67) of the classrooms have a blended funding model. In Washington County, all of their fifteen classrooms utilize a blended funding model. Some of the other funding sources include Title I funds, OPK or Head Start funds, Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) subsidies, Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special

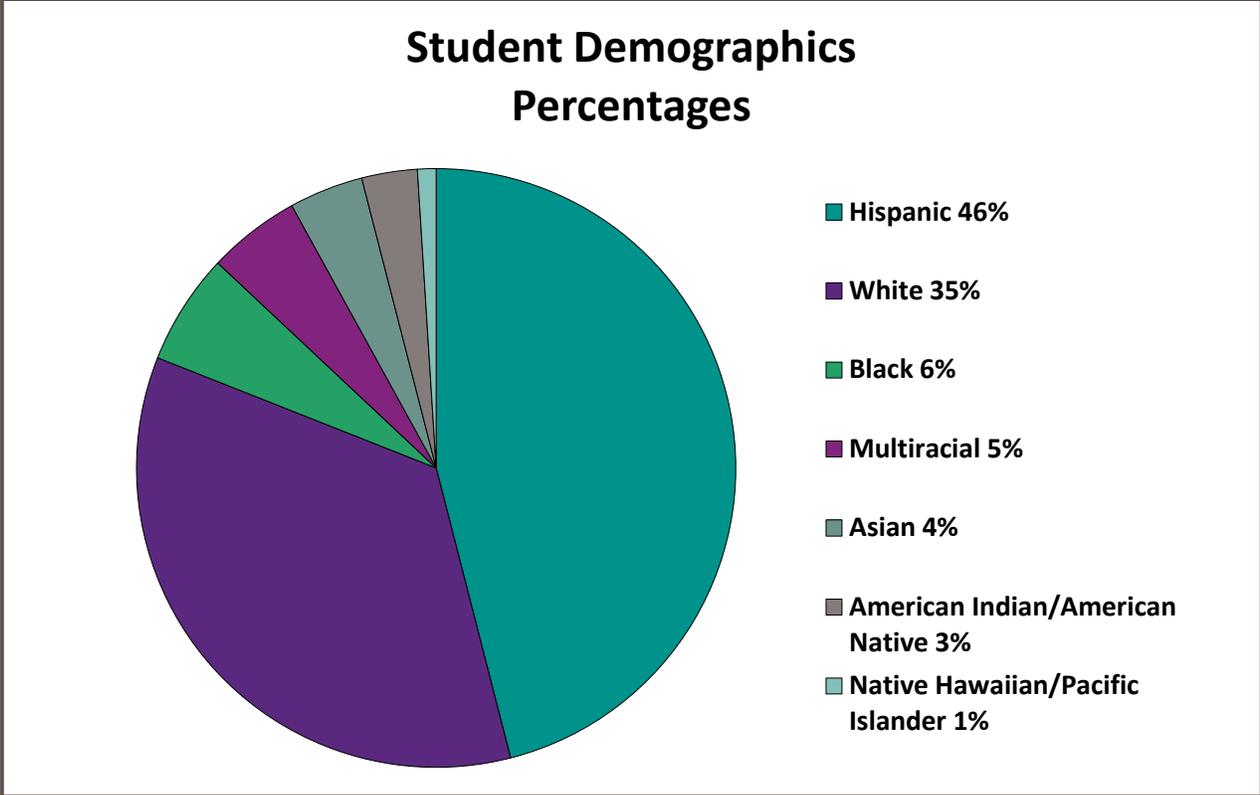
Education (EI/ECSE) funds, or parent pay (tuition). Of these 443 children, 19 are Title I funded, 80 are OPK or Head Start funded, 28 receive ERDC, and 235 are parent pay. A small percentage of children are partially funded using EI/ECSE funds.

**Cost.** The average cost per child is \$11,458 which includes direct provider services and hub coordination activities. The main driver of cost is teacher and staff wages and benefits, dose and duration of services that are equivalent to full day kindergarten (minimum 900 hours), other comprehensive services (transportation, nutrition, parent engagement), and professional development. One of the unique features of Preschool Promise is the mixed array of providers offering the program and even though cost drivers are consistent across all provider types, there is a cost variance. The average cost per child by provider type ranges from \$8,300 to \$11,500. Registered Family providers are at the low end of cost because of lower facility costs while school districts are at the high end due to higher administrative, facility, comprehensive employee benefits and transportation service costs.

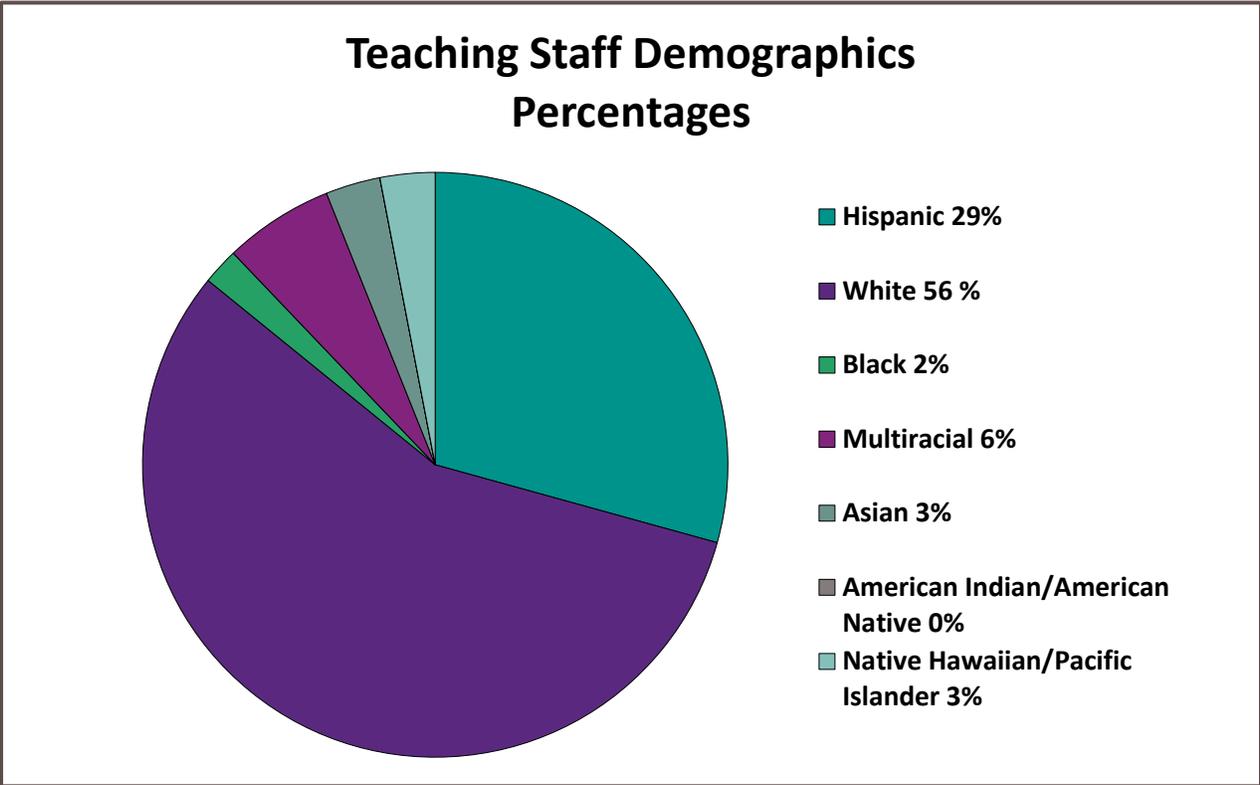
Type of Provider	Average Cost Per Child
Registered Family	\$8,308
Certified Family	\$9,532
Education Service District	\$10,405
Community Based Organization	\$10,584
Certified Center	\$10,883
Head Start	\$10,984
Relief Nursery	\$11,400
School District	\$11,513

**Access.** In this first year of services, nine Early Learning Hub regions covering seventeen counties, are able to offer Preschool Promise. The 1,300 enrollment opportunities are distributed in a manner that reaches a large geographic area and includes rural, metro and frontier regions. Currently, there are 382 children on a wait list.

First year data demonstrates that Early Learning Hubs have successfully recruited families representing diverse populations. Approximately 65 percent of the first year students identify racially with historically underrepresented populations. The overall demographic data indicates the following for the children currently enrolled in Preschool Promise: Hispanic, 46 percent; White, 35 percent; Black, 6 percent; Multiracial, 5 percent; Asian, 4 percent; American Indian/American Native, 3 percent, and; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 1 percent. Thirty five percent of all children enrolled indicated that Spanish is their primary language.



To support the language development of children enrolled, 28 percent of the teaching staff speak Spanish; 3 percent speak Russian, and 3 percent indicated competency in another foreign language.



### Student progress and outcomes

Research and experience demonstrates that Head Start works. Researchers’ most comprehensive examination, the Head Start Impact Study, found “Providing access to Head Start has a positive impact on children’s preschool experiences. There are statistically significant differences between the Head Start group and the control group on every measure of children’s preschool experiences measured in this study.”<sup>3</sup>

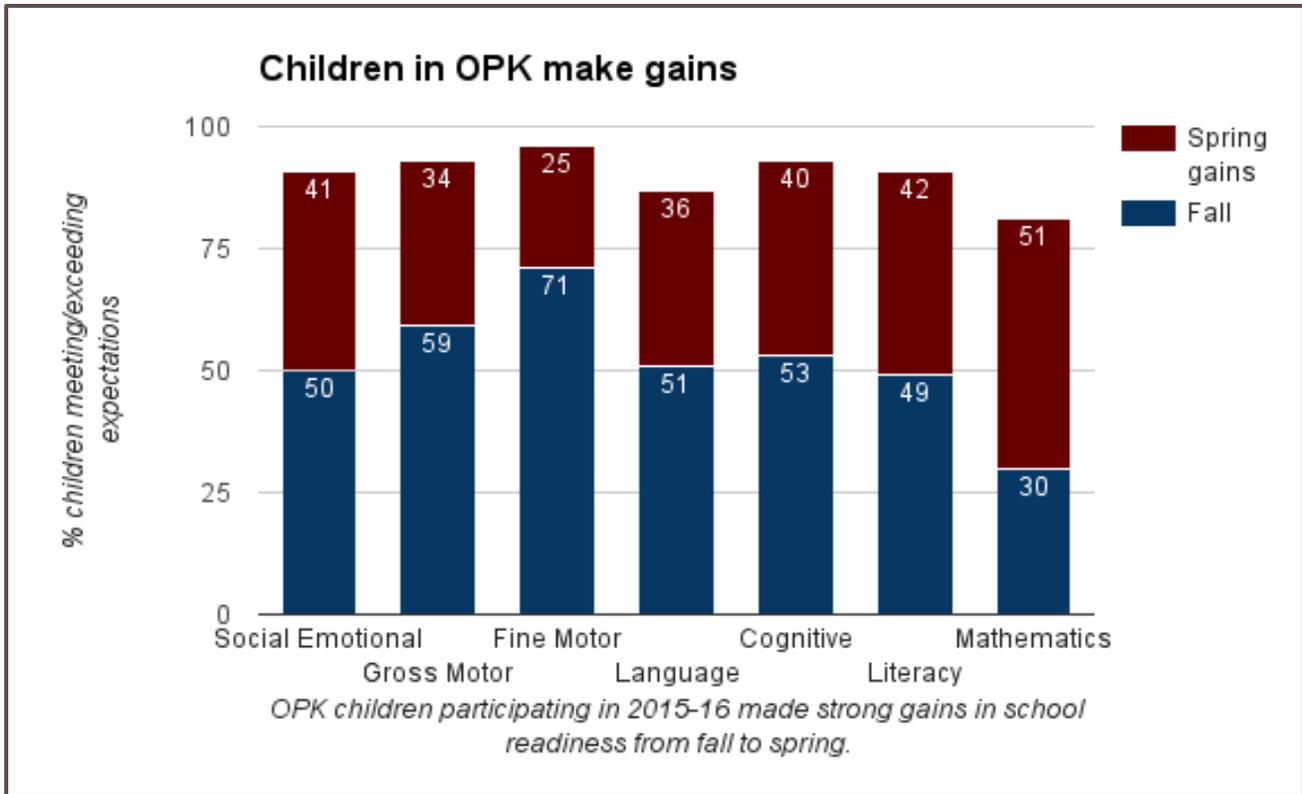
	CENTRAL DOMAINS				
	APPROACHES TO LEARNING	SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	COGNITION	PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
▲ INFANT/TODDLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
● PRESCHOOLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication Literacy	Mathematics Development Scientific Reasoning	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

**Head Start Outcomes Learning Framework**

Oregon’s partnership with federal Head Start orients local agencies to a highly effective program model. OPK programs help children develop skills in six domains: how young children learn, feel, communicate, think, and move. OPK programs assess children in these domains multiple times a year. Teachers and parents observe children carefully, listen to their words, and ask them questions. Teachers use these observations to assess children in each domain. ELD collects and analyzes the assessment data, from which effective practices and initiatives are identified and provides assistance to programs to improve child outcomes.

Equity is prioritized throughout programs through a commitment to supports for children and families farthest from opportunity. Teachers provide culturally responsive curricula and environments, learning about each family and planning to meet the needs of every child. Strong developmental gains are documented in children facing extra challenges such as learning English as a second language, those marginalized by racism or coping with disabilities.

<sup>3</sup> Puma, M., Bell, S., Cook, R., Heid, C., Shapiro, G., Broene, P., ... & Ciarico, J. (2010). Head Start Impact Study. Final Report. *Administration for Children & Families*.



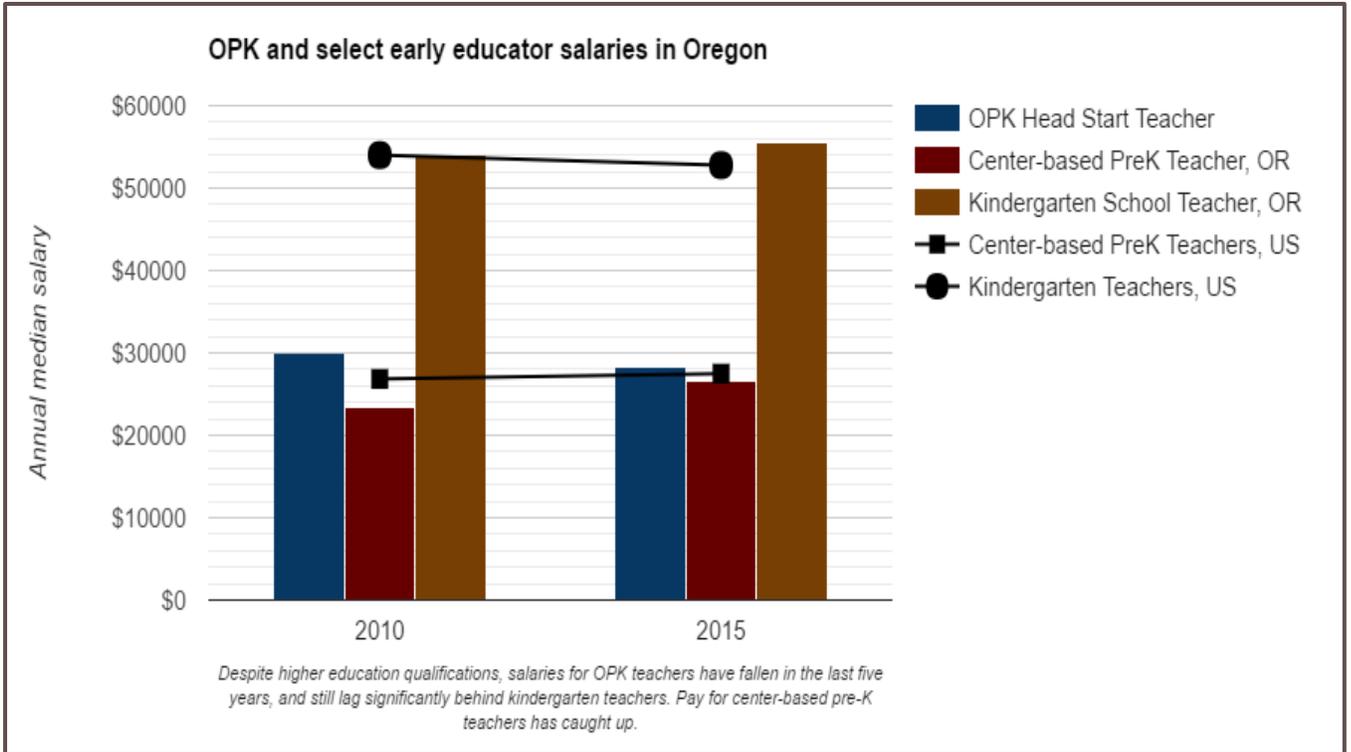
## Salary, education levels and turnover rates of lead preschool teachers

### OPK

Wages for OPK teachers largely reflect industry trends. In 2015-16, salaries for Oregon Head Start lead teachers averaged \$28,388, about five percent less than 2010's inflation-adjusted figure of \$29,920. To understand these figures in context, consider two comparisons: center-based preschool teachers in Oregon averaged \$27,000 per year, while kindergarten teachers in Oregon public schools earn \$58,000 per year.<sup>4</sup>

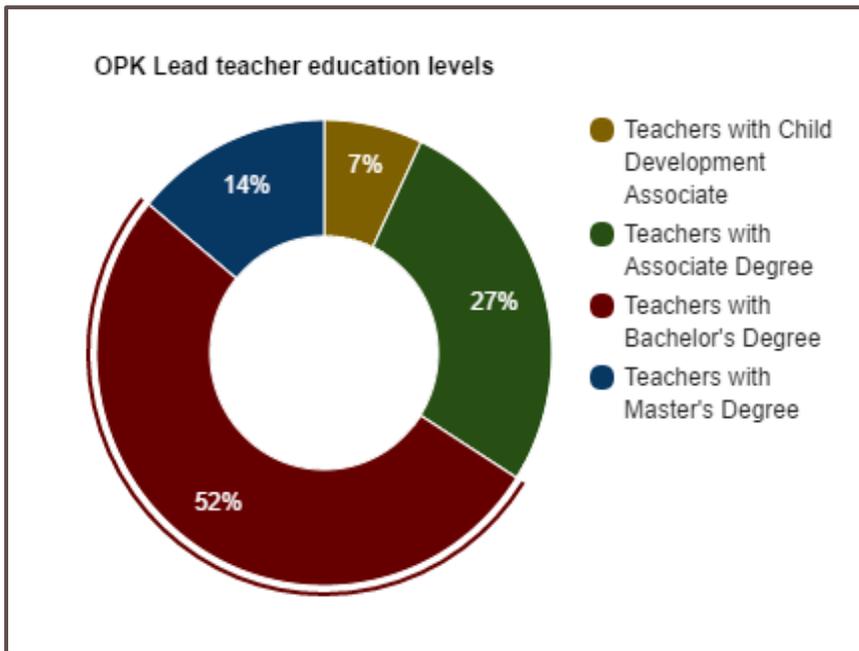
Notwithstanding falling wages, OPK teachers tend to have higher education levels today than in years past. These improvements reflect growing consensus that high quality programs need better-educated teachers. Beginning in 2008, federal Head Start implemented policies designed to raise the qualifications of teachers in Head Start. From a baseline of one in four lead teachers having a bachelor's degree, Head Start required that by 2013, half of lead teachers would need a bachelor's degree. In addition, the 2015 Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC) report, "Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying

<sup>4</sup> OPK salaries from ELD data. For Oregon and national wage information, see: Center for the Study of Childcare Employment. 2016. "Early Childhood Workforce Index". Wages converted to annual salaries using 2000 hours/year.



Foundation”, calls for a bachelor's degree, with specialized knowledge and competencies, for all lead teachers working with children birth through age eight.<sup>5</sup>

OPK has mirrored national trends and met the Head Start target: today two-thirds of OPK lead



teachers hold at least a bachelor’s degree, up from half in 2008. For most of these teachers, their degrees come in early childhood education or a closely related field; for others, they have additional qualifications and/or coursework in fundamentals of child development.

OPK programs face high turnover rates, typical for the field. One in four OPK teachers left their position in 2015-2016. Further, one third of

<sup>5</sup> Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. 2015. "Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying foundation." Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

OPK programs experienced higher than average teacher turnover rates—in some cases over fifty percent.

### Preschool Promise

HB 3380 specifies a number of program standards that are intended to support quality teacher-child interactions. These standards include class size, adult-child ratios and the requirement that lead teachers have a bachelor’s degree. Adequate compensation also supports quality adult-child interactions for three main reasons: It impacts the ability to recruit teachers with the high-level qualifications specified in HB 3380; retain those teachers; and provide incentives for teachers who do not yet meet those qualifications to invest in further education and training.

The challenges posed by low levels of compensation in the field of early childhood are significant and systemic. About seventy percent of the funding for early childhood programs comes directly out of the pockets of parents in the form of tuition and child care payments. As a result, there is a persistent gap between what parents can afford and what early childhood programs are able to pay their teachers. This challenge cannot be fully resolved by Preschool Promise alone. The Preschool Promise salary requirements are likely to create situations in which Preschool Promise teachers and non-Preschool Promise teachers who are part of the same organization are paid at different rates. However, Preschool Promise does begin to address the need for career paths within early childhood that are better compensated. By creating more fairly compensated early childhood teaching positions for practitioners with a bachelor’s degree, Preschool Promise provides an incentive to earn a degree and remain in the field.

HB 3380 states that “target salary requirements should be comparable to lead kindergarten teacher salaries in public schools” and that the Early Learning Council will establish the target salaries for lead teachers. An analysis of kindergarten teacher salaries found significant regional variation. Based on this information, the Early Learning Council decided that the salary requirements for Preschool Promise teachers should be established by region and take into consideration the average kindergarten teacher salary for all school districts within that Hub region.

Early Learning Hub	BA Target	BA Minimum	AA Target	AA Minimum	CDA Target	CDA Minimum
Eastern	\$48,174	\$33,722	\$40,948	\$28,904	\$31,313	\$24,087
South-Central	\$53,773	\$40,441	\$45,707	\$32,264	\$34,952	\$26,887
NW Regional	\$54,272	\$37,990	\$46,131	\$32,563	\$35,277	\$27,136

Lane	\$57,680	\$40,376	\$49,028	\$34,608	\$37,492	\$28,840
Marion- Polk	\$59,398	\$41,579	\$50,488	\$35,639	\$38,609	\$29,699
Southern	\$59,961	\$41,973	\$50,967	\$35,977	\$38,975	\$29,981
Clackamas	\$60,365	\$42,256	\$51,310	\$36,219	\$39,237	\$30,182
Washington	\$62,143	\$43,500	\$52,822	\$37,286	\$40,393	\$31,072
Multnomah	\$63,272	\$44,290	\$53,781	\$37,963	\$41,127	\$31,636

HB 3380 requires lead teachers to have a bachelor’s degree, but also recognizes that many teachers will need time to get there. As a result, HB 3880 also allows for waivers for this requirement, as long as the teachers submit a plan for completing a bachelor’s degree and maintain adequate progress in meeting that plan. Approximately 50 percent of the lead teachers have requested a waiver for the bachelor degree requirement. Differentiating salary requirements by teacher’s education level – CDA, Associate’s degree, bachelors and master’s – recognizes and creates incentives to support professional development.

### Update on Status of Preschool Promise program

The Preschool Promise program model leverages high-quality, local, and culturally-relevant early child care and education programs. By incorporating a “mixed delivery” approach, Preschool Promise provides families the option to choose and access the preschool program which best meets their needs. The vision for Preschool Promise is to begin to close opportunity gaps through the creation of new and expanded preschool opportunities throughout Oregon. This model builds off investments the legislature has made in Oregon’s early learning system in recent years, including the system of Early Learning Hubs.

### Program requirements

Children ages 3 to 4, living in families with incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty line are eligible to participate. The legislation specified that Early Learning Hubs apply for state funds and tasked Hubs with identifying and coordinating the providers who will deliver the preschool program in their community. Schools, ESDs, Head Start programs, child care providers and community-based organizations are eligible to provide Preschool Promise services and receive funding through their local Early Learning Hub to provide these services. To be eligible, preschool

providers must have achieved a 4- or 5-star-rating in Spark, Oregon’s quality rating and improvement system<sup>6</sup>, or to seek a waiver for this standard.



**Role of Hubs and role of ELD**

Hubs are responsible for ensuring fiscal accountability among participating preschool providers. In turn, the Hubs are accountable to the Early Learning Council for specified performance metrics defined in contract. The Early Learning Division (ELD) is responsible for administering Preschool Promise to ensure program standards are met. The ELD and Hubs provide technical assistance to ensure continuous quality improvement, as well as collect, aggregate and report on data from the preschool programs. The Hubs share in the responsibility for data collection.

The table below provides more detail on the roles of the Council, ELD, Hubs, and preschool providers.

<sup>6</sup> Oregon’s tiered quality rating and improvement system was created and established as directed by ORS 329A.261.

Early Learning Council Policy Body	Early Learning Division State Agency	Early Learning Hubs Local Contractors	Preschool Providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish criteria and process for selecting Early Learning Hubs who will sub-contract with local preschool providers.</li> <li>Identify resources necessary for the ELD to develop, support and sustain the implementation of a high quality preschool program.</li> <li>Ensure that professional development pathways and supports are available to teachers and assistants.</li> <li>Establish minimum salary and target salary requirements for lead preschool teachers.</li> <li>Develop strategies that strive to increase the mean salary for lead preschool teachers in this state.</li> <li>Administer waivers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set program standards, teacher qualifications, and compensation scales.</li> <li>Support professional development of workforce (state system alignment).</li> <li>Develop Technical and Training Assistance supports for both contractors and providers.</li> <li>Monitor local contractors for proper execution of sub-contracts with providers, including quality improvement plans associated with waivers.</li> <li>Build data system to support program objectives and reporting requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify community priorities.</li> <li>Create an Implementation Plan that addresses priorities.</li> <li>Identify a set of providers that would actualize the Implementation Plan.</li> <li>Subcontract with selected providers to implement preschool program.</li> <li>Monitor program providers.</li> <li>Make investments in providers in order to meet program standards.</li> <li>Support community collaboration to meet the needs of children and families enrolled in the preschool program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit and determine child eligibility.</li> <li>Implement preschool model according to program standards.</li> <li>Recruitment of staff that meet requirements.</li> <li>Participate in continuous quality improvement plans to meet standards.</li> <li>Collect and report data on child outcomes and other identified program goals.</li> </ul>

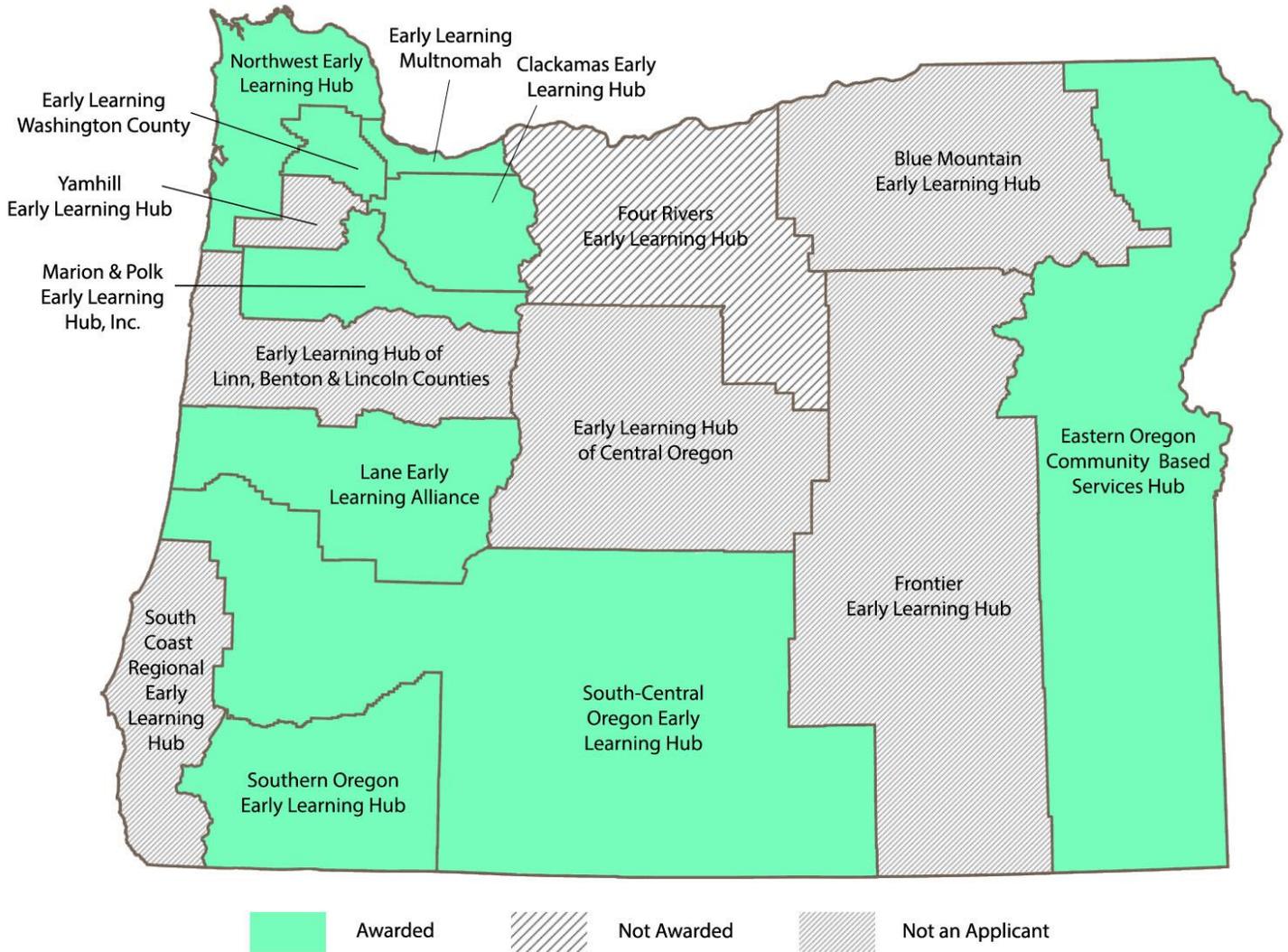
### Process for selecting Hubs

The Council decided that Preschool Promise should be launched in a limited number of Hubs ranked by their ability to demonstrate capacity and readiness. The Council initiated a formal Request for Applications (RFA) released in December 2015. The RFA was categorized into three overarching sections: Demonstrated Need and Connection to Community; Capacity to Support a Mixed Delivery Model, and; Capacity to Support High Quality Preschool Programs.

Nine applications were received and six of those applications were selected to receive awards. Once the six applications were selected, the Early Learning Council Award Committee determined the distribution of awarded enrollment opportunities. It is important to note that one of the awarded applications was a ‘regional’ application that included four Hubs and consequently nine Hubs received contracts to implement Preschool Promise. Contracts were awarded to selected Hubs in March 2016.

### Selected Hubs: Where are they located?

The nine Hubs that are implementing Preschool Promise are geographically distributed across Oregon, reaching rural as well as metropolitan areas.



## Hub and Provider Contracts

Hubs are responsible for coordinating and partnering activities with Preschool Promise providers which include refining, assessing and determining the capacity of providers to meet program objectives and standards, and identifying areas of needed quality improvement and professional development. The Hubs are responsible for assisting providers in submitting waiver requests and developing quality improvement plans.

Hubs and selected providers finalized contracting in the summer and fall of 2016. Providers then began the work of establishing age appropriate classrooms, hiring and onboarding teachers, acquiring equipment, curricula and other materials. Training and technical assistance to Hubs and providers to ensure programs are meeting standards and implementing high-quality instructional practices is ongoing and utilizes early learning systems currently in place through the Child Care Resource and Referral networks and Spark quality improvement supports.

## Program Funding: Hub and Provider Funding for Preschool Promise

The ELD developed a working budget for Preschool Promise. The budget is broken down into the categories described below.

Categories	Proposed Amounts
Per Child Program Allocation	\$14 M
Preschool Provider Start-Up & Capacity Building	\$2 M
Hub Coordination, Support and Administrative Activities	\$.9 M
<b>Total for Hub Contract</b>	<b>\$16.9M</b>
Training & Technical Assistance	\$.4M
Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Cost for RFA process	\$.2M
<b>TOTAL ALLOCATION</b>	<b>\$17.5M</b>

### Per Child Program Allocation

The funds in this category were sub-contracted by the Hubs to the Preschool Promise providers for the direct provision of services. This category did not include start-up or capacity building costs; rather it reflects the on-going cost of program operation.

ELD staff modeled the cost of operating a Preschool Promise classroom based on the program standards specified in HB 3380. The program standards that are the primary cost-drivers include:

- Maximum classroom size of 20 children<sup>7</sup>
- Lead teacher and teacher's assistant in every classroom (adult-child ratio of 1:10)
- Lead teacher with a bachelor's degree in early childhood or related field
- Salaries for lead teachers within targets set by the Early Learning Council
- Full-day schedule
- Instructional hours equivalent to full day Kindergarten in local public schools
- Transportation

As indicated earlier in this report, the actual cost for this first year of implementation is between \$8,300 to \$11,500 (this amount does not include Hub coordination funds). While providers are not

<sup>7</sup> Based on early child care and education standards for developmentally appropriate adult to child ratios and maximum group size. Accreditation criteria established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (<http://www.naeyc.org>). Oregon Office of Child Care's Administrative rules (OAR 414-300-0130) mandates that the maximum number of children, 36 months of age to the age for attending kindergarten, in a group is 20 and that the minimum number of caregivers to children is 1:10.

required to provide transportation, providers who do were allowed to access additional funds to cover these costs. The final cost per child is also dependent upon the minimum teacher salary.

**Preschool Promise Provider Capacity Building and Start Up**

The funds in this category are directly sub-contracted to Preschool Promise providers by the Hubs. These funds are not for capital investments, but can be used for initial classroom set-up, curricula, materials and small-scale health and safety improvements needed to ensure that spaces are appropriate for children of this age. This is particularly relevant for classrooms in elementary schools.

The Early Learning Council directed some of the Preschool Promise funds be set-aside to support the capacity of programs to meet the standards identified in HB 3380 and are tied directly to the quality improvement plans submitted as part of the waiver process. The supports could also be used to provide professional development opportunities so that Preschool Promise teachers and assistants meet the required degree requirements.

**Hub Coordination and Administrative Activities**

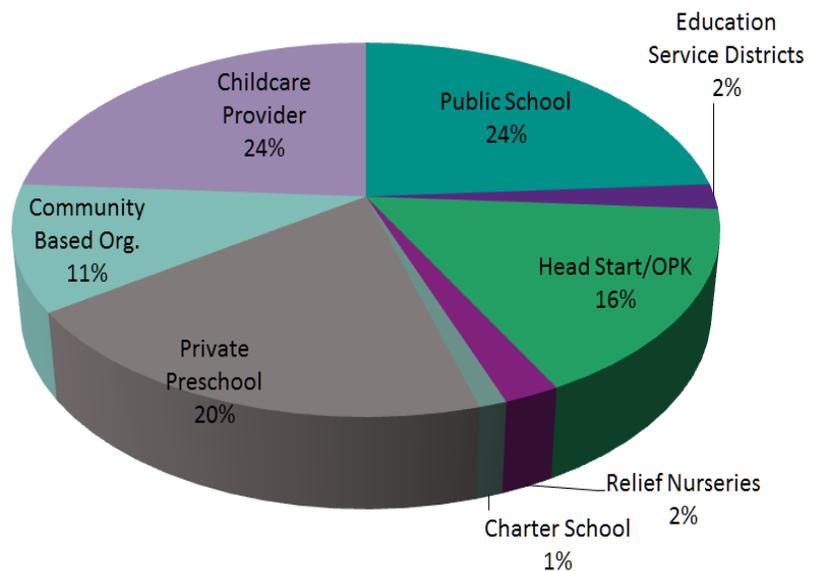
HB 3380 specified that Hubs are responsible for applying to the state for funding, developing a community plan, identifying the Preschool Promise providers in their community, contracting with those providers for Preschool Promise services and administering and monitoring those contracts. Hubs also have responsibility associated with collecting and tracking data from programs. The 6.5 percent of the total contract with a Hub identified in this category represents a cap for how much a Hub can retain in order to support these functions.

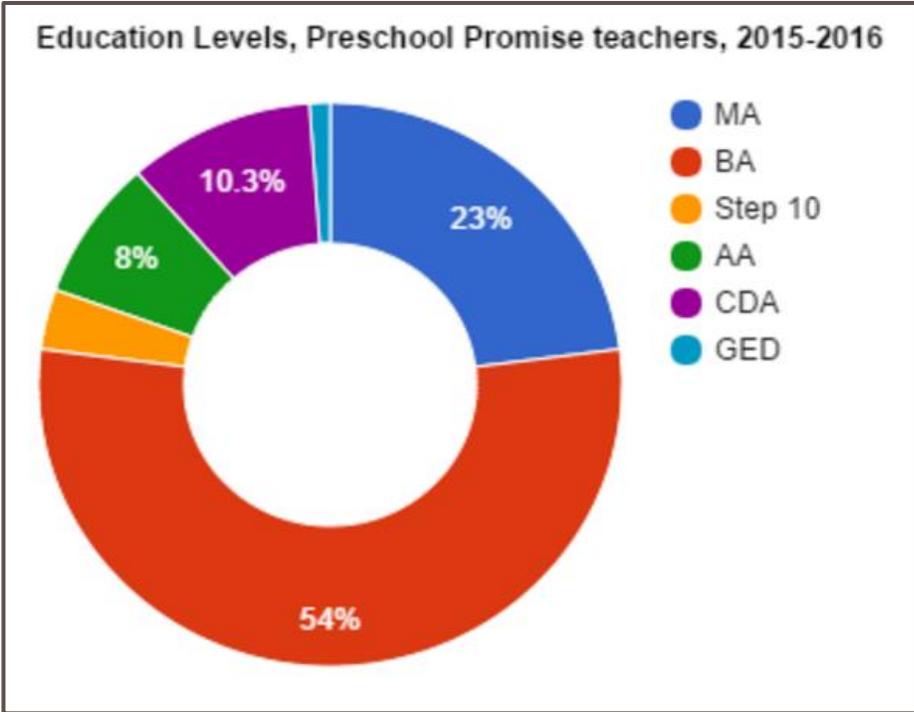
**Training & Technical Assistance**

High-quality instructional practice has been demonstrated to be one of the most significant determinants of outcomes for preschool programs. In order to maintain the coherence and integrity of Preschool Promise as a statewide program, it is important there also be opportunities for statewide trainings for Preschool Promise teachers and Hub personnel. The \$400,000 identified for this purpose would be retained by the ELD or subcontracted out to provide this training. The \$400,000 is approximately \$1,600 per staff member associated with Preschool Promise at the Hub and provider level.

**“Mixed Delivery Actualized”: Composition and make up of providers**

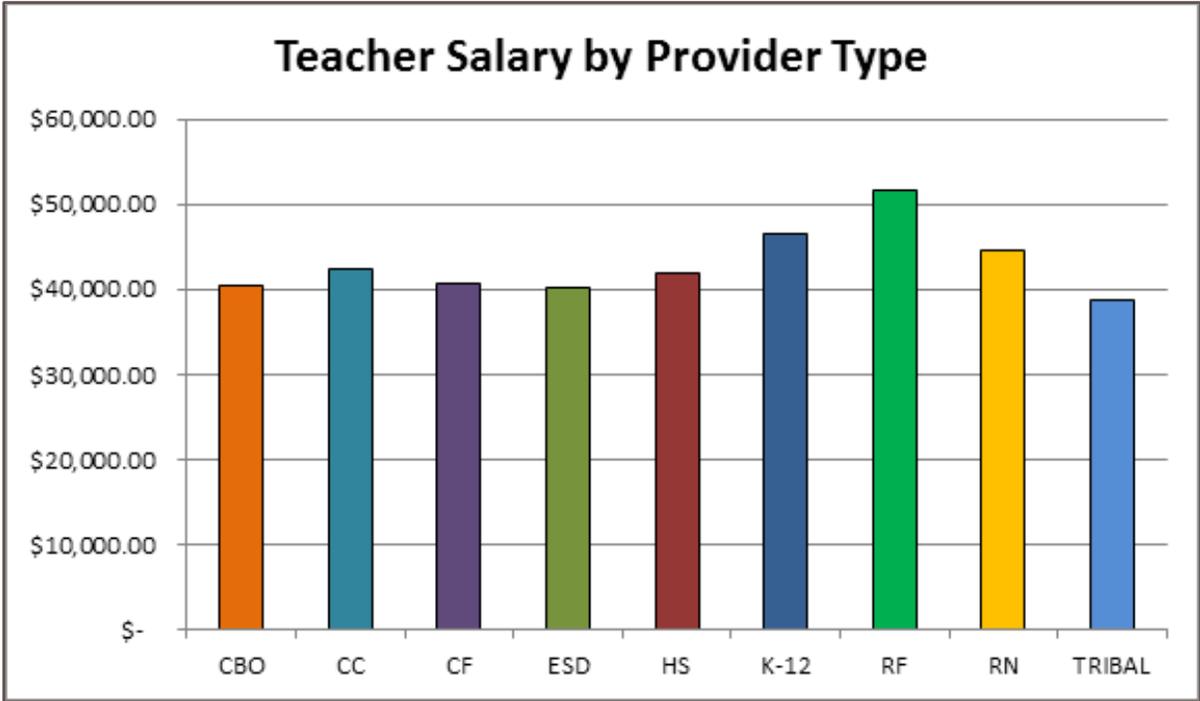
Preschool Promise incorporates a “mixed delivery” approach which recognizes that high-quality early





learning experiences can take place in a wide variety of settings, giving families the ability to choose the setting that works best for them and their child. The settings include elementary schools, Head Start programs, licensed center- and home-based child care programs and community-based organizations. All programs must meet research-based standards that are linked

to positive outcomes for children<sup>8</sup>. Preschool Promise, in its first year of implementation, has made large gains toward pay parity. Initial data indicates that of the reported ninety-three lead teachers, the average salary for those with a Step 10, Bachelor’s Degree or Master’s Degree is



<sup>8</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. 2011. *Caring for our children: National health and safety performance standards; Guidelines for early care and education programs*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Also available at <http://nrckids.org>.

\$46,535. This group represents 76 percent of the lead teachers (n=71). For the eleven lead teachers (12%) with an Associate's Degree, the average salary is \$37,357 and for the remaining ten (11%) lead teachers with a Child Development Associates certificate (CDA), the average salary is \$30,030. Early Learning Multnomah reports that all of their Preschool Promise lead teachers have either a Bachelor's Degree or Master's Degree and the average salary is \$51,969. Three other Hubs reported average lead teacher's salaries, with BA/MA, over \$50,000. In some Hub regions it was more challenging to obtain the target salaries due to provider level salary structures (pay equity considerations for all employees), collective bargaining agreements, and blended funding models.

## Program Evaluation

### OPK Evaluation

ELD monitors, assesses, and provides technical assistance to all OPK grantees, with particular attention to the seven programs not currently receiving federal funding. Consistent with Oregon law, ELD collaborates with federal Head Start officials to evaluate jointly-funded programs by sharing child outcome data, discuss incidents, track funding, and analyze assessments. In an effort to better connect children and families with resources, ELD initiated a plan in 2016-17 to help OPK agencies address structural racism. Grantees will learn together, assess their organizations, and review data. Agencies will then make plans to improve access, retention, and outcomes for people of color.

Grantees provide ELD with documents and data throughout the year. ELD staff review enrollment and attendance data monthly, child outcome data quarterly, and grantee self-assessments and community assessments annually. In recent years, Head Start has required use of Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®), an observation instrument that assesses the quality of teacher-child interactions in center-based preschool classrooms. OPK grantees regularly conduct CLASS® observations. Agencies use data from these observations to plan professional development and they share results with ELD annually.

National Head Start officials visit agencies annually to monitor implementation of policy, identify strengths, and determine areas of improvement. ELD's federal partners take responsibility for overseeing jointly-funded OPK programs while ELD staff monitors the seven grantees that only receive state funds. In 2016-17, site visits are scheduled at all seven of these programs. CLASS observations will be conducted, along with examination of child eligibility documents, and (in partnership with ELD Office of Child Care licensing specialists) health and safety inspections.

### Preschool Promise Evaluation

To monitor program quality and compliance with Preschool Promise statutes, rules and Operating Guidelines, the ELD and the Hub collects program level data and may conduct quality assurance site visits. The monitoring activities include; evaluation of QRIS/Spark! Star Rating Level; Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) evaluations; review of provider's staff qualifications, class size, adult-child ratios, working conditions; review of student records; review of enrollment and attendance records; evaluation of provider's accommodation for children with special needs; review of provider's parent participation plan; review of provider's curriculum; review of

provider's screening and assessment processes; evaluation of provider's efforts to connect families to resources that align with the family's childcare needs; evaluation of provider's staff development and training programs; review of provider's financial records and fiscal viability; review of provider's licensing records; review quality improvement plans; and review of waiver requests, associated quality improvement plans, and progress toward meeting quality standards.

To evaluate learner outcomes and to inform instructional practices, providers are required to complete three assessments annually. The first assessment is formative and provides baseline data, the second assessment is formative, and the third is summative. The main purpose of the assessments is to inform appropriate instructional strategies, the need for teacher training and technical assistance, and provide feedback to parents on their child's progress in relation to kindergarten preparedness and individual learner goals. In the first year of implementation, the collective learner outcome data will be utilized as formative baseline data for the entire program and will be a part of a multi-year program effectiveness evaluation.

The program will be evaluated in relation to the legislative goals listed below:

- Expand access to prekindergarten services.
- Families have access to programs that meet their needs and treat them as partners.
- A common set of high standards promoting school readiness and active family engagement.
- Preschools offer culturally and linguistically responsive services.
- Collaboration between Head Start programs, K-12 schools, child care programs and community based organizations in which each are treated as equal partners.
- Professionalizing and increasing compensation for the early childhood workforce.

### **Improvements to administration and evaluation of Preschool Promise**

This first year of implementation, although successful, involved tight implementation timelines and contained some areas of challenge that will need further evaluation and consideration so that subsequent years of service and expansion will operate more efficiently and effectively. The areas for future consideration include:

- Contracting and insurance requirements
  - Tight implementation timelines and the complexity of subcontracting with multiple provider types required additional time to develop appropriate and necessary contracting solutions.
  - Contractual insurance limits required by the ELD and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) for Preschool Promise providers created the largest obstacle. Obtaining the necessary insurance took time and increased operating costs. This created a delay in the start-up for many providers this first program year and due to this delay, some providers will not be able to provide the full 900 hours of service.

- Child eligibility requirements
  - The legislation speaks only to income eligibility (200 percent federal poverty guidelines or below) and this made it more difficult to offer services to children who have other circumstances that create opportunity gaps. Specifically, children who are in the foster care system, being raised by guardians (grandparents or other relatives), who have insufficient housing or are homeless, or whose parent/parents are serving in military active duty.
- Teacher and staff qualifications
  - In some communities providers were challenged recruiting staff that met the educational qualifications and also met the linguistic and cultural competencies needed to serve the community-identified target populations for Preschool Promise. Also, by only recognizing educational attainment as quality, some master level early learning professionals were not considered for lead teacher positions.
- Tribal engagement
  - In this first year, only one tribe is a designated provider for Preschool Promise services.
- Need for appropriate facilities
  - It was challenging for some communities and providers to expand services in targeted communities due to lack of appropriate facilities and no funds for capital projects. Many providers indicated that they would have liked to participate in Preschool Promise but their facilities and classrooms are at maximum capacity.
- Community coordinated services distribution
  - An unintended consequence of a new publically funded preschool program was enrollment challenges for existing programs. Preschool Promise services, although intended to be a complimentary service to other existing programs (HS/OPK, Relief Nursery, Title 1 preschool), created ‘competition’ within communities. Work has already begun with the ELD, Early Learning Hubs and Head Start programs to develop community based strategies to ensure that families and children furthest from opportunity are able to access services that meet their needs and that all programs and providers meet their enrollment requirements.

### **Estimates for 2017-19 roll up and Rate of increase in funding necessary to serve all eligible children and families**

The ELD estimates the roll-up cost for Preschool Promise for the 2017-19 biennium to be approximately \$32 million. This estimate is based on maintaining a current service level of about 1,300 children and takes into account a reduction in start-up and capacity building costs. Maintaining current service level over the next biennium will enable the ELD and the funded Hubs to refine implementation and conduct a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of the program.

## Conclusion: The Early Learning Council Long Range Plan

High-quality preschool is well documented to be one of the most effective strategies for closing opportunity gaps and raising school achievement. Children who attend high-quality preschool programs are more likely to arrive at kindergarten with social-emotional skills and academic experiences that place them on a path for success. While Oregon has made significant strides in the last decade, access to affordable high-quality and culturally relevant preschool still remains too limited for too many families in Oregon, particularly for low-income and families of color.

The Early Learning Council's 2016 Strategic Plan articulates a commitment to strategies that focus on children who are over-represented in the academic achievement gap and under-represented in accessing strong services and supports<sup>9</sup>. The Council is committed to making measurable progress to ensure all Oregon children enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

In order to achieve these goals and broaden access to high-quality preschool programs in the state, the ELD has continued to support OPK and, in 2016, launched the new Preschool Promise program.

### Goals of the Early Learning Council, Division and Hubs

- (i) An early learning system that is coordinated, aligned and family-centered;
- (ii) children arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed; and
- (iii) children live in healthy, stable and attached families.

Since 2007, the state's investment in OPK has more than doubled, significantly increasing the number of three- and four-year olds from families experiencing poverty that have access to the supports and educational opportunities that will help them be ready to succeed when they enter kindergarten. OPK, combined with federal investments, now reaches about sixty percent of the eligible children. In addition to the more than 7,000 three- and four-year olds living in poverty who do not have access to OPK, there are also far too many children from low-income families who are missing the opportunity to attend a high-quality preschool. Until 2016, there was no public preschool option for these children.

Preschool Promise has greatly expanded Oregon's toolkit for providing high-quality preschool opportunities in this state. Not only does it expand eligibility to children living in families up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level, it also broadens the range of entities able to offer preschool, increasing family-choice and community responsiveness. However, Preschool Promise is still in its early stages of implementation, with programs available in nine of Oregon's sixteen Early Learning Hubs, covering seventeen of its thirty-six counties. It has given 1,300 students who would otherwise not have had this opportunity, access to high-quality preschool. There remain more

<sup>9</sup> Strategy 1.1 Develop a supply of high quality, community based early learning programs focused on the ELC's priority population of low income children and children of color. Strategy 1.2 Ensure equitable access for children and families to quality early learning and development programs for children in the ELC's priority population

than 21,000 three- and four-year olds from low-income families who have neither access to Preschool Promise or OPK.

The most defining element of a high-quality preschool is high-quality adult-child interactions. The successful expansion of preschool requires teachers who can guide social-emotional growth, promote learning environments that are linguistically rich and cognitively stimulating, and attend to the unique ways young children learn and develop, and do so in ways that are culturally and linguistically responsive, valuing the culture of families. As Oregon expands access to high-quality preschool programs in the state, it will also need to attend to the early childhood workforce. The early child education and development workforce, in Oregon and nationally, has had limited opportunities for professional development and is subject to wages that encourage high turnover rates and discourage professional advancement.

The Early Learning Council and ELD is committed to partner with policymakers, early learning providers and stakeholders to build upon successes and investments made over the last several years to expand access and improve the quality of early learning for Oregon's most vulnerable children.