

PRESCHOOL PROMISE

HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL
FOR MORE OREGON KIDS



In 2015, the Children's Institute and 34 other organizations, working on behalf of Oregon's most vulnerable children and families, supported the passage of Preschool Promise. Preschool Promise is a new **state-funded preschool program that offers high-quality preschool to low-income children** ages 3 and 4. The program recognizes that families should be able to choose the setting that works best for them and their child, including child care, public school, Head Start, or community-based organizations.

With passage of this legislation, Oregon has taken a significant step toward ensuring more low-income Oregon children are prepared for school.

Oregon's existing early learning investments are critical, but are reaching far too few children from low-income families and children of color. When children lack access to high-quality early learning, they can be up to 18 months behind their peers by age 4.¹ When they enter kindergarten, the achievement gap is already entrenched.

By investing in high-quality preschool, **Oregon can significantly narrow the opportunity gap before kindergarten.** This is critical, because children who arrive at kindergarten ready are more likely to go on to meet third-grade benchmarks, our best measure for predicting high school graduation.

PRESCHOOL PROMISE REACH

1,300 CHILDREN

9 REGIONS OF THE STATE
STARTING FALL 2016

NUMBER OF CHILDREN

32,000

FROM LOW-INCOME FAMILIES
LACK ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY
PRESCHOOL

BENEFITS OF HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL

Early learning investments are the single most cost-effective way to close the opportunity gap and improve outcomes for children.²

Improved third-grade outcomes³

Reduced costs for remedial and special education⁴

More likely to graduate from high school⁵

Achieve greater lifetime earnings⁶



ACCESS MATTERS

For decades, Oregon has envisioned providing preschool to all children in poverty, but over time we've fallen even further behind other states as the number of Oregon children in low-income families continues to outpace investments. The vision of Preschool Promise is to reach all low-income children, who have the most to gain from high-quality preschool.

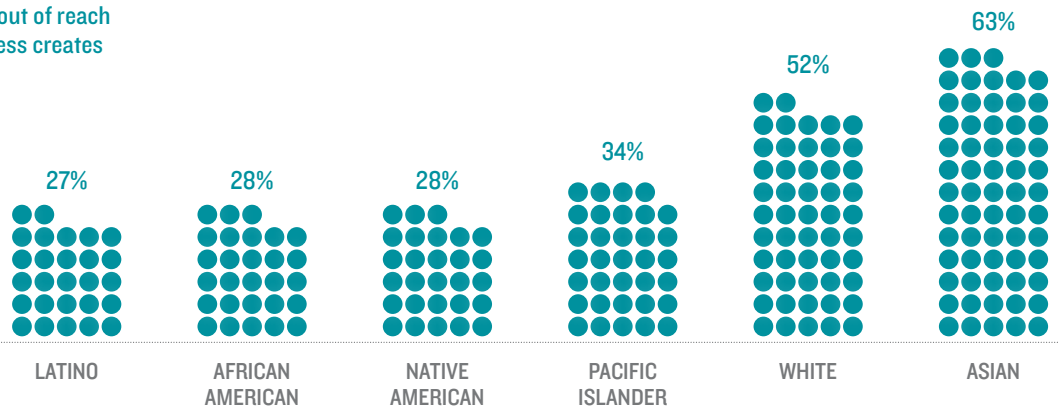


Seven out of ten 3- and 4-year-olds from low-income Oregon families*—about 32,000 children—don't have access to high-quality preschool.



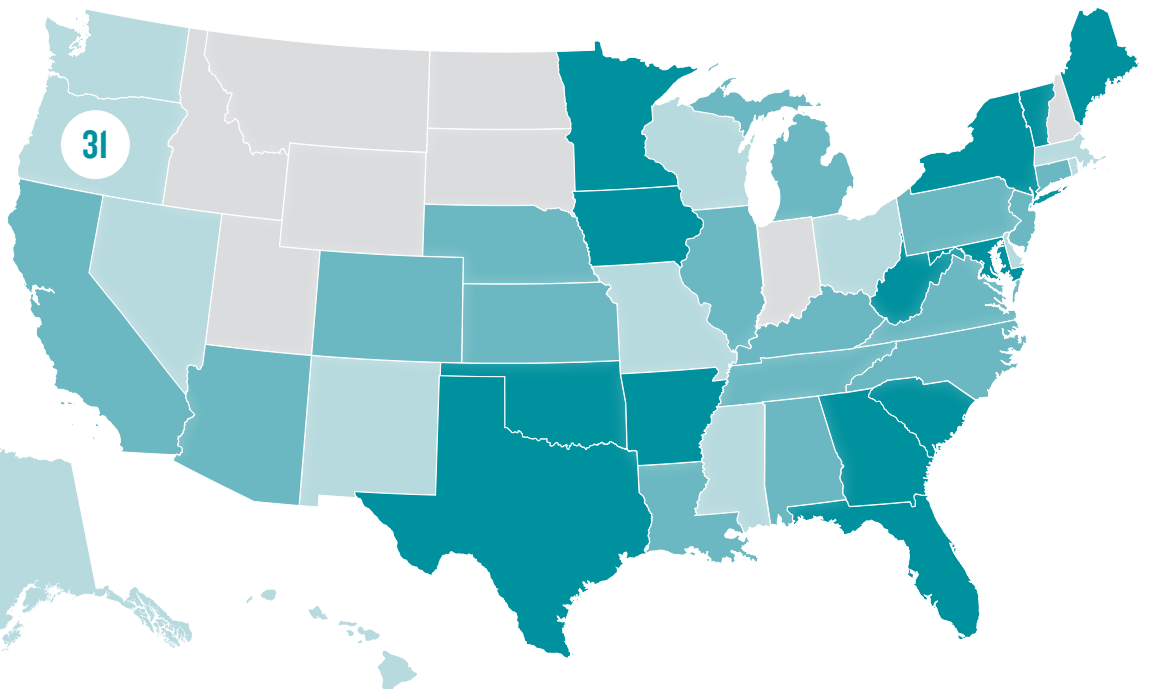
*Families with incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level

High-quality preschool is even more out of reach for children of color. This lack of access creates a large third-grade achievement gap.



Kids meeting third-grade reading benchmarks, by race

Oregon is near the bottom nationally for access to publicly-funded preschool for 4-year-olds, enrolling only 10 percent of all children, placing Oregon at 31 out of 43 reporting states.⁷



QUALITY COUNTS

We know that high-quality preschool programs can significantly close the achievement gap and improve school and life outcomes for low-income children.⁸ Studies have identified the standards and practices that have the greatest impact, and these are part of Preschool Promise.



FULL-DAY CLASSES

For low-income children, a 6-hour day of preschool has a much greater impact than a half-day.



WELL-EDUCATED TEACHERS

Preschool teachers with a bachelor's degree are more responsive to young children and provide more language development and early literacy activities.



1:10 ADULT-CHILD RATIO

Classrooms with a minimum of a lead teacher and an assistant and no more than 20 students are associated with better outcomes for children.



CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE

Teaching that is attuned to and informed by the cultural and linguistic strengths and needs of children and families is most effective.



ADEQUATE TEACHER COMPENSATION

Increased teacher compensation improves program quality and child outcomes, and decreases teacher turnover.



INCLUSIVE

High-quality programs have support and resources for children with special needs.



PROVEN CURRICULUM

Research-based curriculum that is age-appropriate and builds the right skills in early learners leads to better outcomes.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers, leaders and other staff members need ongoing professional development.



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Programs that engage families as partners have the greatest impact.

THE PATH FORWARD

Every child in Oregon deserves an opportunity to succeed, and Oregon's investment in Preschool Promise is a first step to expand access to high-quality preschool. Serving 1,300 low-income children is a strong start, but we can and must do more to meet the growing demand. The early learning hubs that applied for Preschool Promise are ready to serve more than 2,100 children.

Research has irrefutably proved what parents and educators have been saying for years—early childhood experiences are foundational for later school success. Preschool Promise is a smart economic investment because early learning reduces future costs for special education and remediation. In fact, by making greater investments in early learning, Oregon can increase the impact of the significant dollars spent on K-12 education.

In an increasingly competitive and global economy, our civic institutions and workplaces need the full participation of all Oregonians. Public investments in early learning give low-income children the chance to succeed and become thriving, successful adults.

Preschool Promise is the right thing for Oregon. And it's right for our children, who deserve the best possible start in life.



Oregon has made a down payment on high-quality preschool by investing in Preschool Promise. Join us in advocating for the Oregon Early Learning Council and Legislature to take action to:

- 1** Increase funding to expand access to Preschool Promise to more of the 32,000 low-income children still unserved.
- 2** Create a robust preschool **professional development** plan to support high-quality teachers, directors, and support staff.
- 3** Provide **opportunities and financial support** for culturally and linguistically diverse teachers to increase their education.
- 4** Develop a state **implementation plan** with guidance for meeting quality standards.
- 5** Fund and implement a **rigorous evaluation** to support continuous improvement and measure child outcomes.



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Our mission is moving research to action by promoting cost-effective public and private investments in our youngest children birth through third grade.

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- 1 Lee, V. E. & Burkam, D. T. (2002).
- 2 Heckman et al. (2010); Currie (2001).
- 3 Campbell et al. (2002); Schweinhart et al. (2005).
- 4 Temple and Reynolds (2007).
- 5 Campbell et al. (2002); Schweinhart et al. (2005).
- 6 Masse and Barnett (2007).
- 7 NIEER (2015).
- 8 Minervino, J. (2014).