



Oregon Department of
**Early Learning
and Care**

Report to the Legislature

Birth through Five Literacy Plan

A comprehensive, equitable framework for improving early literacy outcomes for
Oregon's youngest children



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Executive Summary

Pursuant to [ORS 327.839](#), this report is being submitted by the Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) to inform the legislature on the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan, incorporated below. DELIC developed the plan as a comprehensive framework aimed at improving early literacy outcomes for children from birth through age five. Grounded in the goals of the Early Literacy Success Initiative (HB3198), the plan emphasizes equity, cultural responsiveness, inclusivity, and addresses disparities in access to quality literacy programs and services.

The Birth Through Five Literacy Plan aims to transform early literacy in Oregon by:

- Empowering families as children's first teachers.
- Equipping educators with tools and training to address diverse needs.
- Supporting Tribal Nations in preserving and revitalizing Native American languages.
- Bridging gaps in access to create an inclusive and more equitable early learning system.

Key Survey Findings on Early Literacy in Oregon

27% of survey respondents, including families and early learning professionals, identified **access to books** in families' primary language as a critical need.

23% of survey respondents would like to see more activities that offer ways for **families to learn and connect** with each other around topics including literacy.

16% of early learning professionals expressed a desire for training on **supporting multilingual learners**.

The plan recognizes the critical period of brain development between birth and age five when a child's foundational skills for literacy are established. It also acknowledges the essential role of families, educators, and Tribal Nations in fostering these skills. Importantly, the plan is **informed by robust community engagement efforts**, including input from families, educators, and consultation with Tribal Nations within Oregon's borders. Through a partnership with Oregon's Kitchen Table (OKT), DELIC hosted [multilingual surveys and discussions](#), ensuring that diverse voices shaped the plan's development.

A fundamental priority of the plan is to **address disparities and promote equity**. Oregon's diverse population includes a growing number of children from historically marginalized communities. Nearly 15% of children under age five live below the federal poverty level (FPL)¹ and experience significant disparities in access to early literacy programs. Furthermore, 44% of children aged five and below are children of color², yet the early learning workforce remains predominantly white (67%).³ Research highlights the

importance of culturally responsive programming and the integration of home languages in early literacy efforts. For example, studies show that incorporating a child's home language strengthens family bonds and enhances literacy outcomes.⁴

1. The 2024 federal poverty guidelines are \$25,820 for three persons in a household and \$31,200 for four persons in a household

2. Oregon Early Learning Council. (2023). *Raise Up Oregon: A Statewide Early Childhood System Plan 2024-2028*. Salem, OR: Department of Early Learning and Care.

3. Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and Education, Portland State University, & Oregon Child Care Research Partnership, Oregon State University. (2023). *Oregon early learning workforce: Nine years beyond baseline, comparison of 2012 and 2021*. Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and Education.

4. Bialystok, E. (2001). *Bilingualism in Development: Language, Literacy, and Cognition*. Cambridge University Press.

Key Components of the Plan

The **Birth Through Five Literacy Plan** has three key goals informed by community input, which also serve as the plan's components:

Goal 1: Expand Culturally Specific Early Literacy Programs

- Provide professional training and culturally relevant resources
- Fund programs to develop and distribute home language literacy materials
- Support workforce with literacy pathways and increased access to professional development

Goal 2: Promote the Capacity of Programs that Engage Families in Early Literacy

- Strengthen connections between DELC and libraries
- Increase access to book distribution and culturally responsive family education
- Elevate family voice to shape policies and investments

Goal 3: Support Language Revitalization Efforts for Tribal Nations

- Consult with the Nine Federally Recognized Tribal Nations within Oregon's borders to develop resources and expand language preservation efforts
- Respect Tribal sovereignty through non-competitive funding processes

Phased approach to implementation

To support sustainable development and investment of the system structures necessary for success, the plan will be implemented in an overlapping phased approach that builds toward full implementation.

Initial Phase:	Develop foundational resources and elevate family voice in decision making.
Growth Phase:	Expand workforce training and strengthen family engagement programs.
Scale-Up Phase:	Increase provider access to culturally specific literacy materials and flexible funding.
Evaluation Phase:	Assess progress, gather community feedback, and adapt strategies as needed.

In summary, the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan is a transformative framework that addresses systemic disparities and fosters a culturally responsive, inclusive early learning system. By centering families, supporting early educators, and consulting with Tribal Nations, the plan lays the groundwork for equitable literacy development in Oregon. With an additional investment of approximately \$12.5 million in the Governor's Recommended Budget for the 2025-2027 biennium, DELC would invest in the plan's components, building foundational supports in the early learning system to ensure every child in Oregon has the opportunity to achieve their full literacy potential.

The Why: Background on the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan

Early Literacy Success Initiative- HB3198

In 2023, Governor Tina Kotek set a vision for early literacy to ensure that every child has access to consistent, culturally responsive, and research-aligned literacy supports, beginning at birth. Through House Bill 3198, the Governor and the Legislature established the Early Literacy Success Initiative with five key goals:

- Increase early literacy for children from birth to third grade,
- Reduce literacy academic disparities for student groups that have historically experienced academic disparities,
- Increase support to parents and guardians to enable them to be partners in the development of their children's literacy skills and knowledge,
- Increase access to early literacy learning through support that is research-aligned, culturally responsive, student-centered and family-centered, and
- Expand and develop language revitalization efforts by federally recognized Indian Tribes in this state.

As outlined in [ORS 327.825 - 327.845](#) these goals will be accomplished through four aligned yet distinct grant programs: (1) Early Literacy Success School District Grants; (2) Early Literacy Success Tribal Grants; (3) Early Literacy Success Community Grants; and (4) Birth through Five Literacy Plan. The first three programs are administered by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE); the fourth by DELC. **This report pertains only to the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan.** It is in keeping with [ORS 327.839](#), which requires DELC to submit an annual report on the plan to the legislature.

Oregon's Early Literacy Success Initiative provides Oregon the opportunity to improve, connect, and fortify systems and structures to enable every child in the state to receive evidence-based early literacy development that honors the unique and intersectional assets their families bring. Under this initiative, DELC and ODE will establish, grow, and deepen the integral connections between the early learning and K-12 sectors, and between the state, Tribal Nations, schools, and communities. These connections will support early literacy development and ensure that every early educator in Oregon has the skills, tools, and opportunity to support children, and their families, to realize every child's full potential.

Purpose of the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan

HB 3198 directs DELC to establish and implement the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan for the following purposes:

1. Expand culturally specific early literacy programs for children from birth through five years of age by: encouraging family and caregiver engagement; and providing research-aligned, developmentally appropriate professional training and coaching for direct service staff in early literacy,
2. Promote the capacity of programs that engage parents and children from birth through five years of age in early literacy and that are available equitably and statewide, and
3. Expand and develop language revitalization efforts by federally recognized Indian Tribes in the state.

The DELC plan serves as a strategic, comprehensive, equitable framework for improving early literacy outcomes for children in Oregon from birth through age five. It facilitates children's holistic literacy development by supporting, expanding, and enriching the families, programs, workforce, Tribal Nations, and the systems that surround children as they develop in their earliest years.

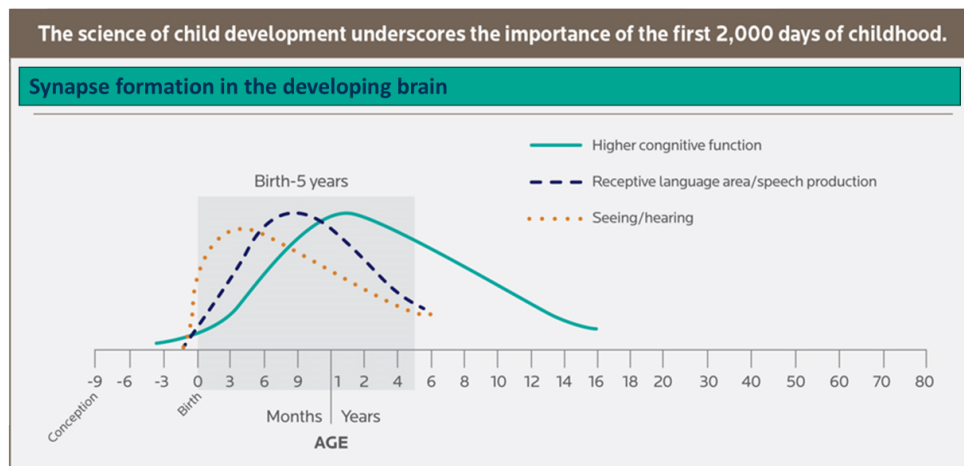
Recommended Investments

In 2023, DELC submitted its first Birth Through Five Literacy Plan Report, outlining the community engagement and recommended funding approaches for the 2023-2025 biennium. This 2024 report outlines the agency's recommendations for investments of \$22 million in the 2025-2027 biennium, including the additional \$12.5 million in the Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB) for implementation of the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan. The recommendations outlined in this report are based on extensive community input from families, child care providers, early educators, and community partners,

Children In Oregon

Early Literacy, the Foundation for Reading, Starts at Birth

Research on early literacy shows that babies develop emergent literacy skills from birth. The years between birth and kindergarten are a critical period of brain development when a child's brain is making one million new neural connections every second.⁵ During this time, children are establishing attachment to caregivers, learning to communicate and interact with others, and learning to listen and speak in their home language—all setting the foundation for early literacy and school readiness. These findings underscore the need to start supporting parents, caregivers, and children well before children begin their K-12 education journey.⁶ This graph, from the book 'Neurons to Neighborhoods', underscores the importance of the first 2000 days, or five years, of a child's life on the synapse formation in the developing brain.



Source: Shankoff, J.P., & Phillips, D.A. (Eds.). (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. Washington, DC, US: National Academy Press. Retrieved from <https://www.nap.edu/read/9824/chapter/1>.

5. Center on the Developing Child (2007). *The Science of Early Childhood Development* (InBrief).

6. Lonigan, C. J., & Shanahan, T. (2009). *Developing early literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel. Executive summary. A Scientific synthesis of early literacy development and implications for intervention*. National Institute for Literacy.

In Oregon, the percentage of third graders demonstrating proficiency on the statewide summative assessment in English language arts (reading, writing, listening, and research) has been below targets for several years, and these scores also highlight a gap for students of color.⁷ Research has confirmed that third grade reading scores link not only to educational success but also to social impacts later in life.⁸

Year		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All Students	Target	53%	66%	68%	68%	68%	68%
	Actual	47.2%	N/A	N/A	40.0%	39.4%	39%
Students of Color	Target	32%	56%	60%	60%	60%	60%
	Actual	28.5%	N/A	N/A	21.7%	29.2%	22%

To ensure that students will be successful readers by third grade, Oregon needs to lay the groundwork by investing in supporting children’s literacy skills before they enter school, starting at birth.

To build early literacy skills and to ensure that schools are ready for students, it is critical to recognize that parents and families are the child’s first, most important teachers and to support that role accordingly. Parents and families deepen children’s literacy learning by affirming each child’s unique language, culture and identity. Parents and caregivers are also critical in reinforcing the learning that happens in educational settings. Supporting families in their role as teachers enables them to be full partners in developing their child’s literacy skills and knowledge. Indeed, the need to recognize the primacy of this role and to engage parents as partners was a consistent theme in community engagement sessions conducted by the Governor’s Office to inform the development of HB 3198.



7. Oregon Department of Education. (2024). 2024 Oregon state test results: Data visualizations. Oregon Department of Education

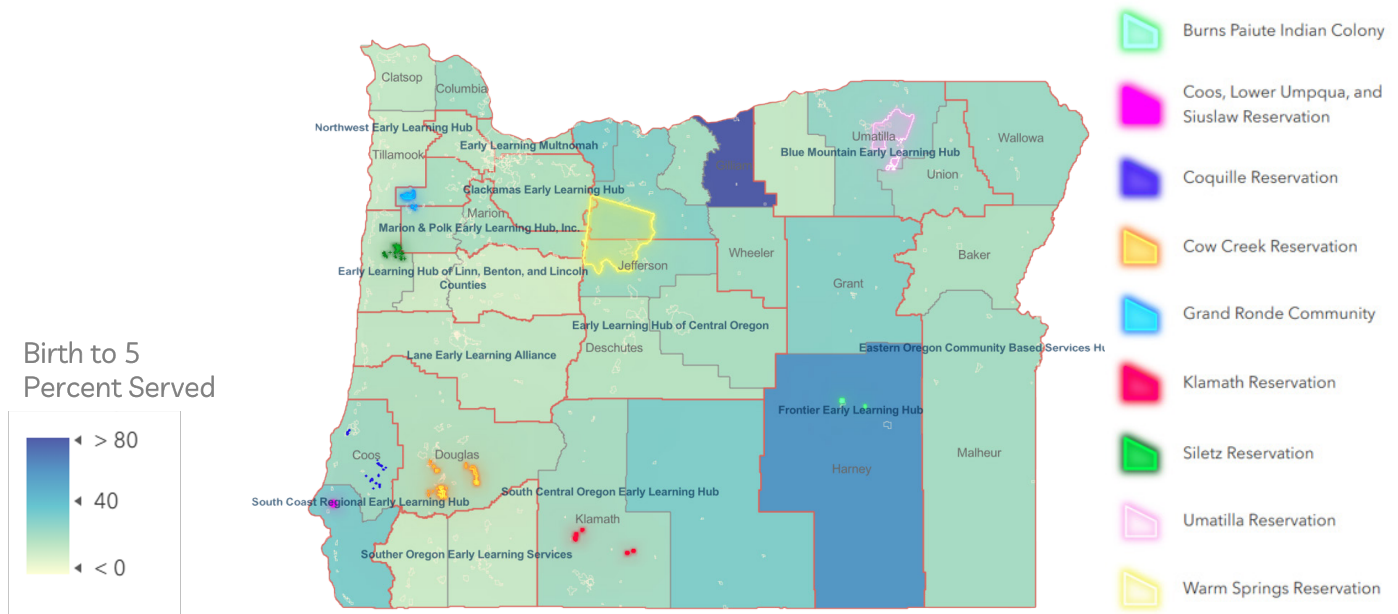
8. Feister, L. (2013). *Early warning confirmed: A research update on third-grade reading*. The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

There are Gaps in Access to Publicly Funded Early Learning and Early Literacy

To support improving early literacy outcomes for children in Oregon it is important that all children have access to high quality early learning programs and services. Especially vital is ensuring that publicly funded early learning investments reach children and families who have been historically marginalized by educational systems and are furthest from current opportunities and access.

Oregon is home to 254,512 children aged birth to five. Of these children, nearly 15% are living in families earning incomes below the federal poverty level (FPL) and 35% below 200% of the FPL.⁹ An expansion of publicly funded preschool programs administered by DELC in 2022-23 increased preschool access for eligible families. Many counties now have access rates above 50%, with five counties meeting access goals of 80% or more for preschoolers - recognizing that not all families want or need access to preschool. However, as represented in the graphic below the majority of counties in Oregon still experience preschool and infant, toddler child care deserts where at least one in three children living below 200% of the federal poverty level do not have access to early learning.

2023-2024 Percent of Eligible (under 200% FPL) Children Under 5 with Access to a Publicly Funded Early Learning Slot in Oregon



Note: Data includes 2023-2024 slot estimates for the following programs: Baby Promise, Preschool Promise, Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten and federal Head Start/Early Head Start. Tribal Head Start, Migrant & Seasonal Head Start, and other publicly funded program data are not included. Source: Department of Early Learning and Care. Total population defined as children ages 0-4 living in families below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level; Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2021

Gaps in access to high quality early learning can prevent children and families from gaining the experiences needed to achieve the literacy skills that provide a foundation for success in school and life. Supportive early care and education programs and family resources for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers are essential to the literacy and language development that begins at birth. In addition, DELC recognizes the need to ensure access to evidence-based services and support for parents and caregivers, who are in the best position to promote early literacy skills with their children as their first teachers.

9. Number of children 0-5 by federal poverty level estimated using the American Community Survey (ACS), 2022 5-Year Estimate, Table B17024.

Early Learning Services Need to Address Multilingual Learners and Racial Equity

In addition to gaps in access, the availability of early learning programs and services that are culturally responsive or support instruction in a child's home language are also lacking. Forty-four percent of young children ages five and below in Oregon are children of color, and Oregon's child population is becoming more diverse.¹⁰ ODE's Statewide Report Card shows that 12% of Oregon's K-12 students are multilingual learners, an increase from the previous year.¹¹

The Oregon Child Care Research Partnership reports that the early learning workforce in Oregon is primarily white (67%), with smaller percentages of Hispanic/Latino (21%), Asian (4%), Black/African American (4%), American Indian/Alaskan Native (2%), Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (1%), multiracial (1%), and other (1%). Around 85% of the workforce speaks English as their first language, and 11% speak Spanish, with more home-based providers using a language other than English.¹²

Primary Language of caregiver by type of care	2021 N=20,015	
	English	Other than English
Center	87%	13%
Large Home-Based	82%	18%
Small Home-Based	67%	33%

Supporting home language development not only strengthens ties with the child's family and community; research shows that incorporating a child's home language into early literacy also supports overall literacy success¹³ as well as the child's cognitive and social emotional development.¹⁴



"Different cultures and languages are often viewed from a deficit perspective rather than an opportunity for children/families to see themselves in our programs and for other children to get a window into the lives and experiences of others in their learning community." - professional in the early learning workforce

10. Oregon Early Learning Council. (2023). Raise Up Oregon: A Statewide Early Childhood System Plan 2024-2028. Salem, OR: Department of Early Learning and Care.

11. Williams, C. Oregon Statewide Report Card 2022-23

12. Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and Education, Portland State University, & Oregon Child Care Research Partnership, Oregon State University. (2023). Oregon early learning workforce: Nine years beyond baseline, comparison of 2012 and 2021. Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and Education

13. US Department of Health and Human Services. (2008). Dual language learning: What does it take? Head Start dual language report.

14. Bialystok, E. (2001). Bilingualism in development: Language, literacy, and cognition. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

The What: 2024 Birth Through Five Literacy Plan

The Birth Through Five Literacy Plan presented here is a comprehensive framework aimed at improving early literacy outcomes for children from birth to age five. Tying to the goals of the Early Literacy Success Initiative (HB3198, 2023), the plan emphasizes equity, cultural responsiveness, and inclusivity, addressing disparities in access to quality literacy programs and services. The plan is grounded in research and in findings from community outreach. It has three key goals, each with defined strategies and intended outcomes as delineated below.

Grounded in Research and Community Engagement

Research. To develop the plan's goals, strategies, and outcomes DELC conducted an extensive review of research on high quality early learning programs and services shown to strengthen early literacy skills in the youngest children. This research review specifically focused on evidence-based best practices that are most relevant to achieving the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan's goals.

Community engagement. For initial feedback, DELC engaged directly with programs who receive DELC funding, as well as child care providers of all types in the spring of 2024. To further inform the goals, strategies, and outcomes, in the fall 2024, DELC partnered with Oregon's Kitchen Table (OKT) on a [statewide community engagement effort](#) to better understand what would be most helpful to people working with families with children birth through five to support the development of foundational early literacy skills, including language, early writing, and listening skills.

OKT's team aimed to reach both a wide variety of early learning and care partners, providers, programs, and staff as well as community groups and families from communities who have been historically excluded from public decision making. The OKT team is multicultural and multilingual and includes community organizers experienced in conducting outreach and hosting activities where community members can share what they think in their own language and in whatever way works best for them.

Community engagement activities included:

Surveys

- DELC administered a survey of home visiting program staff.
- A survey designed and administered by OKT, open to people who work with children aged birth through five, support families with very young children, and have children aged birth through five in their families. It was provided in five languages (Simplified Chinese, English, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese).

Series of conversations with community organizations and groups.

- DELC facilitated (in English and Spanish) virtual conversations with child care providers of all types from across the state, as well with Quality Improvement Specialists, Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten (OPK) Directors, Child Care Resource and Referral Directors (CCRR), Early Learning Hub Directors, and Early Childhood Equity Fund (ECEP) grantees.

- The OKT team conducted multiple activities to engage with families and hear their perspectives, including in-person conversation in Spanish with families at the Migrant Education Parent Institute gathering, Zoom conversation with the Yamhill Early Learning Hub Parent Leadership Council, and individual conversations with Native and Indigenous families at Back-to-School event in the Gorge.
- Statewide groups or networks who could bring together multiple organizations from a variety of geographic areas helped to host six of these conversations, including conducting outreach and issuing invitations to community groups in their networks. These groups include public libraries, Healthy Families Oregon, Statewide Child Care Resource and Referral, Oregon Head Start Association, Oregon Department of Human Services Family Coaches, and Early Learning Hubs.

Overall, more than four hundred individuals participated in the engagement statewide. The information gathered from the surveys and conversations was analyzed and organized into “key takeaways” and summarized below.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Providers want more professional development in early literacy, and it should be integrated into Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM), inclusion, and multilingual learning.
- Providers want to connect with families and provide better literacy support in their home languages.
- Providers need culturally relevant resources and flexible funding for literacy spaces and community needs.
- Challenges with staff capacity, turnover, and geographic access is impacting programs’ ability to promote early literacy with families and participate in early literacy trainings.
- There is a desire for deeper understanding of early literacy milestones for children birth to five.
- Book distribution programs are successful but limited, especially for bilingual and multilingual books.
- Partnerships, especially with public libraries, are crucial for early literacy support.
- There is a desire to learn how to incorporate easy to implement early literacy strategies as part of families daily routine.

Goals, Strategies, and Outcomes

Guided by research evidence and the community feedback key takeaways, DELC developed the plan presented in the table below. The plan provides a strategic framework for service delivery, starting at birth, to improve literacy outcomes in Oregon over time. In alignment with DELC’s 2024-2029 strategic plan, it is anticipated these strategies, metrics, and outcomes could be fully implemented by 2029. DELC recognizes that full implementation and maintenance of these strategies is funding dependent. The table on the next two pages lists the three key goals of DELC’s Birth Through Five Literacy Plan and details the recommended strategies and desired outcomes.

Goals and Strategies for Service Delivery	Metrics and Outcomes
<p>Goal 1: Expand culturally specific literacy programs for children from birth through five</p>	
<p>Strategies:</p> <p>Encourage family and caregiver engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines (ELKG) • Develop ELKG toolkit • Fund home language literacy material <p>Provide professional training and coaching for direct service staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen culturally specific organizations • Expand provider training networks • Align with DELC initiatives to support infrastructure • Expand access to professional development • Develop / expand training on supporting families and multilingual literacy • Strengthen resources to support early literacy in inclusive environments • Create a literacy specialization pathway 	<p>Metrics:</p> <p>Encourage family and caregiver engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # grantees acquiring or developing materials in home language <p>Provide professional training and coaching for direct service staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of culturally relevant literacy trainings developed • # of literacy trainings in non-English languages • # of providers receiving recognition for early literacy specialization • # grantees receiving funds for supplies and materials to support literacy instruction <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple accessible pathways exist to grow the full diversity of the early learning and care workforce supporting early literacy development • More early learning programs promote culturally specific literacy with the children and families they serve • Increased access to culturally specific, developmentally appropriate early literacy programming for children and families
<p>Goal 2: Promote the capacity of programs that engage parents and children from birth through five in early literacy and are available equitably statewide</p>	
<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen connections between DELC and the library system • Strengthen book distribution programming • Increase access to culturally responsive family education and support opportunities • Enhance home visiting • Create a structure to elevate family voice in decision making 	<p>Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of families served through home visiting programs that focus on literacy • # of families engaged as family voice representatives • # of families receiving early literacy resources • # of families participating in early literacy family engagement events or activities <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families actively shape children's literacy development and influence Early Literacy Initiative policies, implementation, and budgets

Goals and Strategies for Service Delivery	Metrics and Outcomes
Goal 3: Expand language revitalization efforts by federally recognized Indian Tribes	
<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund and consult¹⁵ with the Nine Federally Recognized Tribal Nations within Oregon's borders • Respect Tribal Sovereignty and Tribal self-determination in identifying appropriate early literacy strategies 	<p>Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of Tribal Nations participating in DELC funded programs • # of language and culture revitalization projects supported <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State resources support Tribal Nations in expanding language revitalization efforts • Increased access to culturally and linguistically appropriate early literacy services in Tribal communities

15. Consultation is a formal process which considers the scope, scale, and degree of Tribal implications conducted to honor the government-to-government relationship between Tribes and the State.



Goal 1: Expand culturally specific literacy programs for children from birth through five

Findings from Research and Community Engagement

Research shows that high quality early learning programs boost children's language and literacy skills before they start school and as they move into elementary grades.^{16, 17} This effect is especially strong for dual language learners.^{18,19,20}

During community engagement sessions with early childhood professionals, providers highlighted the need for multiple types of resources that would strengthen their capacity to support early literacy development in children.

Providers requested more professional development focused on early literacy, including:

- Practical tools for the classroom and recommended curricula
- Training and coaching instruction and materials in a range of languages, to better support their own professional development
- Training in strategies that are culturally responsive and that help them integrate literacy with social and emotional learning

These providers noted that due to high workforce turnover, staff need professional development support that meets them where they are in terms of their professional journey. Feedback from community engagement also highlighted the need to incorporate literacy instruction across learning domains to support the whole child.

They also asked for age-appropriate and culturally relevant resources like books, games, and songs. Providers expressed the need for more flexibility in funding, especially for supplies and materials needed to create literacy spaces. Educators working with children birth through age five also require support at the state policy level. The National Governor's Association

recommends a key policy action: ensure early learning standards reflect the three areas of early language and literacy skills and knowledge. These include language and communication, mechanics of reading, and content knowledge.²¹ There is an opportunity in Oregon to update and revise the Oregon Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines (ELKG) for early learning and early grade educators. The current ELKG was jointly developed by the Early Learning Division and Oregon Department of Education in 2016, and revision and updating is necessary to include strategies and support for children ages birth to three as well as increase alignment to ODE's Early Literacy Framework.



"Some kind of training in 'weaving literacy throughout the day' would be helpful, especially for staff new to the field." - professional in the early learning workforce

16. McCoy, D. C., Yoshikawa, H., Ziol-Guest, K. M., Duncan, G. J., Schindler, H. S., Magnuson, K., Yang, R., Koepp, A., & Shonkoff, J. P. (2017). Impacts of early childhood education on medium- and long-term educational outcomes. *Educational Researcher*, 46(8), 474-487.

17. McCoy, D. C., Yoshikawa, H., Ziol-Guest, K. M., Duncan, G. J., Schindler, H. S., Magnuson, K., Yang, R., Koepp, A., & Shonkoff, J. P. (2017). Impacts of early childhood education on medium- and long-term educational outcomes. *Educational Researcher*, 46(8), 474-487

18. Kane, C., Sandilos, L., Hammer, C. S., Komaroff, E., Bitetti, D., & López, L. (2023). Teacher language quality in preschool classrooms: Examining associations with DLLs' oral language skills. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 63, 352-361

19. National Governors Association. (2013). A governor's guide to early literacy: *Getting all students reading by third grade*. Washington DC.

20. Gormley, W. T., Jr. (2008). The Effects of Oklahoma's Pre-K Program on Hispanic Children. *Social Science Quarterly*, 89(4), 916-936

21. National Governors Association. (2013). A governor's guide to early literacy: *Getting all students reading by third grade*. Washington DC.

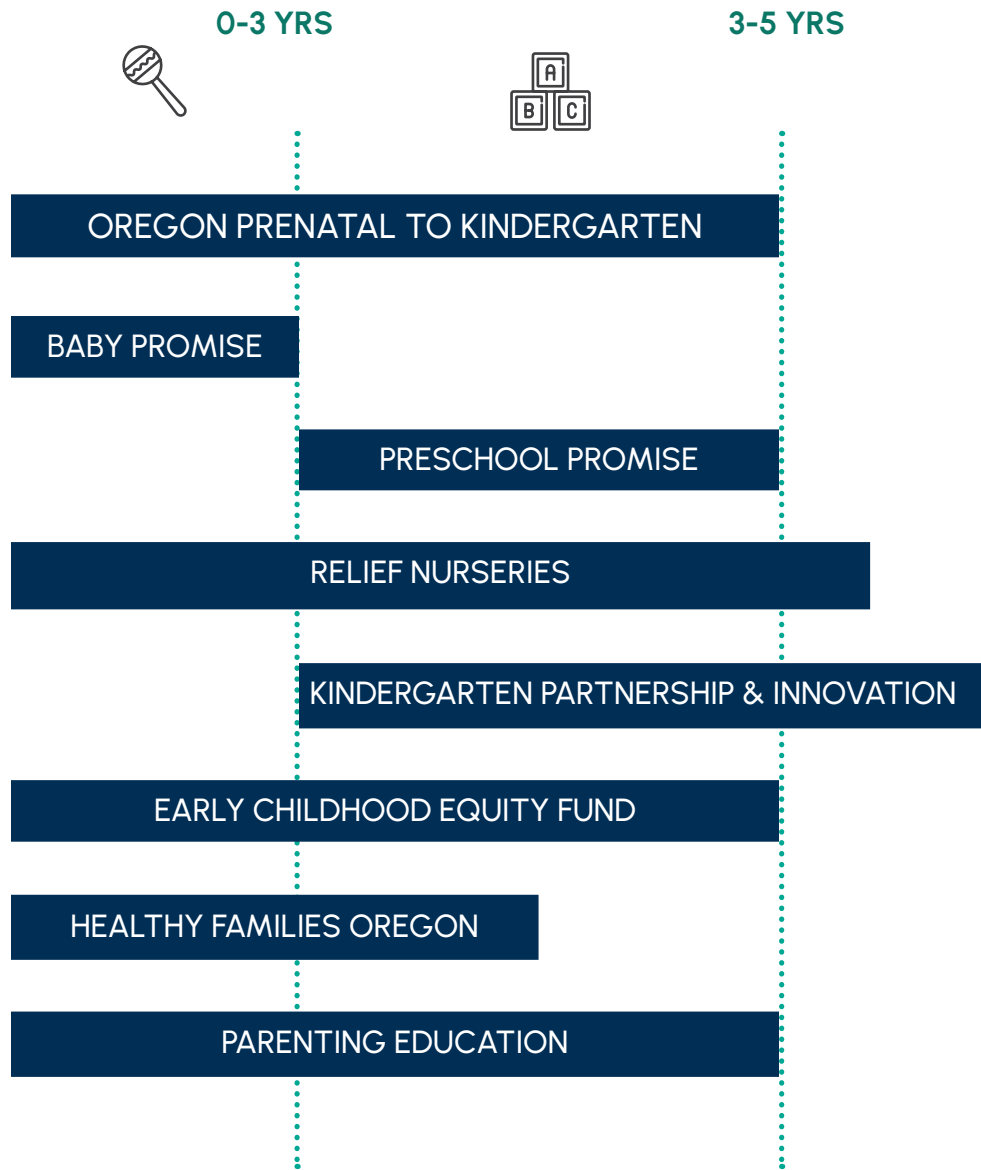
Alignment with Current DELC Programs

DELC programs promote early literacy development through culturally specific child and caregiver programming and professional learning for the early educator workforce. These programs leverage several strategies to promote early literacy:

- 1. Parenting Education:** Parent education workshops, classes and community events all focus on recognizing parents as their first teacher, providing them with tools, resources and support to meet their child's needs in the family's home language.
- 2. Home Visiting:** Standalone and complementary home visiting services continue to promote parents as their child's first teachers, with a focus on the mental, behavioral and physical health needs of parents and young children, prenatally through age three. These services use a strength-based, family-centered approach, honoring cultural and individual differences, fostering resilience, and empowering parents as their child's first teacher.
- 3. Community Need:** It is important to center community voice in understanding what works in different communities. This means being responsive to community needs by resourcing innovative programming that is informed by the community, meets the needs of diverse communities, and aligns with the goals and outcomes of DELC across professional development, parenting education, kindergarten transition programs, and more.
- 4. Tribal Language Preservation:** DELC has a government-to-government commitment to support the nine federally recognized Tribes within Oregon's borders to revitalize and preserve Tribal language and culturally sustaining care.
- 5. Developmentally Appropriate Practice:** The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and its then-called Early Learning Division released Oregon's Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines in 2016. This comprehensive document includes developmentally appropriate practices for preschool and kindergarten and is a tool for the ongoing professional development of the shared workforce.

The variety of programs DELC administers address the unique needs of families and the development progression of children. The array of programs is designed to promote early literacy, learning and development, affordability, and supports for families. These existing programs can be leveraged as DELC works to provide the resources and services requested by community to enhance literacy development across the state. The programs are shown in the figure on the next page.





DELIC aims to offer a comprehensive coaching and training network to provide guidance, support, and technical assistance to providers. Developing a diverse, culturally responsive and highly qualified workforce is an intensive, ongoing process that involves recruitment, retention, and ongoing professional development. The Department of Early Learning and Care utilizes the National Association for the Education of Young Children's guidance on training and technical assistance as a foundation to structure how the system of professional learning is implemented in partnership with early learning and care professionals. DELIC leads the development of the system plan to implement equitable workforce investments and build statewide professional learning initiatives that prepare, grow, strengthen and retain a qualified workforce. DELIC will ensure that the strategies implemented to support literacy in the Birth Through Five Plan are aligned to and leveraging these current workforce investments.

DELIC invests in statewide initiatives that support early educators to build their capacity by:

- Having access to higher education that is subsidized and accessible
- Helping small businesses create business plans and build a sustainable model
- Creating intensive peer learning cohorts for early educators to build skills and competencies

- Developing a system to support early educators when they are struggling to keep children in care when behaviors are identified as challenging
- Providing access to a growing statewide substitute pool to address staffing shortages of programs
- Building quality improvement systems that identify and celebrate the unique strengths of early learning and care programs

DELG has worked closely with ODE during the development and implementation of the Early Literacy Success Initiative, including by:

- Providing input on the Early Literacy Framework and the Community Early Literacy Framework for K-12
- Collaborating with ODE's office of Indian Education to align efforts related to the Early Literacy Success Initiative
- Collaborating with communities across the state to redesign the Oregon Kindergarten Assessment (OKA). This redesign process is called the Early Learning Transition Check-In: A Collaborative Engagement with Community (ELTC). The ELTC will support anti-racist practices and a whole-child approach, fostering a safe and supportive environment in which Oregon's young children and families can learn and thrive. The information families share as part of this effort will immediately help educators adjust instruction. It will also inform early learning and care programs by collecting information about a child's and families' experience prior to kindergarten—information that is vital to those in local, regional, and state systems who need to evaluate program successes as well as identify opportunities for investments in programs and services that support young children.



DELIC's recommended strategies for achieving Goal 1 are grounded in analyses of both research and community feedback and informed by a review of current DELIC programs and services. The strategies focus on developing multiple accessible pathways to grow the full diversity of the early learning and care workforce, including a literacy specialization which would be a new structure embedded within the existing professional learning system. These strategies will strengthen providers' capacity to promote early literacy development, as well as support programs that promote culturally specific literacy activities.

Goal 1: Expand culturally specific literacy programs for children from birth through five

Recommended Strategies	Activities
Update the Early Learning Kindergarten Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the ELKG for infants and toddlers and include developmentally appropriate early literacy practices • Align the ELKG with the Oregon Transformative Social and Emotional Framework, as well as standards that represent K-12 social and emotional learning
Develop ELKG toolkit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a toolkit to guide utilization of the Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines (ELKG) • Ensure toolkit supports providers in creating inclusive, culturally relevant environments and guiding children's development
Fund home language literacy materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund programs to develop new literacy materials in children's home languages • Fund programs to acquire existing literacy materials in children's home languages • Ensure resources and materials are accessible to all families.
Strengthen culturally specific organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support flexible funding opportunities for culturally specific organizations • Equip culturally specific organizations to develop and implement services that directly address the unique early literacy needs and cultural contexts of the communities they serve
Leverage provider training network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand access to provider training networks • Enhance training networks with a focus on literacy
Align with other DELIC initiatives to provide resources for supplies and materials to support early literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align efforts with other initiatives, such as Spark, to meet the need for provider supplies and materials for literacy learning

Goal 1: Expand culturally specific literacy programs for children from birth through five

Recommended Strategies	Activities
Expand access to professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure literacy trainings for child care providers at all set levels are accessible in languages other than English • Provide flexible training formats • Address logistical barriers such as travel distances and child care needs • Address financial barriers such as paid time off to attend
Develop / expand training on supporting families and multilingual literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop training for providers on engaging families in early literacy practices • Create resources for coaches to assist providers in supporting multilingual learners
Strengthen resources to support early literacy in inclusive environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop trainings to equip providers to integrate early literacy strategies into other key areas of child development, such as fostering inclusion and promoting social-emotional growth. development
Create a literacy specialization pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create pathways for providers to receive recognition for expertise in early literacy within DELC's broader professional development structure
Collaborate with ODE to support the Early Literacy Success Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct community engagement to inform the revisions to ELKG, the learning agenda for research and evaluation, and alignment with ODE on early learning and the transition to kindergarten • Provide engagement sessions to support ongoing professional development focused on the implementation of the ELKG and early literacy • Continue to partner with ODE to support the Early Learning Transition Check-in, which provides vital data about children's experiences prior to entering kindergarten



Goal 2: Promote the capacity of programs that engage parents and children from birth through five in early literacy and are available equitably statewide

Findings from Research and Community Engagement

Recognizing that families, as children's first teachers, play an integral role in their child's literacy development, DELC is committed to centering families in the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan. A key part of doing so is supporting children's home language development.



"I want my children to feel familiar with all the languages that are important to my mixed family" - survey respondent

Research in early childhood education and linguistics consistently demonstrates that supporting a child's home language strengthens their cultural identity, reinforces family connections, and lays a strong foundation for academic achievement in a second language, such as English.^{22,23,24,25} Collaborating with families to honor their cultural values and providing them with practical strategies to foster home language development are essential steps in maximizing these benefits. Further, by valuing home languages and integrating them into learning environments, educators can help children build bilingual skills while maintaining ties to their cultural heritage.

Home visiting programs also play an important role in helping parents learn about child development and promoting nurturing, responsive parenting behaviors, including reading to children. A review of evidence, conducted by the Prenatal-to-3 Policy Clearinghouse, underscores home visits' value and highlights several programs—including Healthy Families America and Early Head Start Home Visiting—that have shown positive effects on long-term child development.²⁶ The Prenatal-to-3 Clearinghouse also spotlights evidence of the impact of shared book reading programs in fostering nurturing child-parent relationships. Such programs increase the frequency of book reading and improve child language development.²⁷

22. Ball, J. (2010). *Enhancing learning of children from diverse language backgrounds: Mother tongue-based bilingual or multilingual education in early childhood and early primary school years*. UNESCO.

23. Cho, G. (2000). The role of heritage language in social interactions and relationships: Reflections from a language minority group. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 24(4), 369-384.

24. Koenig, M. & Woodward, L. (2012). Toddlers learn words in a foreign language: the role of native vocabulary knowledge. *Journal of Child Language*, 39, 322-337.

25. Mayberry, R. I. (2007). When timing is everything: Age of first-language acquisition effects on second-language learning. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 28, 537-549.

26. Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center. (2022). *Oregon prenatal-to-3 state policy roadmap: Evidence-based home visiting programs*. Peabody College of Education and Human Development, Vanderbilt University.

27. Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center. (2024). *Prenatal-to-3 policy clearinghouse evidence review: Shared book reading programs*. Peabody College of Education and Human Development, Vanderbilt University.

During DELC's 2024 community engagement activities, both providers and family members reported needs for access to resources and culturally relevant materials to support home language and early literacy development. Providers identified a lack of adequate literacy support for children and families in their home languages. They also emphasized their own need for improved communication skills to better connect with families and caregivers.

The fall 2024 DELC survey of home visiting program staff revealed that while 94% of respondents believed their programs positively impacted children's early literacy development, 32% reported insufficient resources to support families with early literacy, and 26% noted that training resources lacked cultural specificity.

Alignment with Current DELC Programs

During the 2024-2025 program year DELC leveraged the existing Early Childhood Equity Fund program's eligibility structure to allocate half of the initial Birth Through Five Literacy funds through a competitive process. Applicants were required to be a culturally specific organization or be operating a culturally specific early learning program serving communities within Oregon. Applicants needed to have experience providing outreach, support, and resources to children and families who experience systemic disparities. They also needed to have people in leadership positions that belong to the cultural community they serve.

Forty-one organizations applied, and 27 were fully or partially awarded funding. Of those awarded funds, the table below illustrates activities they plan to focus on, with some awardees providing multiple activities:

Activity	Count of Awarded Applicants
Develop / deliver resources or materials	14
Develop / deliver professional development	23
Community engagement	15

The remaining half of the initial Birth Through Five Literacy funding was allocated to the 16 Early Learning Hubs through the Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation program (KPI). Fourteen Hubs planned to focus on parent/caregiver engagement, with six Hubs planning multilingual strategy groups. Three planned to address cultural/linguistic needs. Fourteen Hubs will conduct book distribution, including book events and establishing libraries. Hubs commonly proposed to conduct activities in partnership with the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS), local organizations, or home visiting agencies.

Several programs funded and supported by DELC focus on family engagement and parenting support as well as literacy development. DELC provides resources for parenting education through the Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative (OPEC) program. OPEC helps parents understand child development, promotes positive parent-child interactions, and connects families to community services.

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Acceso a recursos de literatura y practicas del lenguaje a educadores y familias para poder apoyar en distintas etapas.
 (translation: Access to literature resources and language practices for educators and families to be able to support them at different stages.)
 - survey respondent, considering what they would like to see more of in their community

Additionally, DELC supports Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Oregon to provide free, high-quality, age-appropriate books monthly to children under five, personalized with their names and mailed directly to their homes. With 62,136 children enrolled in 2024, Oregon ranks sixth nationally in new program enrollments. Supported by 56 local partners, DELC remains dedicated to expanding the program's reach of 215,756 eligible children aged birth to five, striving to inspire a love of reading across Oregon's eligible children.

Another book distribution program serving families in Oregon is Reach Out and Read, a nationwide early literacy program that integrates literacy promotion into pediatric care for children aged six months to five years. Pediatricians provide age-appropriate books during checkups, guide parents on reading aloud, and promote positive reading experiences. Prioritizing underserved communities, the program aims to close literacy gaps and ensure equitable access to resources.

Strategies for Achieving Goal 2

Grounded in analyses of both research and community feedback and informed by a review of current DELC programs and services, DELC's recommended strategies for achieving Goal 2 are as follows:

Goal 2: Promote the capacity of programs that engage parents and children from birth through five in early literacy and are available equitably statewide	
Recommended Strategies	Activities
Strengthen connections between DELC and the library system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Oregon's library system in engaging families, leveraging the Ready to Read Grants Program
Strengthen book distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand coverage and increase access for Dolly Parton Imagination Library of Oregon program (DPIL) • Make high-quality books more accessible in families' home language • Support Reach Out and Read as an existing programmatic strategy that promotes access to books
Increase access to culturally responsive family education and support opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and strengthen programs like KPI and OPEC • Equip programs with strategies and tools for activities or approaches that are already part of family's routines
Enhance home visiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen and provide additional resources to home visiting programs that prioritize literacy, like Healthy Families Oregon, Relief Nurseries, and Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten
Create a structure to elevate family voice in decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onboard family voice representatives with diverse backgrounds and experiences • Create a process for the family voice to provide guidance on policy decisions, implementation, and budget priorities for early literacy

Goal 3: Expand language revitalization efforts by federally recognized Indian Tribes

Findings from Research and Community Engagement

Research underscores the pivotal role of early childhood language acquisition in fostering positive cognitive development and cultural identity formation, particularly within Tribal communities.²⁸ Evidence shows that learning one's heritage language has positive benefits, including increased self-esteem and higher academic achievement.²⁹

Tribal language learning builds academic skills like phonemic awareness and recognizing alphabetical sounds. It also promotes positive cultural identity and cultural survivance, while fostering community connection. Native language use by American Indian/Alaska Native groups is associated with positive impacts on identity, thus supporting health, resilience, and wellbeing, along with increased academic competencies and ability to achieve academic goals.^{30,31,32}

Though language revitalization provides fundamental support for Native American communities, families, and children's well-being, the number of fluent Native American language speakers is in dire decline and has been for decades. As of late 2024, Ethnologue lists 245 indigenous languages in the United States, with 49 already extinct and 193 endangered. Of endangered languages, many have only a few elder speakers left. Many Tribal families do not know or speak their heritage languages at home. They rely on Tribally operated programs to teach the languages—an undertaking which requires significant investment.

Oregon currently offers an American Indian Languages Teacher certification, an endorsement designed to support educators who are committed to teaching Native American students and incorporating Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum. There are 11 such licenses in Oregon, focused on various Tribal languages—Chinuk Wawa, Ichishkiin, Kiksht, Numu, and Umatilla Sahaptin. However, there is currently no pathway for American Indian language teaching licensure in the preschool field.

Alignment with Existing DELC Programs

Many Tribal Nations across the United States are enhancing Native American language revitalization and preservation programs, including the Nine Federally Recognized Tribes within Oregon's borders. These language programs are actively dismantling historical barriers imposed on American Indian communities and children through colonial state and federal policies which devastated traditional languages. One such policy, the American Indian Boarding School system, suppressed the use of Native language and disallowed traditional and cultural practices in an effort to assimilate Native children into mainstream culture. Each of the nine Tribes in Oregon have embarked on initiatives which restore, preserve, revitalize, and document their indigenous languages to protect and sustain their cultural and linguistic heritage and sovereignty for future generations.

28. Grunewald, R. 2016, Aug. 19. Early childhood Native language immersion develops minds, revitalizes culture. *Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis*.

29. Jones, B. & Sandoval, N. 2022, Aug. 23. On the Importance of Indigenous Language Education: Reflecting on Past and Current U.S. Policy. *Center for Standards, Assessment, and Accountability*.

30. Whalen, D. H., Lewis, M. E., Gillson, S., McBeath, B., Alexander, B., & Nyhan, K. (2022). Health effects of Indigenous language use and revitalization: A realist review. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 21(1), 169.

31. Whitbeck, L. B., Hoyt, D. R., Stubben, J. D., & LaFromboise, T. (2001). Traditional culture and academic success among American Indian children in the upper Midwest. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 40(2), 48-60.

32. Smallwood, B. A., Haynes, E. F., & James, K. (2009). *English language acquisition and Navajo achievement in Magdalena, New Mexico: Promising outcomes in heritage language education*. Center for Applied Linguistics.

As part of the implementation of the 2023-25 Birth Through Five Literacy funding, DELC partnered with the Nine Federally Recognized Tribes within Oregon's borders to allocate funding in a way that respects the sovereignty of Tribal Nations and honors the government-to-government relationship between state agencies and Tribal Nations. DELC implemented Tribal consultation via a "Dear Tribal Leader Letter" process. As a new state agency, this was the first time DELC followed this format to engage in consultation directly with Tribes to access funding through a non-competitive method. The process was one of the most successful funding opportunities between DELC and Tribes within Oregon's borders, with eight of the Nine Federally Recognized Tribes participating. Future funding through the Early Literacy Success Initiative will be allocated through a similar non-competitive process to respect Tribal sovereignty, allowing each Tribe to determine how to best support literacy in its community.

DELC is committed to enhancing its relationships with Tribal governments in Oregon, developing strategic partnerships, and implementing strategies together with the Tribes. Statutory and regulatory requirements direct the state to consult with federally recognized Tribes and to provide input and obtain feedback and recommendations on education policies, programs, and services that impact the success of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) students. This includes but is not limited to language and cultural preservation and curriculum development. It is DELC's policy to engage Tribal officials and appointed representatives in regular and meaningful consultation and communication on actions which may have Tribal implications before any action is taken.

DELC has initiated formal, ongoing Tribal consultation—that is, an active process of sharing information, coordination, engagement, and dialogue, typically between Tribal and state officials, before a decision is made. The Tribal consultation process ultimately leads to decision making.

The Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC) established by HB 2055 in 2021 has also recommended the development of a Tribal Early Learning Plan and associated Fund to allow a dedicated resource for Tribes to achieve their early learning and child care goals. This includes Tribal language and culture revitalization and preservation, alongside a broad list of other considerations. DELC is currently pursuing legislation to establish this Plan and Fund in statute.

Within this context, DELC is continuing to learn more about Tribes' needs regarding early literacy and language revitalization and preservation. Each of the Nine Federally Recognized Tribes within Oregon's borders is a unique, separate nation with a distinct history, governance structure, and set of values. Given this, Tribes are at various stages in terms of both their language preservation or revitalization and early literacy programming. DELC anticipates continued consultation to further inform ways to support Tribal language and/or early literacy programming.

DELC currently supports Native American language revitalization and preservation through a variety of programs, including directly through the Early Childhood Equity Fund, and indirectly through Preschool Promise and Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten. Lessons learned from the implementation of these and other, non-DELC programs and funding opportunities have helped inform DELC's strategies for carrying out the Birth Through Five Early Literacy Plan.

Strategies for Achieving Goal 3

Goal 3 captures an important purpose of the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan: to ensure that Tribal Nations have access to resources to expand and develop language revitalization efforts. Grounded in analyses of both research and community feedback and informed by a review of current DELC programs and services, DELC’s recommended strategies for achieving Goal 3 are as follows:

Goal 3: Expand language revitalization efforts by federally recognized Indian Tribes	
Recommended Strategies	Activities
Fund and consult with Tribal Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to prioritize non-competitive funding opportunities for Tribal Nations, ensuring that they have the resources needed to support literacy and language revitalization initiatives.
Respect Tribal Sovereignty and Self-Determination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue government-to-government consultation, fostering strong, mutually respectful partnerships that allow Tribal Nations to retain control over decisions that impact their communities



The How: Implementation

Phases of Implementation

To help ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of efforts conducted under the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan, implementation will occur in four overlapping phases. These phases will build on each other, intersect and may occur concurrently, working toward full implementation by 2029. Assuming sufficient funding, DELC plans to implement most activities included in the Initial and Growth Phase strategies in the 25-27 biennium. The strategies in the Scale-up and Evaluation phases are planned to occur in the 27-29 biennium, although full implementation is dependent upon adequate funding. While DELC will track the ongoing progress of the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan outcomes, the effects of these investments may not be fully actualized by 2029 due to factors such as the size and stability of the workforce.

Initial Phase

The first phase focuses on developing foundational resources, supports and guidelines. This includes updating the Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines to include standards for children aged birth to three, aligning to ODE's Early Literacy Framework, and developing new professional development resources for early learning providers and early grade educators. This first phase also focuses on creating a structure to elevate family voice to provide input, feedback, and support for the literacy plan, ensuring that community needs and perspectives are integrated into its implementation and decision making. A third focus of the Initial Phase is non-competitive funding opportunities and government-to-government consultation with Tribal Nations, both with the aim of ensuring continued access to resources to develop and expand language revitalization efforts.

Growth Phase

The Growth Phase focuses on creating multiple accessible pathways to support the full diversity of the early learning and care workforce to promote early literacy development. This will include the development of a pathway for early literacy specialization and recognition in Oregon's professional development system and expansion of access to literacy training in languages other than English. Other activities in the Growth Phase include strengthening DELC's connection with the library system, book distribution, and family education programs that strengthen families' involvement in their children's literacy development. These actions will contribute to the intended outcomes of engaging families in early literacy and supporting the workforce.

Scale-Up Phase

The Scale-up Phase focuses on funding providers to acquire or develop literacy materials in the home language of the children and families they serve. It involves aligning efforts with other DELC initiatives to provide funds for supplies and materials to programs, expanding provider training networks, and supporting flexible funding for early literacy. This phase aims to ensure that providers have culturally relevant tools, resources and networks of support to promote early literacy in their programs, while also fostering coordination and adaptability in DELC's literacy funding streams. By addressing resource and funding gaps, activities in the Scale-Up Phase intend to promote a relevant, flexible and sustainable system for improving early literacy outcomes statewide.

The Evaluation Phase focuses on assessing the progress of activities and identifying adjustments needed to ensure that the intended outcomes are achieved. This includes reviewing output data, community feedback and evaluation findings to identify gaps, shortfalls or unintended impacts. DELC plans to evaluate the initial implementation impacts of activities and will work closely with subject matter experts to determine the best time to begin this evaluation. DELC will ensure that assessment and continuous improvement are embedded in the implementation of the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan and commit to adapting and responding to community needs and family voice.





Indicates strategies funded by the GRB

Initial	Growth	Scale-Up	Evaluation
25-27 biennium*		27-29 biennium*	

Goal 1

Update the ELKG	●			
Develop ELKG toolkit	●			
Fund home language literacy materials	●			
Strengthen culturally specific organizations	●			
Leverage provider training networks			●	
Align with other DELC initiatives to provide resources for supplies and materials			●	
Expand access to professional development		●		
Develop / expand training on supporting families, multilingual literacy	●			
Create early literacy specialization pathway		●		
Collaborate with ODE to support the Early Literacy Success Initiative	●			

Goal 2

Strengthen connections between DELC and the library system		●		
Strengthen book distribution		●		
Increase access to culturally responsive family education and support opportunities		●		
Enhance home visiting		●		
Create a structure to elevate family voice in decision making	●			

Goal 3

Continue to support non-competitive funding for Tribes	●			
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Continuous Improvement

Evaluation of initial implementation impacts and establish annual reporting methodology	●			
Assess the progress of activities, and identifying adjustments needed				●

*Implementation timeline is funding dependent

Funding for Implementation

The 2025–2027 Governor’s Recommended Budget includes approximately \$22 million to support the implementation of the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan. The GRB specifically identifies funds for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library (\$2.2M) and revisions to the Early Learning Kindergarten Guidelines (\$0.3M). The \$22M will fund many of the foundational activities identified in the Initial Phase of the implementation plan and some activities in the Growth Phases and the Scale-Up Phase. More resources and time will be needed to fully implement the plan.

DELC proposes to allocate the \$22M in the 2025–2027 biennium to the following recommended strategies that support all three goals.

Funding Mechanism	Strategy	Approximate funding amount
Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and expand training for supporting families and multilingual literacy • Expand access to professional development • Increase access to culturally responsive family education and support opportunities • Enhance home visiting • Strengthen culturally specific organizations • Fund home language literacy materials • Create a literacy specialization pathway • Strengthen connections between DELC and the library system • Support Oregon’s library system in engaging families and leverage the Ready to Read Grants Program • Strengthen book distribution • Create a structure to elevate family voice in decision making 	\$15,625,000
Intergovernmental Grants	Fund and collaboration with Tribal Nations	\$3,600,000
Contract	Conduct community engagement to inform ELKG revisions	\$75,000
Subtotal		\$19,400,000
Contract	Update the Early Learning Kindergarten Guidelines and develop ELKG toolkit for providers	\$266,500
Grant	Expand Dolly Parton Imagination Library	\$2,200,000
Total		\$21,866,500

Conclusion

The Birth Through Five Literacy Plan is a transformative framework that addresses systemic disparities and fosters a culturally responsive, inclusive early learning system. The plan was informed by community engagement, and the recommended strategies are rooted in best practices supported by research. Grounded in analyses of feedback and review of current DELC programs, the goals and strategies leverage current strengths and address the gaps and needs in the system. By centering families, supporting educators, and consulting with Tribal Nations, the plan lays the groundwork for equitable literacy development in Oregon. With the additional investment recommended for the 2025-2027 biennium, DELC aims to build on these essential initiatives to ensure that every child in Oregon has the opportunity to achieve their full literacy potential.





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