

# 2025 OREGON SCHOOL DISTRICT Preschool Survey



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# Acknowledgement

We are deeply grateful to the school and district leaders who took the time out of their busy schedules to complete the 2025 preschool survey and share their valuable insights. Their participation made this report possible and provides a critical foundation for understanding and strengthening Oregon's early learning system. We also want to thank our partners at the Oregon Department of Education, the Department of Early Learning and Care, and colleagues who offered guidance throughout this process. We would like to also acknowledge Danielle Perry, program assistant, for her outstanding coordination, communication, and support in managing day-to-day operations, logistics, and editing throughout this project. Finally, we want to thank the Children's Institute's communications department for their expertise in design and presentation, ensuring that this report is clear and engaging.

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# Executive Summary

**Oregon’s preschool landscape reflects progress and persistent challenges. District-run programs are vital for alignment with K–12 and smoother transitions to kindergarten.**

Survey responses from 49 Oregon school districts reveal strong local commitment, creative funding strategies, and growing demand—but also highlight structural barriers that limit expansion and sustainability.

## Key Takeaways

- **Access to preschool remains uneven across Oregon.** Most districts operate small-scale programs, typically with only one or two classrooms, and enroll fewer than 50 children.
- **Funding and facilities continue to be the most significant constraints,** with workforce shortages adding further challenges to program expansion and sustainability.
- **Quality and alignment show signs of improvement, but progress is inconsistent across districts,** leaving gaps in curriculum integration and professional development.
- **Strong community partnerships and effective leadership are essential** for sustaining programs and driving long-term growth within Oregon’s early learning system.

## Findings

### Program Scale and Demand:

- Sixty-eight percent of surveyed school districts operate only one or two preschool classrooms, and 74 percent enroll fewer than 50 children.
- More than half of districts (53 percent) report that waitlists have grown steadily over the past five years.

### Funding Landscape:

- Preschool Promise is the most common funding source, used by 60 percent of districts, followed by district funds (41.5 percent) and parent tuition (30 percent).
- Nearly half of districts have not received any new funding since 2020 to expand access for families experiencing economic hardship.

### Quality and Alignment:

- Eighty percent of districts include preschool in their curriculum frameworks, and 60 percent incorporate preschool teachers into their K–12 professional development.
- Data-sharing systems are in place or under development in 72 percent of districts, supporting stronger alignment across early learning and elementary education.

### Workforce and Professional

**Development:** Licensure requirements are becoming more explicit, with 53 percent of districts requiring a teaching license for preschool educators.



- Districts report that the greatest professional development needs are concentrated in behavior support (92 percent) and early literacy (71 percent).

#### **Family Engagement and Outreach:**

- Family engagement is strong after preschool enrollment, with 96 percent of districts regularly holding parent-teacher conferences. However, outreach efforts before enrollment are inconsistent and often limited to occasional activities rather than sustained engagement.
- Targeted multilingual outreach is increasing but not yet universal, and Spanish continues to dominate among translated materials.

## **Why This Survey Matters**

**This survey provides the most comprehensive snapshot of district-run preschools in Oregon since 2015. Responses from 49 districts offer critical insights into program scale, funding, workforce, and family engagement.**

While not all districts responded, the sample reflects a policy-relevant subgroup of active or emerging district preschool operators, making these findings actionable for state and local planning. Importantly, the survey fills a major gap in understanding how school districts provide preschool outside of state-funded programs, often relying on local dollars, parent tuition, and creative partnerships to sustain access for families.

## **Implications for Policy and Practice**

The findings point to clear priorities for Oregon's early learning system improvement:

- **Stabilize and Differentiate Funding:** Move beyond short-term grants to predictable, multi-year funding streams that ensure program sustainability.
- **Invest in Facilities and Workforce Pipelines:** Provide capital grants and targeted scholarships to address persistent facilities and staffing shortages.
- **Embed Early Learning in District Systems:** Strengthen Preschool through 3rd grade alignment through joint professional learning and shared data systems that connect preschool with K-12
- **Advance Equity and Cultural Responsiveness:** Expand bilingual staffing and build culturally specific partnerships to better serve diverse families.
- **Leverage Local Strengths and Partnerships:** Formalize collaborations with Head Start, Tribal programs, and community-based providers to maximize resources and expertise.
- **Integrate Data into State and Local Accountability Systems:** Incorporate preschool access and quality indicators into statewide data collection and explore embedding these measures into district and school report cards to drive transparency and continuous improvement.

# Introduction

## Purpose and Goals

**The 2025 Oregon Preschool Survey provides a deeper look at how school districts and their partners are currently serving preschool-aged children.**

This work focused specifically on school- and district-run preschool programs, which represent a vital but often underexamined part of Oregon's early learning system. These programs play a unique role in expanding access, aligning early learning with K-12 systems, and supporting smoother transitions to kindergarten. Building on the foundation of the [2015 Oregon School District Preschool Survey](#), this updated survey effort aims to:

1. **Describe** the scope of preschool services currently offered by districts across the state.
2. **Identify** key opportunities and challenges in funding, staffing, facilities, and family engagement.
3. **Highlight** practices that support access, quality, and supported transitions to kindergarten.
4. **Capture** regional variation and program models, capacity constraints, and areas where more support may be needed.

While this survey focuses on a specific setting within Oregon's diverse mixed-delivery preschool system, its findings

offer valuable insights into the unique role school districts play in early learning. By taking a closer look at district-run programs, we can better understand the conditions they face in 2025 to inform local and state efforts around planning, budgeting, and continuous improvement.

## Findings from 2015

In 2015, Children's Institute conducted a statewide survey to establish a baseline understanding of how Oregon school districts were approaching preschool, to better understand what programs were in place, how they were funded and staffed, and how districts were supporting early learning. The 2015 Oregon School District Preschool Survey established a baseline understanding of district approaches to preschool programming prior to the implementation of [Preschool Promise](#), Oregon's statewide mixed-delivery preschool program that allows districts and other service providers access to dedicated funding for preschool services.

**Districts offered insight into the diverse ways they were serving preschool-aged children in 2015, highlighting both innovative solutions and ongoing challenges.** They described a mix of school- and community-run programs serving 3- and 4-year-olds, with services concentrated in areas where facilities, staffing, and local partnerships made delivery feasible.



To finance these programs, most districts braided multiple funding sources, including district funds, Title I, Head Start, and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), and used familiar early learning curricula and screening tools to guide instruction and referrals. Core components like family engagement, health and developmental screenings, and kindergarten transition supports were routinely integrated into program design.

However, districts also pointed to persistent barriers. Transportation and facility limitations often constrained access to preschool services. Staffing challenges were also cited as common, including difficulties in hiring qualified teachers and assistants, providing ongoing professional development, and maintaining appropriate adult-child ratios and consistent schedules.

**Conclusions from the 2015 survey emphasized uneven access across regions, limited capacity relative to demand, and strong district interest in expanding preschool given adequate and stable resources.**

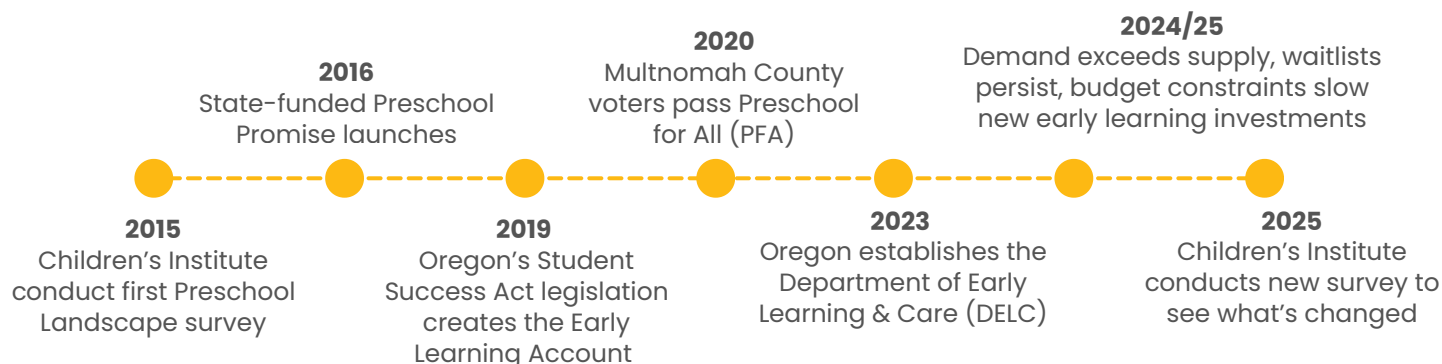
Districts identified funding, facilities, and workforce as the primary barriers to growth, and pointed to partnerships with Education Service Districts (ESDs), Head Start, and community providers as a central strategy for improving quality and reach.

The report underscored the value of coordinated state and local planning, consistent data collection, and targeted supports to strengthen quality, align preschool with K-12 expectations, and improve transitions to kindergarten.

**Current Context: 2015 to 2025**

**Oregon has spent the past decade building a stronger foundation for early childhood education, following a bold vision for a seamless P-20 education continuum from preschool through higher education.**

In 2015, access to high-quality preschool was extremely limited: almost three-quarters of low-income children had no access. At the time, Oregon ranked in the bottom quartile nationally, and about 8 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds were in state-funded preschool. Even among those eligible for Head Start, only about 55 percent of low-income preschool-aged children were served. This unmet need was especially concerning given the strong evidence that high-quality preschool improves early learning, health, and long-term employment and earnings. Since 2015, Oregon has significantly expanded publicly funded preschools. In 2016, the state launched Preschool Promise, a mixed-delivery program that provides free high-quality preschool to children ages 3-4 whose families live at 200 percent or below the Federal Poverty Level.



***Oregon's Preschool Timeline***

Additionally, the 2019 Student Success Act (SSA) created the Early Learning Account, dedicating at least 20 percent of about 1 billion dollars per year in new revenue to early childhood. The SSA Early Learning Account provided new funding for Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) at recommended service levels for one year, established the Early Childhood Equity Fund, and added additional Preschool Promise and Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten (OPK) slots. In 2021, the Oregon Legislature invested an additional \$68 million in Preschool Promise, OPK, and Healthy Families Oregon; creating more than 2,500 new Preschool Promise slots, converting 1,400 OPK half-day slots to full-day, and increasing OPK salaries.

**As a result, state-funded preschool enrollment grew from only a few thousand children to 12,597**

**children in OPK and Preschool Promise by 2023–2024. State preschool spending reached \$234 million in 2023–2024, an increase of 25% from the previous year, supported by increased state investment and federal relief funds (NIEER, 2025).**

**These efforts have improved access, but large gaps remain.**

By 2022–2023, about 15.6 percent of four-year-olds and eight percent of three-year-olds were enrolled in OPK or Preschool Promise, roughly double the number served a decade earlier. When federal Head Start is included, public programs reach about one-quarter of four-year-olds. In 2023, 6,597 children were in federal Head Start and



6,293 were in state-funded OPK. Even so, more than 70 percent of 4-year-olds and more than 90 percent of 3-year-olds are not enrolled in any state preschool program, and many low- and middle-income families remain on waiting lists.

**In 2024, for example, all Preschool Promise programs in Clackamas County reached capacity and began waitlisting eligible families, underscoring high demand and limited supply.**

Alongside expansion, Oregon has pursued quality, alignment, and infrastructure improvements. The Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines are now aligned with Common Core state standards for kindergarten. Preschool Promise grantees must participate in Spark, Oregon's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), and OPK programs continue to follow comprehensive federal Head Start Performance Standards.

The state has also invested in the early childhood workforce and program stability. In 2022–2023, additional funds allowed some programs to expand slots, and a seven percent minimum rate increase was tied to the 2023–2025 budget. Both OPK and Preschool Promise moved to two-year grant cycles, providing more predictable funding for providers and helping families secure two years of continuous preschool at the same site, which reduces churn for both families and programs.

A major structural change was the establishment of the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELC) on July 1, 2023. This eliminated the Early Learning Division from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and created a distinct early learning agency to streamline funding, better integrate child care and preschool oversight, expand data capacity, and strengthen state-level focus on early learning.

External factors have also shaped Oregon's preschool landscape. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020–2021 temporarily closed many programs and reduced enrollment, but with federal relief and state support, preschool enrollment rebounded and by 2022 had grown by roughly 1,000 children compared to the prior year. The pandemic highlighted the essential role of child care and preschool for working families, and reinforced public and political support for early learning investments.

At the same time, Oregon continues to face early educator workforce shortages and rising costs. Providers report difficulty hiring and retaining qualified preschool teachers, due to competition for educators, low wages, and high housing and living costs. Even with increased public funding, the costs of staffing, facilities, curriculum, and wraparound supports make operating full-day, high-quality preschool expensive. These financial and workforce pressures have slowed the pace of expansion.

In the 2025 legislative session, budget constraints led policymakers to scale back or delay several planned early childhood investments. Most proposed expansions in areas such as early literacy, relief nurseries, and parenting programs were not funded. The only major early childhood expansion to pass in 2025 focused on perinatal healthcare, including supports such as doula services, while broader preschool funding growth was largely put on hold.

**Local initiatives and mixed-delivery preschool models have become an increasingly important part of the system.** In 2020, a majority of Multnomah County voters approved Preschool for All, a county-funded program that connects all 3- and 4-year-olds in Multnomah County to free preschool, supported by a tax on high income earners.

Preschool for All began in 2022, served more than 700 children in its first year, and is projected to serve about 3,800 children in the 2025 school year. The program aims to offer free, voluntary preschool to all 3- and 4-year-olds in the county by 2030, using a mixed-delivery model that partners with school districts, center-based and home-based providers, and others, and prioritizes equitable access. This local initiative brings new funding and energy into Oregon's early learning landscape and complements state programs in the Portland metro area.

In 2025, legislators introduced SB 106, a proposal that would have eliminated Multnomah County's authority to levy the

tax funding for Preschool for All and phase out the program by 2027. Following strong opposition from parents, educators, and local officials, the bill was withdrawn, and Preschool for All continues.

**Looking ahead, Oregon's broader early learning strategy emphasizes mixed-delivery preschool expansion. Preschool Promise already operates through a diverse set of providers—including school districts, Head Start agencies, private centers, home-based preschools, and Relief Nurseries—and the Early Learning Council has underscored the importance of building partnerships to expand capacity across all of these settings.**



# Methodology

## Survey Design and Distribution

The 2025 Oregon Preschool Survey was administered online using SurveyMonkey, allowing districts to respond efficiently and securely. The survey was distributed via email to a subset of district leaders and early learning coordinators across Oregon who have previously offered preschool or expressed interest in providing it. To facilitate this, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) also distributed the survey to its contacts. To ensure enough responses from this policy-relevant subgroup, we intentionally oversampled district preschool operators—a standard survey practice used to obtain adequate sample sizes for key groups. Respondents were offered \$10 gift cards for completed surveys.

To make participation straightforward and minimize burden, the survey was organized into short, themed modules. Each module included brief definitions to clarify key terms, and questions were written in plain language. For items that might not apply to all respondents, an “Unsure/Do not know” option was provided to ensure responses remained accurate and inclusive.

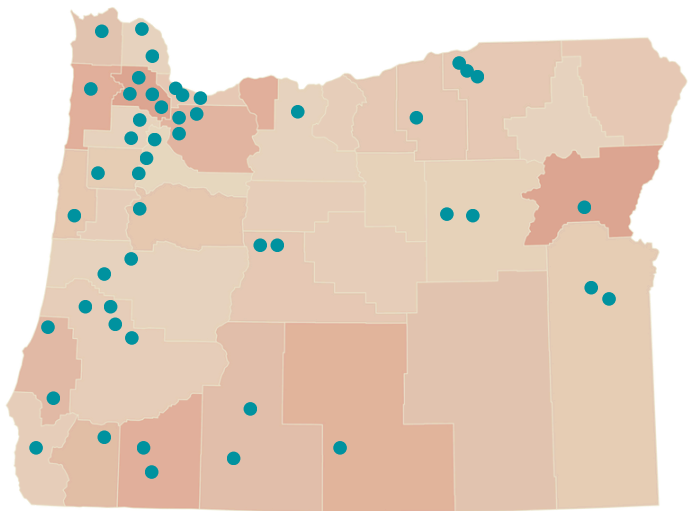
To balance detail with respondent burden, the instrument was organized into five thematic sections:

- **Preschool Availability and Enrollment** establishes program footprint and demand (sites/classrooms, enrollment, waitlists, trends) to gauge capacity relative to community need.
- **Program Quality and Design** documents delivery models, instructional time, settings, curricula/assessments, and kindergarten transition supports to understand how programs are designed to deliver quality.
- **Early Learning Workforce** captures staffing, roles/qualifications, and pipeline needs to identify strengths and gaps affecting program stability.
- **Communication and Outreach** describes how families learn about programs and receive support, illuminating barriers to access and opportunities to improve navigation.
- **Funding and Expansion** identifies funding sources, facility constraints, partnerships, and growth plans to understand what enables or limits expansion.

## Response Rate and Respondent Profile

The survey was sent out to 182 contacts and received 63 responses. From these responses, 49 unique districts were identified. Oregon has 197 school districts, but the state does not publish

a current, authoritative count of which districts themselves operate preschools. This is partly because Oregon's public preschool is delivered through a mixed-delivery system that tracks geographic coverage rather than district operation. Accordingly, we report respondent-level findings and avoid inferring a statewide district count.



**Map of Oregon School District Response**

In addition to district responses, we received surveys from six Education Service Districts (ESDs) and from ten districts that do not operate preschools. We did not include ESD responses in quantitative analysis, as only six of 19 ESDs responded and their feedback largely described Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education services (which are administered regionally) rather than district-run preschool.

Where a district submitted more than one survey, we applied a pre-specified rule set to create a single analytic record per district. First, we prioritized completeness,

retaining the response with the fewest missing items. When responses were similarly complete, we prioritized the submission from the most authoritative/key informant (for example, superintendent, assistant superintendent, early learning director/coordinator).

When complementary responses from the same district remained and did not directly conflict, we aggregated them by averaging numeric items (for example, seats, hours, staffing counts); where answers materially conflicted, we deferred to the key informant record. Open-ended comments from all submissions were captured and analyzed qualitatively (thematic coding) and are presented as narrative insights rather than counted as additional quantitative observations. This approach aligns with common practices in analyzing organizational survey data, particularly when multiple responses are received from key informants from the same organization.

## Limitations

This report is based on self-reported data from district staff, collected through an online survey administered via SurveyMonkey. As with any survey, there are limitations to consider, particularly related to coverage, response rates, and data consistency. The survey was distributed via email to a targeted subset of district leaders and early learning coordinators across



Oregon who have previously offered preschool or expressed interest in launching a preschool program. In some cases, multiple staff members from the same district submitted responses, which may reflect varied roles or perspectives but also introduces the possibility of duplication or inconsistent reporting.

The survey remained open from spring 2025 through fall 2025 to maximize participation. However, collecting data during the summer months, when staffing and enrollment data are often in flux, likely contributed to lower response rates and incomplete data from some districts. The analysis focuses on responses from districts with active or planned preschool programs, where data was more robust and comprehensive. These limitations align with established guidance on survey error and nonresponse from the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), and the Pew Research Center.

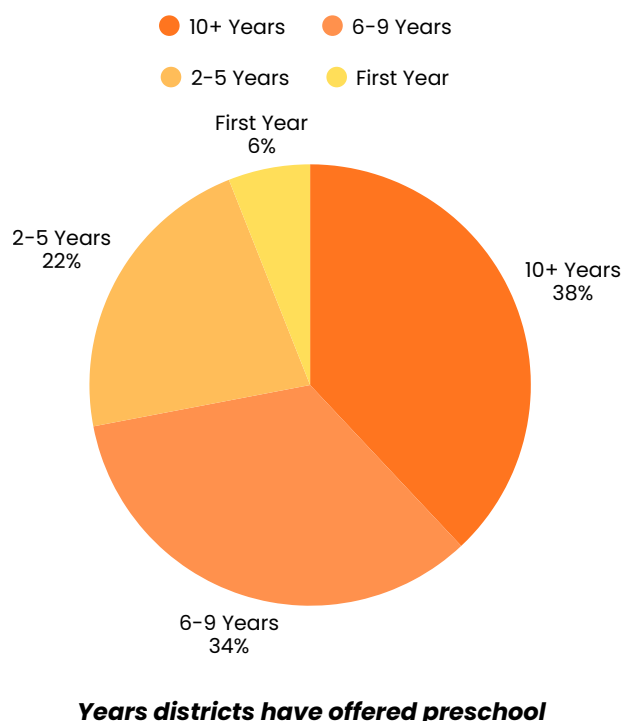
# State of Preschool in Oregon

## Preschool Availability and Enrollment

### *Districts Demonstrate Long-Term Commitment to Preschool*

Survey responses show that preschool

programming in Oregon school districts is not a new endeavor for most. Nearly 38 percent of district respondents have offered preschool for over a decade, reflecting deep experience and sustained commitment. Another 34 percent have provided preschool for six to nine years, suggesting steady growth and integration into district systems. About 22 percent of districts have operated preschools for two to five years, indicating more recent expansion efforts. A small group—just 6 percent—are in their first year of offering preschool, signaling new momentum and opportunities for targeted support. This mix of long-standing and emerging programs highlights the need for differentiated strategies that both reinforce established efforts and cultivate newer initiatives.

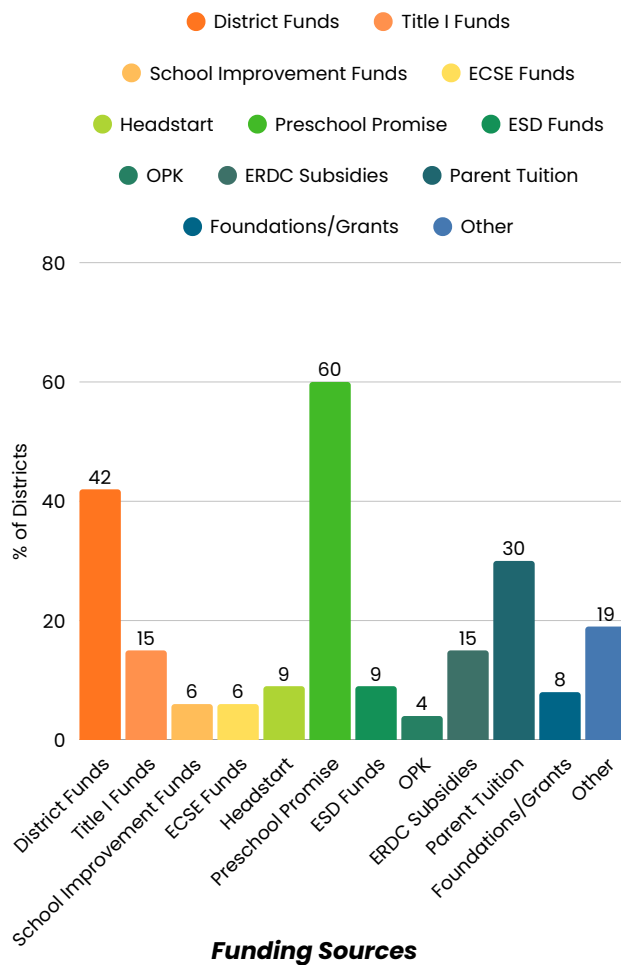


## Diverse Funding Strategies Sustain Oregon’s District Preschool Programs

Survey data from 49 Oregon school districts planning to continue preschool services next year reveals a diverse and layered funding landscape. The most commonly cited source is Preschool Promise, used by 60 percent of respondents, underscoring its central role in sustaining early learning efforts. District funds follow closely, with 41.5 percent of districts investing their own resources, reflecting a strong local commitment. Parent tuition supports programs in 30 percent of districts, indicating a reliance on family contributions to maintain access.

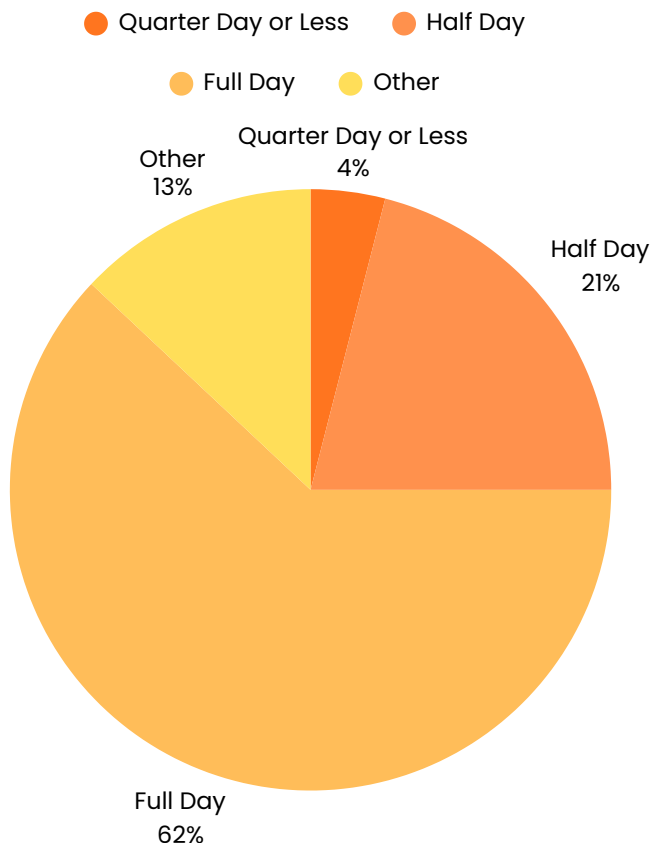
### Federal and State Supports also Play a Role

Title I and Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) subsidies are each used by 15 percent of districts, while Head Start and Education Service District (ESD) funds are each cited by 9.4 percent. Smaller shares of districts report using School Improvement Grants, Early Childhood Special Education funds and OPK, each under 6 percent. Notably, no districts reported using local levy funds, and none indicated plans to discontinue preschool services. Additionally, 19 percent selected “Other,” suggesting the presence of unique or locally specific funding mechanisms, including Multnomah County Preschool for All, cited by three districts. This funding mosaic highlights both the importance of state-level investments and the need for flexible and innovative financing strategies to ensure the sustainability and expansion of preschool across Oregon.



### Most Oregon Districts Operate Small-Scale Preschool Programs

Survey responses from 49 Oregon school districts reveal that the majority operate preschool programs on a modest scale. Nearly 69 percent of districts report having just 1-2 classrooms, suggesting that while preschool is present, it often remains limited in scope. Another 19 percent of districts have 3-5 classrooms, indicating slightly larger but still relatively contained programs. Only 12 percent of districts report operating six or more classrooms, with 6 percent each running 6-9, and 10 or more classrooms.



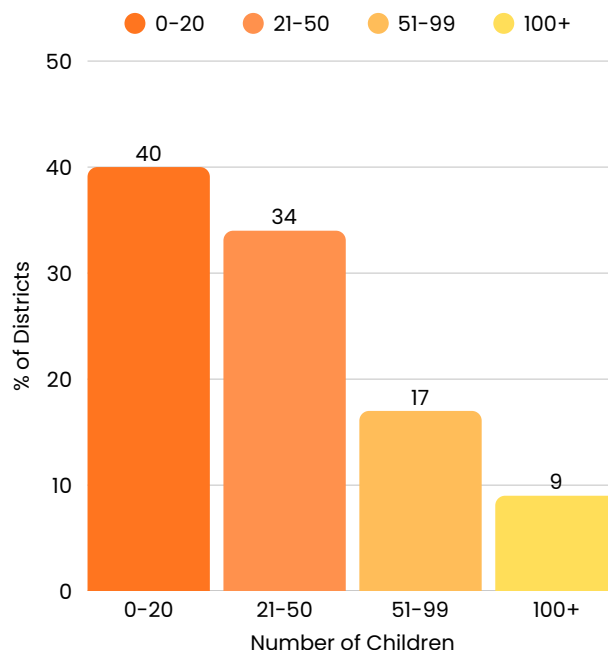
**Preschool Program Daily Duration**

This distribution reflects the broader landscape of Oregon’s education system, where most districts are relatively small in terms of student population. The few districts operating larger preschool programs—those with 10 or more classrooms—are located in urban areas, serving higher concentrations of students. These patterns underscore the importance of tailoring early learning strategies to district size and capacity, ensuring that both small and large districts can effectively support and expand preschool access.

### **Preschool Enrollment Reflects Small-Scale Programs Across Most Oregon Districts**

Survey responses from 49 Oregon school districts show that preschool enrollment

remains modest in most communities. Nearly 40 percent of districts report serving 1–20 children, and another 34 percent serve 21–50 children, meaning almost three-quarters of districts (74 percent) enroll fewer than 50 preschoolers. A smaller share, 17 percent, enroll 51–99 children, while only 9 percent of districts serve 100 or more.



**Enrollment**

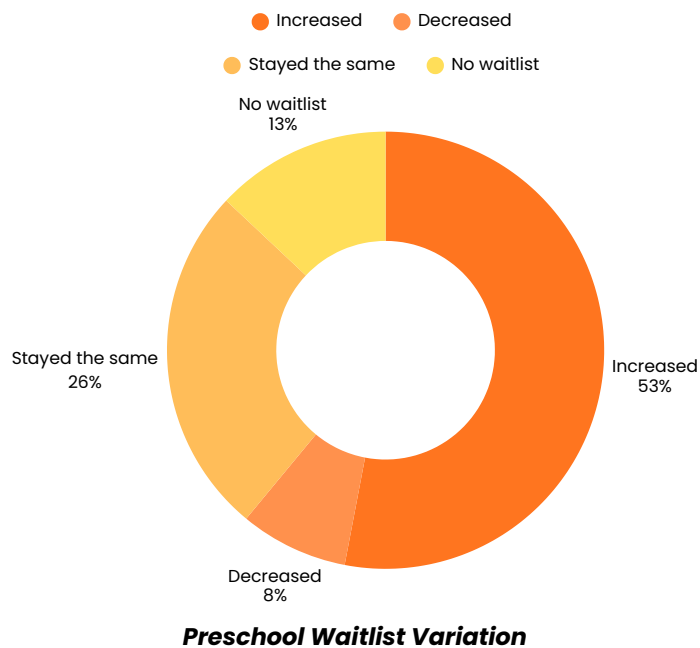
These enrollment patterns align closely with earlier findings on classroom size, where 68 percent of districts reported operating just one to two preschool classrooms. Together, these data points reinforce the picture of preschool as a widespread but small-scale offering across Oregon, likely reflecting the state’s large number of small and rural districts. The relatively low enrollment numbers underscore the importance of tailored strategies that support both the



sustainability of small programs and the potential for thoughtful expansion where demand and capacity allow.

### ***Rising Waitlists Signal Growing Demand for Preschool Access***

Survey results indicate that demand for preschool in Oregon continues to outpace available slots in many districts. Over the past five years, 53 percent of districts report that their preschool waitlists have increased, while only 8 percent have seen a decrease. Another 26 percent say their waitlists have remained the same, and 13 percent report having no waitlist at all.



These findings align with earlier data showing that nearly 75 percent of districts enroll fewer than 50 children, and 68 percent operate just 1–2 classrooms. The combination of small-scale programs and rising waitlists suggests that many districts are struggling to meet community demand for preschool. The fact that only a small

fraction of districts have seen waitlists decrease, or have no waitlist at all, points to a broader capacity challenge across the state.

This trend underscores the need for strategic investments in preschool expansion, particularly in areas where demand is growing but infrastructure and staffing may be limited. It also highlights the importance of collecting and using waitlist data to inform planning, funding, and equity-focused outreach (for example, co-designing outreach efforts with families, active engagement, culturally and linguistically responsive forms and communication, targeted data-driven outreach).

### ***Most Districts Have Short Waitlists but Demand Still Outpaces Capacity***

When asked about the typical length of their preschool waitlists, 60 percent of district respondents reported having 1–10 children on their waitlist, while another 19 percent said they had no waitlist at all. However, nearly 21 percent of districts reported longer waitlists with 11–25 children (11 percent), 26–50 children (8 percent), and even 51+ children (2 percent) waiting for a spot.

These numbers reinforce earlier findings indicating that while most districts operate small-scale programs (with 68 percent running just one to two classrooms and 74 percent enrolling fewer than 50 children), demand continues to exceed available capacity in many communities. The fact that

over half of districts have seen their waitlists grow in the past five years and that some are managing waitlists of 25 or more children suggests that even modest waitlists may reflect deeper access challenges, especially in areas with limited infrastructure or staffing.

This data points to a need for targeted expansion strategies that not only increase the number of preschool slots but also address geographic and demographic disparities in access. It also highlights the importance of tracking waitlist trends over time as a key indicator of unmet need.

### ***Preschool Staff Supervision Varies Widely, Reflecting Diverse Program Structures Across Districts***

Survey responses reveal a wide range of supervisory structures for preschool teaching staff across districts, underscoring the varied ways early learning is integrated into district systems. Forty-three percent of districts report that principals oversee preschool staff, suggesting that in many cases, preschool is embedded within elementary schools and managed alongside K–5 programs. Meanwhile, 26 percent of districts have a dedicated Early Learning Director, indicating a more specialized leadership structure for early childhood education.

However, a notable 30 percent of districts selected “Other,” and their open responses reflect a broad spectrum of supervisory arrangements. These include:

- **Head Start and Education Service District(ESD) partnerships** (for example, Head Start, ESD staff)

- **District-level leadership** (for example, Superintendent, Director of Special Services, Director of Federal Programs, Director of School Improvement)
- **Hybrid or shared models** (for example, Principal and Federal Programs Coordinator, Early Learning Director with Assistant Principals, K–5 Principal/Superintendent)
- **Specialized roles** (for example, Pre-K Coordinator, CDC Coordinator, Student Services Director)
- **Unclear or transitional leadership** (for example, “Unknown right now – shift in district leadership”)

This variation reflects the broader context of Oregon’s preschool landscape, where most programs are relatively small in scale, with 68 percent of districts operating just one to two classrooms and 74 percent enrolling fewer than 50 children. In such settings, preschool may not yet have a dedicated administrative structure, leading to shared or ad hoc supervision models. As Oregon continues to expand access to preschool, ensuring that teaching staff have consistent, knowledgeable, and early learning-focused supervision will be critical. Strengthening leadership capacity, especially in districts with growing waitlists and limited infrastructure, could be a key lever for improving quality and alignment across the P–5 continuum.

### ***Most Preschool Classrooms Are Embedded in Elementary Schools, but Location Settings Vary***

Survey results show that 66 percent of Oregon districts locate preschool classrooms within elementary schools, making this the most common setting and reinforcing the strong link between early learning and the K–5 system. This integration can support smoother transitions to kindergarten and shared resources.

Beyond elementary schools, 26 percent of districts house preschool in separate buildings, and 15 percent place classrooms in middle or high schools, often as a creative solution to space constraints. Notably, 38 percent of respondents selected “Other,” signaling a significant reliance on alternative arrangements. While elementary schools remain the dominant setting and are a great option to support alignment with the elementary grades, districts depend heavily on flexible, locally-tailored solutions; making facilities planning a central challenge and need for both expanding access and ensuring high-quality learning environments.

### ***Most Districts Report Adequate Preschool Facilities, but Gaps Remain***

Survey responses indicate that while many districts reported having access to developmentally appropriate spaces for preschool, there are notable variations in perceived quality and completeness. Sixty-one percent of districts report having both sufficient classroom and outdoor facilities, which is critical for meeting

young children’s developmental needs for movement, exploration, and play. Another 21 percent say they have adequate classroom facilities only, suggesting that outdoor spaces essential for physical development and social-emotional learning may be lacking in some programs.

However, 9 percent of districts report insufficient facilities, and another 9 percent say conditions vary across sites, pointing to uneven quality and potential inequities in the preschool experience within their district. These findings align with earlier data showing that most programs operate on a small scale and are often housed in elementary schools, where space and facility constraints can limit access to age-appropriate environments.

### ***Community Partnerships Play a Key Role in Preschool Delivery***

While many districts reported no partnerships, responses reveal that a significant number collaborate with community-based organizations to deliver and administer preschool programs. The most frequently mentioned partner is Head Start, cited in multiple responses, often alongside Education Service Districts (ESDs) and local early learning hubs. Other notable partners include Adelante Mujeres, CAIRO, IRCO, Community Action Head Start, El Programa Hispano, and organizations like Teaching Preschool Partners (TPP), Ready, Set, Go!, and the Alliance for Equity in Montessori. Districts also described creative arrangements,



such as sharing classroom space with elementary schools, leveraging local daycare providers, and contracting with transportation and meal services. These partnerships reflect the flexible, locally-tailored approaches districts use to expand access and manage preschool programs, especially in rural areas or where district capacity is limited.

This diversity of partnerships highlights their importance in Oregon's preschool landscape. As demand and waitlists grow, strengthening and formalizing these collaborations will be essential for scaling high-quality, developmentally appropriate preschool opportunities statewide.

### ***Post-COVID Funding Shifts Bring Minimal Administrative Change, but Some Districts Report New Partnerships***

Survey results show that for most districts, funding changes following COVID-19 have not significantly altered preschool administration. Fifty-seven percent of respondents reported no major changes, suggesting that existing administrative structures largely remained intact despite pandemic-related disruptions. However, 13 percent of districts noted increased administrative oversight, and 11 percent reported forming more partnerships with community providers, indicating that some districts adapted by strengthening governance or leveraging external collaboration to maintain services. A smaller share (4 percent) experienced reduced administrative support, which could signal resource constraints or staffing challenges.

Meanwhile, 15 percent selected "Other," with open responses likely reflecting unique local adjustments. Taken together, these findings suggest that while the majority of districts maintained stability, a notable minority made structural changes to sustain preschool programming during a period of fiscal uncertainty. This aligns with earlier findings on partnerships and facility flexibility, reinforcing the importance of adaptable systems for resilience and quality in early learning.

### ***Most Districts Provide Full-Day Preschool***

Nearly two-thirds of districts surveyed (62 percent) report offering full-day preschool programs, while 21 percent provide half-day schedules, 4 percent offer quarter-day or less, and 13 percent fall into an "other" category that includes mixed or alternative schedules. This strong prevalence of full-day programming reflects a significant shift toward expanded instructional time for young learners. It also positions most districts to meet Oregon's Preschool Promise standard, which requires at least six hours per day, four days per week, and a minimum of 900 hours annually, ensuring alignment with state goals for access and quality.

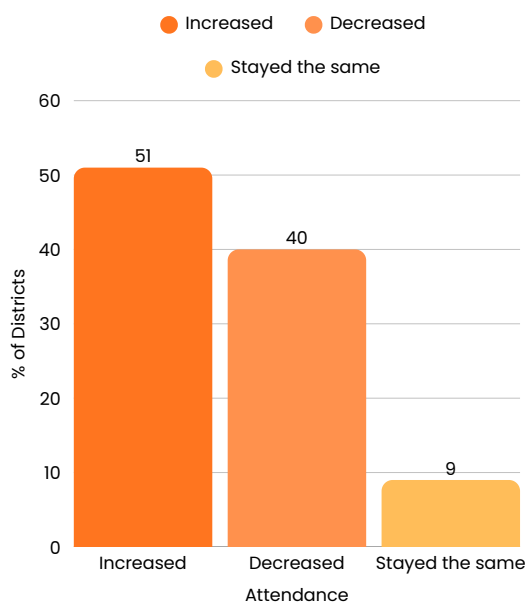
### ***Preschool Attendance Strong, but Some Tracking Gaps Persist***

Survey results indicate that 77 percent of districts report that most enrolled preschoolers (between 76 and 100 percent) attend at least 90 percent of

of the school year, while 13 percent report attendance between 51 and 75 percent, and only 4 percent fall below 50 percent. A small share (6 percent) reported not tracking attendance at all, signaling a need for better data tracking.

**Attending 90 percent or more of the year is a critical benchmark because it means children miss no more than about 18 days in a typical school year.**

Consistent attendance in preschool is essential for building early language, social-emotional, and foundational academic skills, and research shows that chronic absenteeism, even before kindergarten, can predict lower readiness and long-term achievement gaps. High attendance ensures that investments in early learning translate into meaningful instructional time, while tracking attendance helps identify and address barriers, particularly for children from historically marginalized communities.



**Attendance Variation Since 2020**

## **Preschool Attendance Rebounds Post-Pandemic in Most Districts**

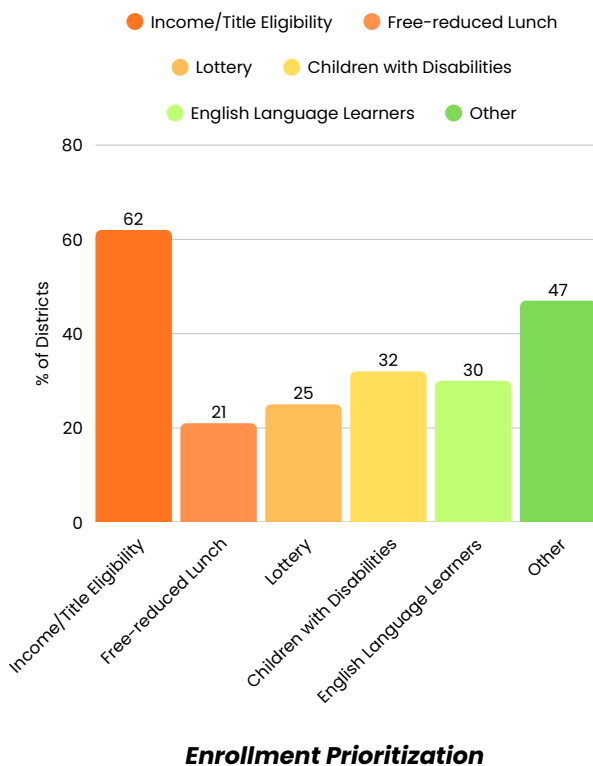
When asked how preschool attendance has changed since 2020, 51 percent of districts reported an increase, while 40 percent said attendance has stayed the same, and only 9 percent noted a decrease. These results suggest that for most communities, preschool participation has stabilized or improved following the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The increase in attendance may reflect renewed family confidence in early learning programs and recognition of preschool's role in supporting school readiness. However, the fact that nearly 10 percent of districts still report declines signals ongoing challenges that can affect access. Monitoring these trends remains essential to ensure equitable recovery and sustained engagement in early education.

## **Income-Based Criteria Lead Preschool Enrollment Priorities, but Local Flexibility Remains High**

Survey responses reveal that 62 percent of districts prioritize children for their preschool program slots based on income or Title eligibility, making economic need the most common enrollment criterion. Other significant factors include children with disabilities (32 percent), English Language Learners (30 percent), and Free and Reduced Lunch status (21 percent), while 25 percent use a lottery system. Nearly half of respondents (47 percent) selected "Other," citing approaches such as

age (especially 4-year-old children entering kindergarten the following year), and coordination with program requirements, including Preschool Promise, McKinney-Vento, and Migrant Education.



This variation underscores the balance districts must strike between meeting state and federal priority populations and maintaining local flexibility. While income-based eligibility aligns with equity goals, the prevalence of “Other” responses suggests that enrollment practices are far from consistent, which can impact access and consistency across regions.

### **Most Districts Have Not Received New Funding to Expand Preschool Access**

When asked whether their district has received additional funding since 2020 to improve preschool access for low-income families, 49 percent of respondents said

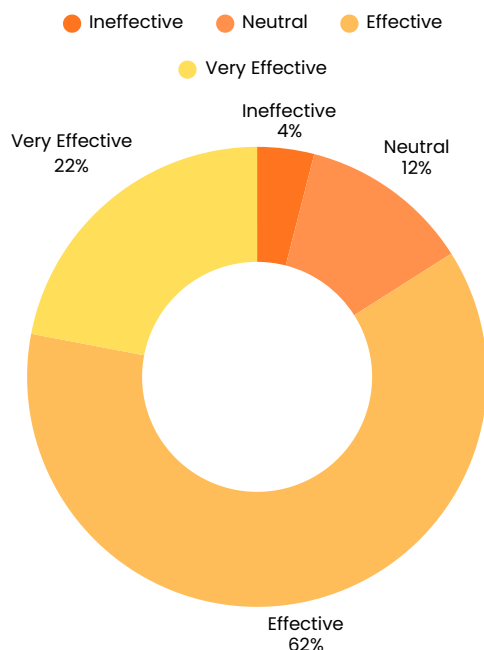
no, while 30 percent reported receiving new funding, and 21 percent were unsure. This means that nearly half of districts have not seen increased financial support for expanding access. The uncertainty among one-fifth of respondents suggests that funding streams may be complex or not clearly understood.

### **Creative Curriculum Leading Preschool Curriculum, but Variety Remains High**

Half of districts (50 percent) report using Creative Curriculum, making it the most used curriculum. Other named approaches include Reggio Emilia (14 percent), HighScope (12 percent), and Montessori (4 percent), while 16 percent do not use a specific curriculum. Notably, 34 percent selected “Other,” citing a wide range of curricula, including Frog Street, Second Step, Conscious Discipline, and locally developed approaches. Some of these may serve as secondary or supplemental resources rather than primary curricula. This diversity reflects flexibility in meeting community needs but also indicates variation in instructional approaches across districts. Given that many districts reported partnerships with Head Start, it is unsurprising that Creative Curriculum is the most prevalent choice. Creative Curriculum aligns with Head Start standards and is the most used curriculum within Head Start programs, which likely influences its widespread adoption among districts.

## Most Districts Rate Preschool Curriculum as Effective for Kindergarten Readiness

Survey results show that 62 percent of respondents consider their preschool curriculum “effective” and 22 percent rate their curriculum “very effective” in preparing children for kindergarten. A smaller share, 12 percent, rate it neutral, while only 4 percent describe it as “very ineffective,” and none rate it “ineffective.” These findings suggest strong confidence in curriculum effectiveness across districts, though the presence of neutral and negative ratings indicates opportunities for improvement and ongoing evaluation to ensure all children enter kindergarten ready to succeed.



**Effectiveness of Curriculum for Kinder Readiness**

## Districts Use a Variety of Strategies to Support Kindergarten Transitions

Districts reported using a range of strategies to support children and families in the transition to kindergarten, beyond

offering preschool programming. The most common approach was hosting a Kindergarten Open House, selected by 91 percent of respondents, followed by Kinder Transition Programs (71 percent) and Family Home Visits (28 percent). Only 2 percent of districts indicated they do not offer any additional transition supports.

In addition to the listed options, districts shared several other practices through open-ended responses, including:

- Classroom visits to kindergarten
- Lunch visits at the elementary school
- Preschool classrooms co-located at elementary schools
- Back-to-School Night kindergarten orientation
- Ongoing parent outreach and family surveys

These responses reflect a strong commitment to easing the transition to kindergarten through relationship building, familiarization with school environments, and proactive family engagement. The variety of approaches also highlights the importance of local flexibility in designing transition supports that meet community needs.

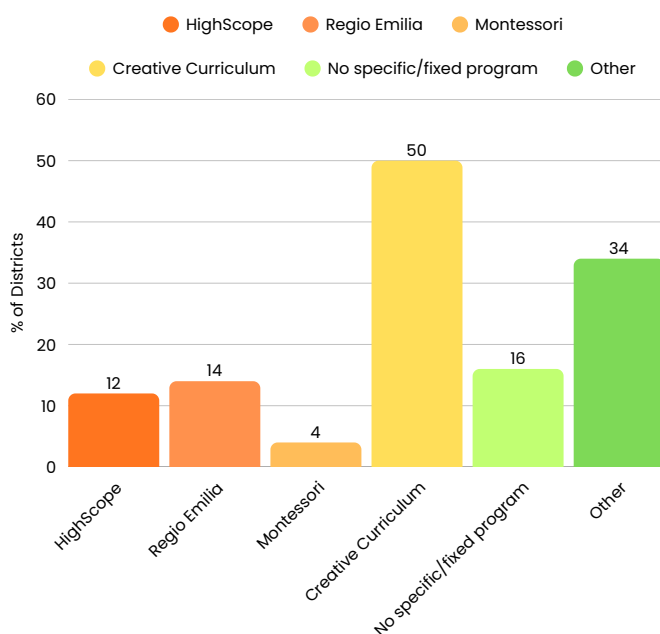
## Program Quality and Design

### Curriculum and Learning Environments Support Kindergarten Readiness

Districts report using a wide range of preschool curriculum approaches, with one program emerging as a clear



anchor. Half of respondents (50 percent) use Creative Curriculum, making it the most common primary framework. Smaller shares report using Reggio Emilia (14 percent), HighScope (12 percent), or Montessori (4 percent). At the same time, 16 percent say they do not use a specific curriculum, and 34 percent selected “Other,” describing a mix of locally developed models and supplemental materials such as Frog Street, Second Step, Conscious Discipline, Heggerty, Amplify/CKLA, and other literacy and math resources.



**Use of Standardized Curricula**

When asked how effective these curricula are in preparing children for kindergarten, most districts express confidence in their current approach. Nearly two-thirds (62 percent) rate their curriculum as “effective,” and another 22 percent describe it as “very effective.” A smaller share (12 percent) are neutral, and only 4

percent report their curriculum as “very ineffective,” with none rating it simply “ineffective.” These responses suggest that, as in 2015, districts see curriculum as a strength of their preschool programs, even as some continue to refine or supplement their core materials.

### ***Learning Environments Extend Beyond the Classroom***

A majority of districts (82 percent) report that they integrate outdoor learning into their preschool programs, with another 10 percent noting that outdoor learning is “in development.” Only 8 percent say they do not include outdoor learning. This emphasis on outdoor experiences aligns with a whole-child approach that supports physical development, exploration, and social-emotional learning alongside early academics.

### ***Preschool Is Increasingly Embedded in District Standards, Professional Learning, and Data Systems***

Survey responses indicate that preschool is not operating on the margins of district systems; instead, it is increasingly woven into broader instructional and data frameworks. Four out of five districts (80 percent) report that preschool children are included in their district’s standards or curriculum frameworks, with only 20 percent saying they are not.

Preschool teachers are also being brought into K–12 professional learning, though participation is not yet universal. Sixty percent of districts include

preschool teachers in K–12 professional development, and another 30 percent do so occasionally. Only 10 percent report that preschool teachers are not included at all. When asked to rate the alignment between preschool and kindergarten teaching, most districts place themselves in the middle-to-upper range: 32 percent describe practice as “mostly aligned” and 12 percent as “fully aligned,” while another 32 percent select “moderately aligned.” Smaller shares report being “slightly aligned” (16 percent) or “not at all aligned” (8 percent). Taken together, these results suggest that cross-grade alignment is a work in progress, with many districts moving toward more consistent P–3 practice.

Data systems are evolving in a similar direction. Forty-two percent of districts use data-sharing systems to connect preschool with K–12, and another 30 percent report partial sharing, and only 12 percent say no. In combination, these responses show that most districts are either already sharing data or actively building the infrastructure to do so.

Screening and assessment practices are widely used to inform instruction and transitions. Nearly four in five districts (78 percent) report using a developmental and socioemotional screener, with Ages and Stages the most common tool (56 percent). Smaller shares report using PEDS or CDI (8 percent each) and the M-CHAT (2 percent), while 22 percent say they do not use a formal screener. For ongoing child and program assessment, districts

draw on a range of instruments. About one-third (34 percent) use Teaching Strategies GOLD and a similar share use Creative Curriculum’s assessment system (36 percent). Other tools include CLASS (24 percent), ECERS (26 percent), TPOT (14 percent), COR Advantage (8 percent), and AEPS (8 percent). More than one-third (36 percent) selected “Other,” describing locally developed tools or district-created checklists, often layered onto the formal systems listed above.

Almost all districts conduct preschool-specific assessments at least once a year. Half (50 percent) report assessing children three times per year (fall/winter/spring), 24 percent do so quarterly, 6 percent monthly, and 2 percent annually. Only 4 percent say they do not conduct assessments, with the remainder selecting “Other” and describing variations such as twice-yearly assessments or partner-led evaluation (e.g., by an ESD or Head Start). Over the past decade, about 28 percent of districts report changing their assessment tools, 50 percent say they have not, and 22 percent are unsure, suggesting a mix of continuity and adaptation as districts respond to new requirements, program models, or evidence about effective practice.

### ***Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness is a Growing but Uneven Focus***

Districts report a range of strategies to ensure that preschool programs are

culturally and linguistically responsive, with staff practice and family partnership at the center. The most common approach is staff training (84 percent), followed closely by parent engagement strategies (78 percent) and culturally relevant materials and resources (76 percent). Sixteen percent report using dual-language curriculum as a core strategy, and 10 percent selected “Other,” noting approaches such as partnering with culturally specific providers or tailoring practices to local communities.

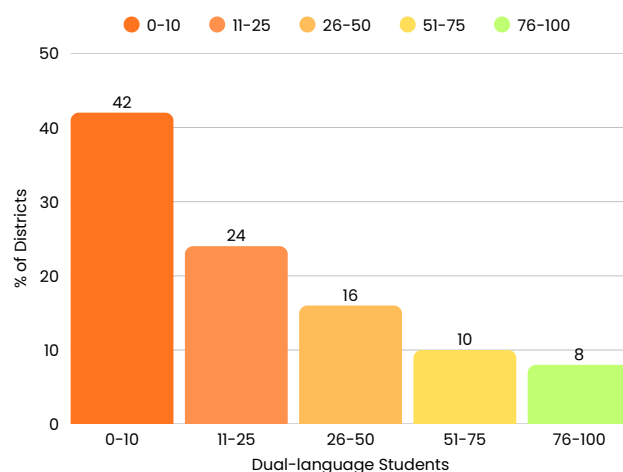
At the same time, bilingual staffing and multilingual programming remain uneven across the state. When asked what percentage of preschool staff are bilingual or multilingual, 42 percent of districts report that 0–10 percent of their preschool staff are bilingual, and another 24 percent report 11–25 percent.

Sixteen percent of districts say that 26–50 percent of staff are bilingual; 10 percent report 51–75 percent of staff are bilingual; and only 8 percent indicate that 76–100 percent of their preschool staff speak more than one language. In other words, roughly one-third of districts report that at least 25 percent of their preschool staff is bilingual, and fewer than one in five report a majority bilingual workforce.

Formal dual language immersion programs are relatively rare in preschool, but where they exist, they are almost always Spanish-English. Sixty-six percent of districts say they do not offer a dual language immersion program at the preschool level. Among those that do,

Spanish is the predominant language (32 percent), with only a small share indicating “Other” languages. This aligns with broader patterns in Oregon’s K–12 dual language program landscape, where Spanish tends to be the primary focus.

New bilingual or multilingual initiatives are emerging, but most districts have not introduced major changes in the past five years. One in five districts (20 percent) report launching new bilingual or multilingual initiatives, and another 10 percent say such efforts are “in progress,” while 70 percent report no new initiatives. These responses suggest that while many districts are working on cultural responsiveness through staff training, parent engagement, and materials, more systemic approaches—such as expanding dual language programs, increasing bilingual staffing, or launching new multilingual initiatives—are still in earlier stages of development.

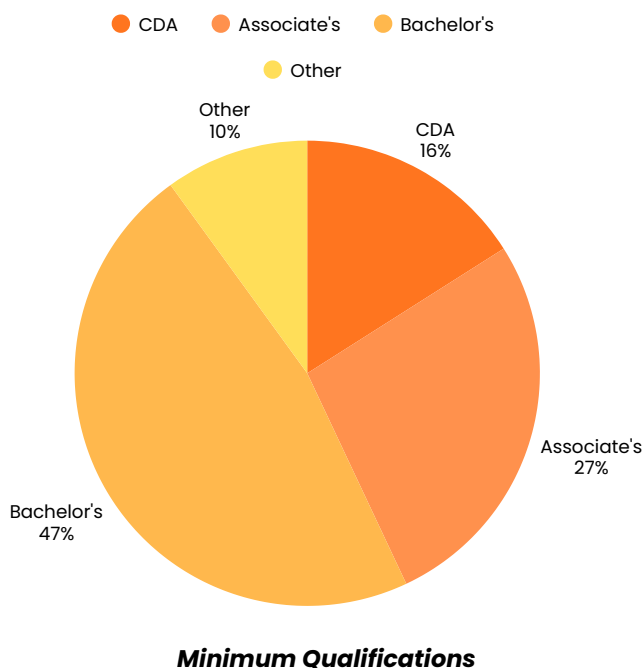


**Presence of Dual-Language Learners in Districts**

## Early Learning Workforce

### **Educator Qualifications Are Diversifying with Growing Licensure Expectations**

District-run preschool programs use a range of qualification pathways for lead teachers, reflecting diverse approaches to meeting staffing needs. While a bachelor's degree remains the most common requirement, other credentials and registry-based pathways are widely accepted, creating multiple entry points into the profession. Across respondents, about 39 percent said a bachelor's degree is most common, followed by "other" qualifications such as Oregon Registry Online (ORO) steps or Teacher Standards and Practices (TSPC) licensure (about 25 percent), an associate's degree (about 20 percent), and a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential (about 16 percent). No district reported a master's degree as the minimum requirement.



Open-ended responses clarify that many districts anchor requirements to ORO steps (often Steps 7–10), prefer or require TSPC licensure with an early childhood or early elementary endorsement, or allow candidates to begin on a work plan while completing a degree. Some districts note that requirements are set by Head Start or the ESD where programs are operated or staffed.

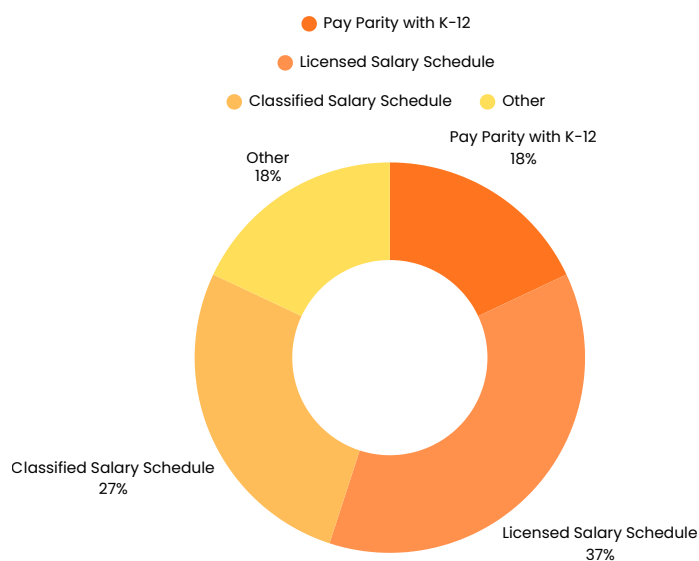
Licensure expectations are increasingly explicit. About 53 percent require preschool lead teachers to hold a teaching license, while 47 percent do not. Compared to 2015—when districts emphasized four-year degrees and referenced licensure implicitly—current patterns point to broader entry routes paired with clearer licensure expectations, especially in districts aligning preschool with K–12 salary schedules and evaluation systems.

### **Compensation, Well-Being, and Professional Learning are Tied to K–12 but are Uneven**

Compensation structures for preschool educators are closely linked to existing K–12 frameworks but remain uneven across districts. About 37 percent of districts place preschool educators on *licensed* salary schedules, while about 27 percent use *classified* salary schedules. Fewer report explicit pay parity with K–12 teachers (about 18 percent), and a similar share (about 18 percent) describe "other" arrangements, including separate preschool scales, reliance on Head Start



ESD pay structures, or alignment with Preschool Promise expectations and ORO steps.



**Compensation Breakdown**

Financial support for professional learning also varies widely. Just over 27 percent of districts provide no yearly financial support for preschool teacher professional development. At the other end of the spectrum, about 29 percent report providing more than \$1,000 per year per educator. About 12 percent offer \$100–\$500 and another 10 percent offer \$501–\$1,000. Another 22 percent select “other,” to describe tuition reimbursement, stipends funded by grants, or district-specific arrangements. These responses suggest that while many districts are investing directly in preschool professional learning, others rely on ad hoc or minimal funding.

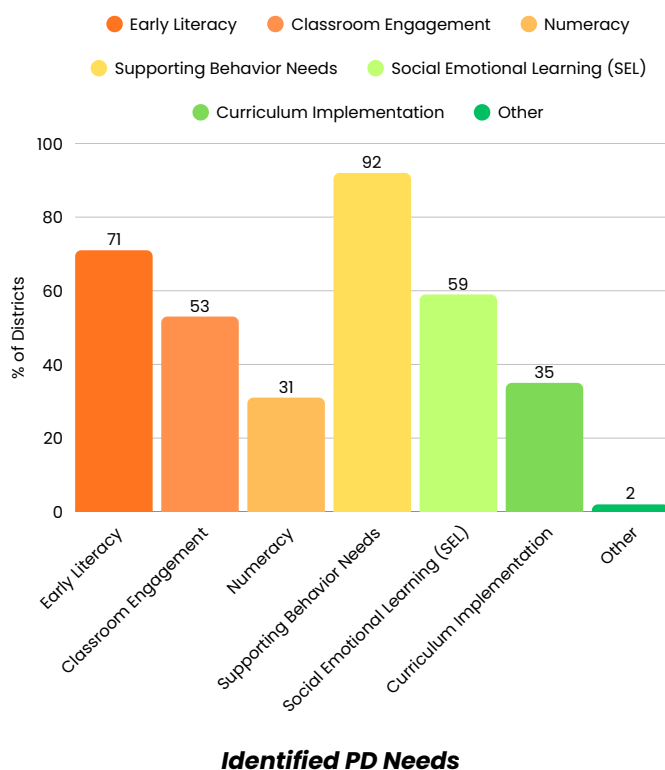
Professional learning needs are concentrated in a few key content areas. Nearly all districts (about 92 percent)

identify supporting student behavior as a major need, followed by early literacy (about 71 percent) and social-emotional learning (about 59 percent). Classroom management (about 53 percent), curriculum implementation (about 35 percent), and numeracy (about 31 percent) also appear frequently. In contrast to 2015—when districts chiefly described PD modalities (district PD, conferences, PLCs, job-embedded coaching)—today’s responses emphasize specific content areas where targeted coaching and high-quality materials are needed; especially behavior supports and early literacy.

Multiple partners help deliver this professional development. District-provided PD is most common (about 73 percent), followed by Early Learning Hubs (about 57 percent), Child Care Resource & Referral (about 37 percent), and Education Service Districts (about 45 percent). Additional providers include Regional Educator Networks (about 24 percent), external organizations (about 27 percent), higher education institutions, and state or national conferences. “Other” comments highlight Head Start trainings, the Pyramid Model, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) ethical standards, Teaching Strategies resources, and external trainers for Science of Reading instruction.

Despite this variety, perceptions of PD effectiveness are mixed. Roughly 39 percent of respondents are

unsure how effective in-service PD is for preschool teachers. Among those who do rate it, most cluster in the middle: about 22 percent say PD is “moderately effective,” 33 percent “mostly effective,” and just 2 percent “very effective.” Very few consider it ineffective. This suggests that access alone is not enough; districts may need more protected time, more targeted content, and stronger coaching models to translate PD into classroom practice.



Districts are also beginning to attend to educator well-being, but participation is uneven. When asked what share of educators participate in well-being initiatives (where such initiatives exist), responses are spread across the spectrum: some districts report high participation (about 18 percent say 76–100 percent of educators participate), while others report much lower uptake.

Notably, about 43 percent say no well-being initiatives have been introduced at all, underscoring a gap in systematic supports for staff wellness.

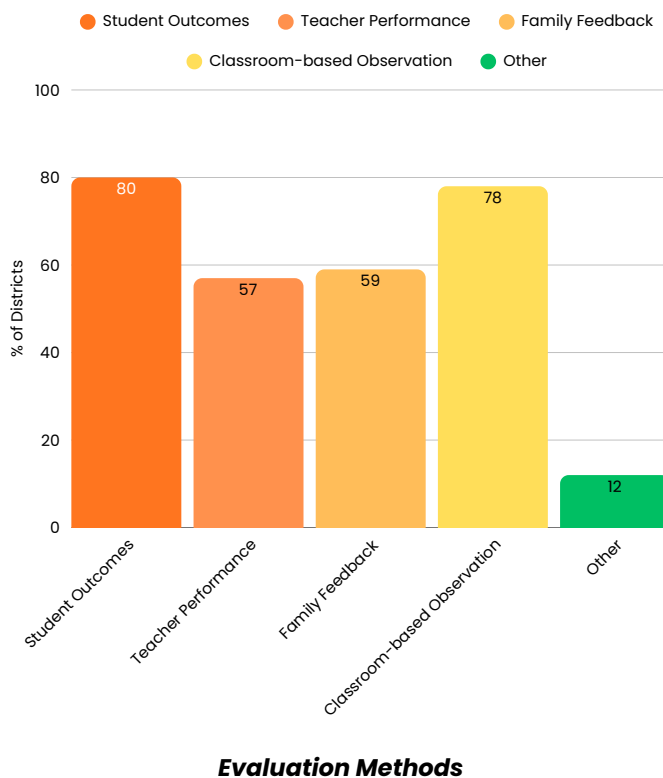
Time for collaboration is more consistently available but not universal. Nearly three-quarters of districts (about 73 percent) report regularly scheduled weekly planning or collaboration time for preschool teachers. Smaller shares provide planning time only monthly (about 6 percent), only on PD days or in-service days (about 2 percent), or rely on teachers coordinating informally on their own time (about 8 percent). About 10 percent select “other,” describing building-based variations or shared planning with kindergarten or K–3 teams. Taken together, these patterns show that many districts have structurally embedded collaboration time, but others still depend heavily on individual initiative.

### ***Leadership, Collaboration, and Quality Systems Support Continuous Improvement—But Gaps Remain***

Principals and other school leaders play multiple roles in supporting preschool programs. Districts most often report that leaders conduct classroom observations (about 67 percent), provide professional development (about 51 percent), mentor teachers (about 51 percent), and offer active oversight of programs (about 51 percent). Roughly 10 percent indicate that leaders play no formal role. Open-ended responses

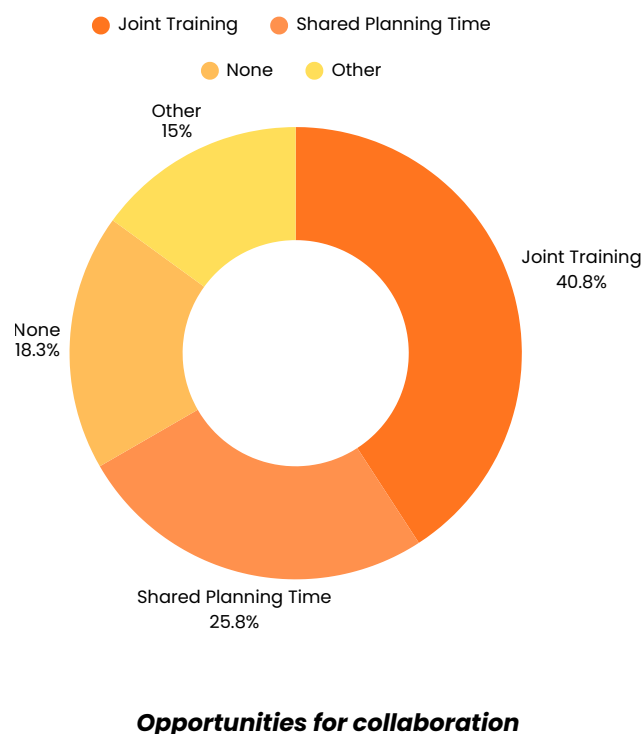
highlight mentor–mentee programs, walkthroughs using tools like Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT), and collaborative efforts between principals and Early Learning Administrators.

Program evaluation generally relies on a mix of measures. Most districts use student outcomes (about 80 percent) and classroom-based observations (about 78 percent) as key data sources, alongside teacher performance measures (about 57 percent) and feedback from families and caregivers (about 59 percent). Other practices include kindergarten readiness checks in late summer, mid- and end-of-year family and staff surveys, and alignment with existing district evaluation systems. This layered approach suggests that many districts are working to integrate preschool into broader continuous improvement cycles.

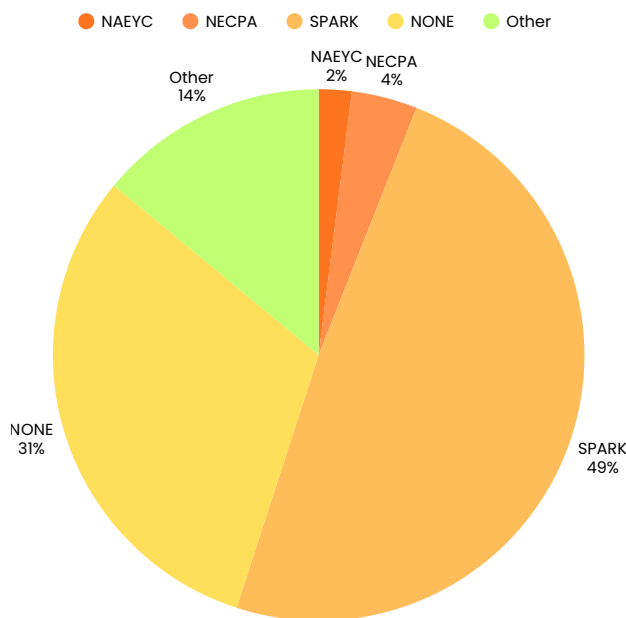


K–12 alignment is advancing but remains inconsistent. When asked whether preschool teachers participate in K–12 professional learning communities, about 49 percent of districts say yes, 43 percent say no, and 8 percent describe partial or emerging participation. Opportunities for cross-grade collaboration follow a similar pattern: nearly half of districts (about 49 percent) report joint training across preschool and K–12, about 31 percent offer shared planning time, and about 18 percent describe “other” opportunities such as joint literacy nights or transition meetings. However, about 22 percent report no cross-grade collaboration opportunities at all.

Barriers to collaboration are led by time. Nearly 69 percent of districts cite time constraints as a barrier to collaboration



between preschool and K–12, and about 14 percent point to lack of resources. Others report that alignment is seen as unimportant (about 16 percent) or that administrative barriers get in the way (about 8 percent). At the same time, 16 percent say there are no notable barriers, , and “other” comments note schedule misalignment, preschool programs located in separate or high school buildings, and structural limits when preschool staff are not district employees. Several districts emphasize that alignment has recently become a priority and is improving, but not yet fully realized.



#### Accreditations and Rating

Quality recognition systems show mixed participation. About 49 percent report holding an Oregon SPARK rating, while 31 percent report no accreditation or rating, and only a small share hold national accreditations such

as National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) or the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA). Another 14 percent select “other,” noting DELC certification, participation in SPARK but without a star rating due to ERDC–related constraints, or active efforts to work toward a rating. SPARK, Oregon’s Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), has been undergoing a major redesign since 2023 to make it more equitable and accessible; the transition from star ratings to a continuous Quality Improvement cycle likely explains why only about half of districts currently report a SPARK rating and several note that they are “in process.”

## Communication and Outreach

### *Relationship–Based Family Engagement Is Strong Once Families Enroll*

Districts report a robust mix of family engagement strategies once children are enrolled in preschool. Nearly all districts (96 percent) use parent–teacher conferences, and almost 90 percent host family nights, making these the backbone of family engagement. About 65 percent offer parent education programs and 69 percent use social media to stay in touch with families.

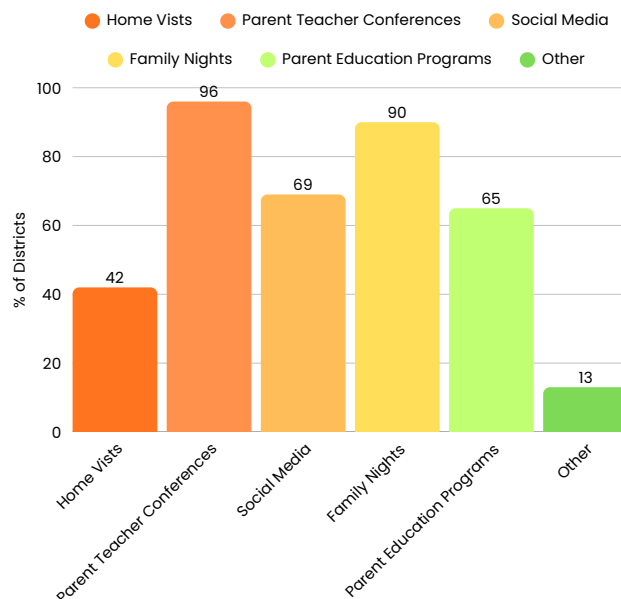
Home visiting is less common but still notable: 42 percent of districts report using home visits as a preschool family



engagement strategy. While not universal, this level of home visiting suggests that many districts are investing in relationship-based supports that extend beyond the classroom. A smaller percentage (13 percent) selected “Other,” describing additional activities such as family events, playgroups, and locally developed engagement efforts. Together, these patterns show that once families are connected to preschool, districts tend to provide regular, relationship-centered opportunities for communication, learning, and participation.

### Multiple Outreach Channels Reach Families, but Time and Awareness are Persistent Barriers

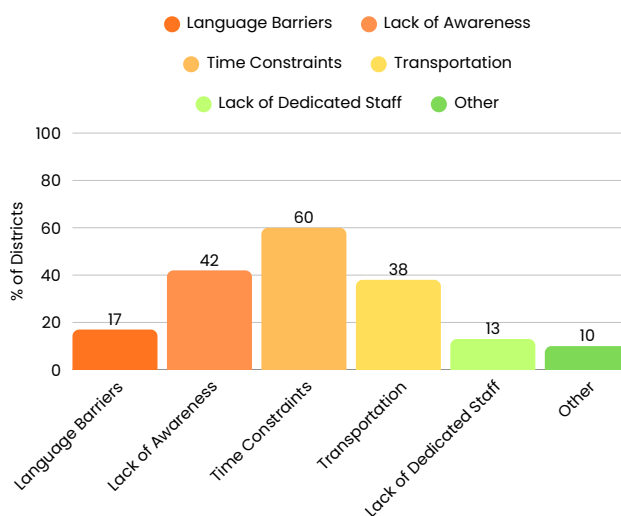
When promoting preschool opportunities, districts rely heavily on basic, widely accessible channels, supplemented by digital communication. Flyers are the most common tool—used by 96 percent of districts—followed by school websites and social media, at 75 percent for each. About two-thirds (67 percent) of districts use email and more than half (58 percent) use text messages. About one-third (31 percent) selected “Other,” describing tools such as phone calls, ParentSquare or similar apps, newsletters, and community-based outreach events. Despite this range of strategies, districts report that time and awareness remain the biggest barriers to engaging families. Time constraints are cited by 60 percent of respondents, followed by lack of awareness about district preschool programs (42 percent), and limited transportation (38 percent). Fewer districts report language barriers



**Family Engagement Strategies**

(17 percent) or lack of dedicated staffing (13 percent) as key obstacles, although open-ended responses note challenges such as sparse local media options and general difficulties engaging families in some communities.

Even with these constraints, most districts see their outreach as at least moderately effective. When asked to



**Challenges**

rate overall effectiveness, 42 percent describe their preschool outreach as “mostly effective,” 35 percent as “moderately effective,” and 13 percent as “very effective.” Only a small minority view outreach as “slightly effective” (8 percent) or “not effective” (2 percent). Districts that feel their strategies are working well tend to describe a blend of tactics: pairing school-based communication with visible community presence and multiple points of contact over time.

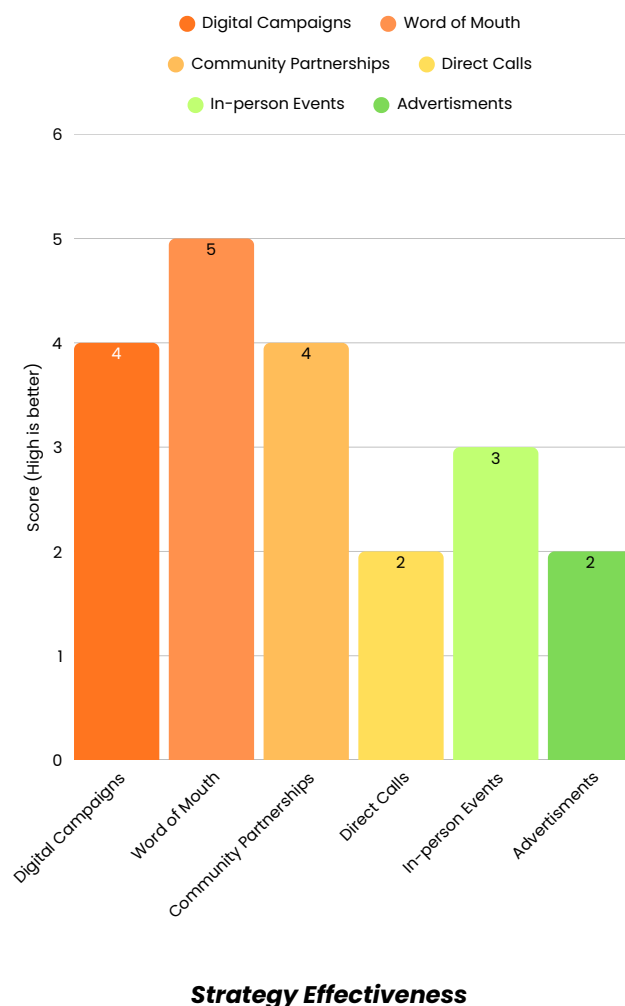
### **Targeted and Multilingual Outreach is Growing, and High-Impact Strategies are Clearer**

Targeted outreach to non-English-speaking families is underway in many, but not all, districts. About 44 percent report that they have already implemented targeted outreach for non-English-speaking families, 35 percent say they have not, and 21 percent indicate efforts are “in progress.”

Among respondents who provide translated preschool materials in multiple languages, Spanish is by far the most commonly mentioned language, often paired with English. A smaller number of districts report translating materials into additional languages such as Vietnamese, Dari, Zomi, and Somali. Several note that materials are bilingual by default or translated upon request, and some describe using tools like ParentSquare to deliver messages in families’ home languages. These responses suggest that while translation and language access are present in many districts, deeper

multilingual capacity is still emerging.

Districts also provided insight into which outreach strategies and platforms they see as most effective in prompting families to respond or enroll. When asked to rank outreach strategies, word of mouth stands out with the highest average effectiveness score, followed by digital campaigns, community partnerships, and in-person events. Direct calls and paid advertisements receive the lowest scores, suggesting that families are more responsive to trusted relationships and visible community presence than to cold calls or traditional advertising.



A similar pattern appears for communication platforms. Social media receives the highest average effectiveness score, followed by text messages and email. Community events fall in the middle, while direct mail and phone calls are rated least effective overall. In practice, this means districts see the most return when they combine relationship-centered strategies (word of mouth, community partnerships, school-based events) with digital communication tools that are easy for families to access on their phones.

## Funding and Expansion

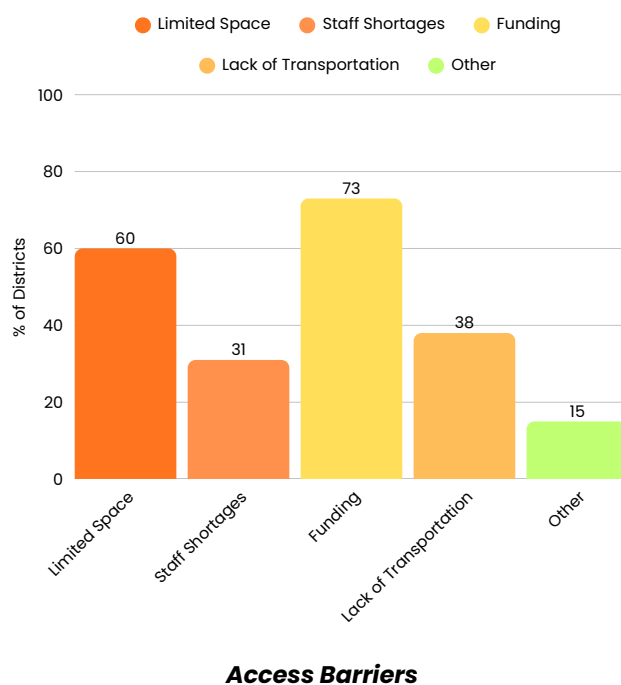
### ***Preschool Coverage Remains Partial, Even Where Multiple Providers Operate***

When asked what share of eligible preschool-aged children are served by district-run and community preschool options combined, districts paint a picture of partial but incomplete coverage. About 40 percent estimate that more than half of eligible children in their community are being served (reporting 51–75 percent or 76–100 percent coverage), while a similar share—roughly 38 percent—believe that only a quarter to half of eligible children are enrolled. A small group (8 percent) estimate that fewer than one-quarter of eligible children are reached, and nearly 23 percent of respondents are unsure.

### ***Funding and Space Are the Most Persistent Barriers to Expansion***

Districts overwhelmingly cite funding and facilities as the primary obstacles to expanding preschool access.

More than seven in ten respondents (about 73 percent) identify funding as a barrier, and about 60 percent point to space constraints. Transportation (38 percent) and staffing shortages (31 percent) emerged as secondary challenges, reinforcing the picture of a system limited by both infrastructure and workforce capacity. Fewer districts highlight issues like local enrollment or community demand, suggesting that families are eager for preschool access but districts lack the resources and physical space to meet that demand.



These perceptions are echoed when districts are asked specifically about funding barriers. Local budget constraints are the most frequently cited funding challenge (73 percent), followed by insufficient state (60 percent) and federal (52 percent) funding and the unpredictability of grant dollars (44 percent). Comments emphasize

tightened general funds, the high cost of launching and operating preschool without dedicated revenue streams, and gaps in staffing and administrative infrastructure. Nearly all districts (about 92 percent) report that additional funding targeted to preschool expansion would be beneficial; none say they would not benefit, and a small group are unsure.

### ***Districts Are Testing Multiple Strategies to Expand Access, with State Investments Playing a Key Role***

Despite these constraints, districts are not standing still. Over the past five years, many report adopting new strategies to expand preschool access. More than half (56 percent) have opened new preschool classrooms within the district, and about 40 percent have partnered with community-based organizations such as childcare providers or co-located preschool classrooms on elementary school campuses. About one-third have shifted from half-day to full-day models or increased outreach and enrollment supports, and a smaller but a notable share (13 percent) report implementing dual-language or culturally specific programs. About 10 percent report implementing none of these strategies.

State investments—especially Preschool Promise and other state-funded programs—are widely seen as important access drivers. While one-quarter of districts report no impact from these programs, nearly six in ten say they have had a high or significant impact on preschool

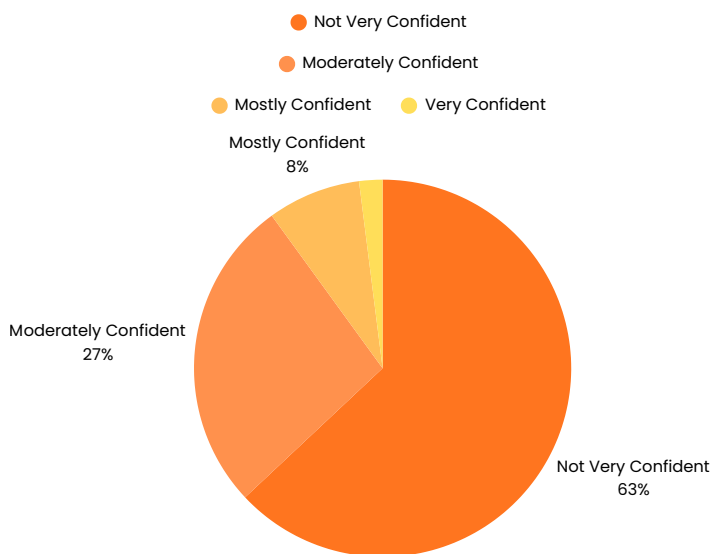
accessibility, and another group report moderate effects. This marks a clear shift from a decade ago, when Preschool Promise had not yet launched and many districts cobbled together programs from general funds and parent tuition. In the past five years, 44 percent of respondents report increased state funding for preschool, 10 percent report new or increased local funding, and about one-fifth have experienced funding decreases from one or more sources. A notable minority (about 10 percent) are unsure, underscoring the complexity of preschool finance in a mixed-delivery system.

### ***Thin Margins Undermine Sustainability, Even as Districts Feel Ready to Grow***

While state and local investments have helped districts expand access, most districts remain uncertain about the long-term sustainability of their preschool programs. When asked how confident they are in sustaining preschool without additional state or federal funding, almost two-thirds (about 63 percent) place themselves at the low end of the confidence scale—describing themselves as “not” or “slightly” confident. Only a small group (around 10 percent) feel mostly or very confident. These responses align with districts’ descriptions of running preschool on thin margins and relying on categorical or time-limited funds. At the same time, districts report that state and federal funds already cover a



substantial share of preschool budgets. Nearly two-thirds say state and federal sources cover three-quarters or more of their preschool costs, and another group reports that these funds cover at least half. Almost one in five districts, however, report that state and federal dollars make up less than a quarter of their preschool budgets, suggesting significant variation in how heavily local funds are being leveraged—or stretched—to maintain services.



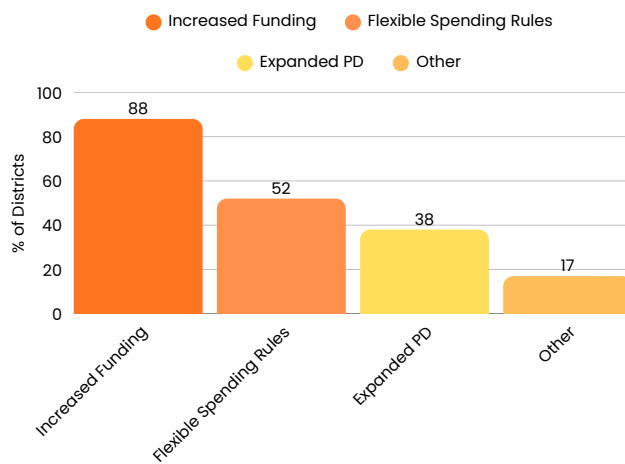
#### Confidence to sustain programming

Rising early childhood costs add another layer of pressure. About half of districts report that increased costs (for staffing, facilities, and operations) have had an impact on preschool enrollment, while roughly a quarter say costs have had no impact and another quarter are unsure. This mixed picture suggests that cost pressures are very real, but not always visible at the district level, particularly where preschool is not primarily funded through parent tuition. Despite these constraints, districts express considerable readiness to scale up preschool if

adequate, stable funding were available. Nearly 80 percent describe themselves as at least moderately prepared to expand services, and close to 60 percent say they are mostly or fully prepared. Many districts have already invested in program design, staffing structures, and partnerships; what they lack are the sustained dollars and facilities needed to grow.

#### Policy Levers and Practice Priorities for Sustained Expansion

When asked which policy changes would most help them sustain and grow preschool programs, districts point first to increased state or federal funding (about 88 percent). Just over half call for more flexible spending rules, and more than one-third emphasize the need for expanded funding for professional development. These responses suggest that districts are not only seeking more dollars but also greater flexibility in how funds can be used to meet local needs—from staffing and transportation to facilities and training.



#### Needs for expansion



Finally, just over half of districts believe that state or federal policies have played a positive role in their preschool program's success, while a third are unsure and a smaller share do not perceive a positive impact.

This ambivalence suggests that, although recent investments like Preschool Promise have shifted the landscape, there is still work to do to ensure that policy frameworks, funding streams, and accountability systems consistently support district-run preschool as a core part of Oregon's early learning system.

Nearly 80 percent highlight the need to strengthen funding mechanisms and resources, about 40 percent point to K–12 alignment, and more than one-third emphasize improved teacher training models.

These practice areas mirror the conditions districts associated with current program success: strong district leadership, stable funding, robust community partnerships, effective curriculum, and family engagement all show up as key contributors to successful preschool programs.

# Key Takeaways

Compared to the 2015 baseline Oregon District Preschool Survey, access to district run preschool programs and the supports that accompany them remains uneven across the state. Persistent constraints, particularly limited funding and inadequate space, continue to be the dominant barriers to both program expansion and long-term sustainability. Across the state, access to preschool depends heavily on whether districts have the dollars and facilities to offer it, rather than on family demand. Districts describe struggling to secure stable operating funds and appropriate classroom space, especially in older buildings and rapidly growing communities. These constraints limit both the ability to open new classrooms and the capacity to sustain existing ones, even where there are long waitlists and strong local support.

***Workforce pathways have become more flexible, but quality and alignment supports are uneven, and consistent access to high quality professional development remains inconsistent.***

However, districts report that loosened credential requirements and creative “grow-your-own” approaches have made it easier to staff preschool classrooms. At the same time, supports that sustain high quality teaching, such as ongoing coaching, time for collaboration, and clear expectations for alignment with K–3, vary widely. Many districts reported they lack consistent, early-learning-specific

professional development, which makes it harder to meet children’s diverse needs and to maintain quality as programs expand.

Districts are actively trying to expand access through partnerships, new classrooms, and outreach—and they credit leadership, families, and community partners for their successes. Even under tight constraints, districts are opening new preschool classrooms, co-locating programs on elementary campuses, and partnering with Head Start, community-based organizations, and other local providers. They consistently point to strong district leadership, engaged families, and committed community partners as key to getting programs off the ground and keeping them going. These local assets are a critical foundation for any future expansion.

State programs and policies matter, and many districts feel ready to scale if funding is available. Districts emphasize that state preschool investments and policy decisions directly shape whether they can launch, expand, or sustain programs. Where state resources and clear guidance are present, districts are more likely to offer preschool and to do so at a meaningful scale. Many respondents indicate they would be ready to grow quickly if they could rely on stable, long-term state funding streams.

# Policy and Practice Recommendations

## Differentiated Strategies

**Oregon needs to address the unique strengths and needs of long-standing and emerging district run preschool programs rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach.**

Established districts may need support to deepen quality, strengthen alignment, and expand inclusive services, while newer or smaller districts may first need planning grants, technical assistance, and start-up funds. State strategies should recognize this spectrum and offer a tiered menu of supports that meet districts where they are.

Recent national analyses in the NIEER State of Preschool report 2024 highlight Alabama, Michigan, New Mexico, and Oklahoma as four “all around leaders” in preschool access and quality (NIEER, 2025). Each has used differentiated strategies rather than a single program model.

Alabama’s First Class Pre-K (FCPK) has grown gradually over nearly two decades, maintaining all 10 of NIEER’s quality benchmarks while providing start-up funds for new classrooms and quality-improvement grants for existing ones, which allows supports to vary by program

stage (Friedman-Krauss et al.; Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education). New Mexico’s preschool program used a similar gradual approach and then accelerated expansion when ready, rapidly increasing enrollment of 3- and 4-year-olds while shifting more classrooms to school day and extended year slots. This acceleration was made possible by unique and sustainable funding streams, including substantial appropriations from their unique Land Grant Permanent Fund, allocations from the Early Childhood Trust Fund, and other state-directed investments, which provided a strong financial foundation for growth.

Other states offer additional models for differentiated support. Mississippi’s Early Learning Collaboratives receive grants that cover classroom operations, coaching, and shared services, with local collaboratives deciding how to phase in quality improvements and expansion in their communities (Mississippi Department of Education; “Early Learning Collaborative Act”).

West Virginia’s Universal Pre-K, which meets high quality benchmarks and operates statewide, requires collaboration with community partners



and allows counties to tailor local service delivery plans through county collaborative teams (Garver et al.; West Virginia Department of Education).

**For Oregon, these examples suggest a tiered approach that could include:**

#### **Planning grants and technical assistance**

for districts that do not yet operate preschool or are in early stages of development.

#### **Start-up and quality-improvement grants**

for districts that are ready to open new classrooms, convert part-day to school-day, or strengthen inclusion and dual language supports.

#### **Targeted incentives**

for districts serving large shares of children from historically underserved communities or rural areas

## **Professional Learning and Coaching**

District teachers need professional development that is specific to early learning—covering inclusion, behavior supports, developmentally appropriate practices and early literacy—rather than generic K–12 training. While Oregon has invested in building a comprehensive professional learning system, districts report inconsistent access to these resources, especially when they do not use state funds for preschool. This reflects a structural challenge: districts have not historically been part of the early learning system and often lack the infrastructure to integrate early childhood practices within the K–12 framework. Additional supports

such as job-embedded coaching, opportunities to observe high-quality classrooms, and training aligned with state standards and responsive to local demographics and languages are essential. State and regional partners can help coordinate and fund these efforts to ensure accessibility and sustainability.

Several states embed early childhood-specific professional learning directly into pre-K policy. Alabama's First Class Pre-K, which meets all 10 NIEER quality benchmarks, pairs high structural standards with systematic coaching and monitoring. State guidelines require dedicated planning time, regular visits from coaches, and alignment with early learning standards (Friedman-Krauss et al.; Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education). Michigan's Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) funds curriculum training, coaching, and parent outreach as part of the per-child rate, enabling districts to invest in early childhood PD without diverting resources from staffing (Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential). Other states, such as Mississippi and West Virginia, have written PD requirements into statute or regulation, ensuring consistent implementation and joint training for school and community-based staff. Oregon has taken important steps to address quality through statewide competencies, practice-based coaching models, and initiatives like the Pyramid Model and inclusion-focused coaching.

These efforts demonstrate a strong commitment to building a professional learning system for early educators. However, gaps remain in effectively reaching district-run preschool programs, particularly those outside state funding streams.

**For Oregon, this could include:**

#### **Cross-System Coaching Networks**

Establish state-supported, regional coaching networks jointly led across early learning and K-12. Provide job-embedded coaching, co-planning, modeling of inclusive practices, and data-informed reflection to support P-3 alignment—available to all districts, including those without state-funded preschool supports.

#### **Curriculum- and Assessment-Aligned Professional Development Funding**

Make curriculum- and assessment-aligned professional development a dedicated line item within district preschool allocations. Prioritize early literacy, inclusion, and culturally responsive practice training so districts can strengthen instruction without diverting staffing dollars.

#### **Cross-Site Learning for District Leaders and Teachers**

Fund structured learning visits for preschool teachers and administrators to observe high-quality, inclusive classrooms in other Oregon districts (and select high-performing states where feasible). Pair visits with guided reflection and follow-up coaching to support implementation within district K-12 systems.

#### **Strengthen P-3 Alignment Supports**

Expand ongoing, district-based professional learning that brings preschool and early elementary educators together. Support joint planning, shared training (early literacy and SEL), and collaborative data reviews to strengthen transitions and consistency for children and families across P-3.

### **Leadership Capacity**

**Investing in early-learning-focused supervision and PreK-5 alignment roles at the district and school levels is critical.**

This can include dedicated early learning directors, principals trained in early childhood best practices, and structures for regular collaboration between preschool and K-5 staff. Strengthening leadership capacity helps ensure that preschool is integrated into broader instructional, equity, and family engagement strategies rather than operating as a stand-alone program.

In Alabama, sustained success stems from bipartisan political commitment and strong partnerships. The First Class Pre-K program benefits from proactive leadership by the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education and bolstered by a state business coalition known as the Alabama School

Readiness Alliance that champions funding, quality standards, and ongoing program evaluation. Governor Kay Ivey, alongside ADECE Secretary Ami Brooks, has overseen expansion efforts including adding 58 new classrooms for the 2025–26 school year, maintaining quality benchmarks, enhancing teacher qualifications, and advancing P–3 alignment through expanded early grade classrooms.

**Local preschool implementation leadership also matters.** Oklahoma provides a clear example of preschool integrated into the public education system. The state offers universal preschool for 4-year-olds in all school districts, meeting nine of ten NIEER quality benchmarks and requiring that pre-K teachers meet public school teacher standards and pay scales (Friedman-Krauss et al.). District leaders supervise pre-K within existing instructional structures, allowing a coherent PreK–12 approach. New Jersey’s Abbott Preschool Program and subsequent expansion similarly rely on district leaders to manage mixed-delivery systems, coordinate contracts with community providers, and uphold common quality standards (Garver et al.; New Jersey Department of Education).

**For Oregon, leadership strategies could include:**

#### **Dedicated Early Learning Leadership**

In districts with significant preschool operations, prioritize roles such as Early Learning Directors or PreK–3 Coordinators to ensure strong alignment and oversight.

#### **Capacity Building for Existing Leaders**

Provide principals and central office staff with training on early childhood development and instruction, linked to Oregon’s quality standards, recognizing that many districts are small and may not have specialized early learning expertise.

#### **Structures for PreK–3 Collaboration**

Establish formal mechanisms for collaboration, including joint professional learning communities, shared data reviews, and coordinated family engagement plans, adapted for rural and small-district contexts where staffing and time are limited.

## **Stabilized Funding**

**To ensure that preschool access does not depend on local wealth or family tuition, Oregon should prioritize stable, statewide operating funds for preschool.**

Reducing reliance on short-term grants, local fundraising, and tuition can help districts plan for multi-year staffing, invest in quality, and avoid abrupt service cuts. Multi-year funding commitments and simplified, predictable funding streams make it far easier for districts to launch and sustain programs.

The state currently enrolls about 66 percent of four-year-olds in the Oklahoma Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program and meets nine of ten NIEER quality benchmarks (Friedman-Krauss et al.). Allocating preschool through an existing formula has allowed districts to treat pre-K classrooms similarly to elementary classrooms in terms of staffing, scheduling, and budgeting.

New Mexico has taken a different approach by securing a dedicated revenue stream. In 2022, voters approved a constitutional amendment that increased distributions from the Land Grant Permanent Fund by 1.25 percent, with 60 percent of the new funds earmarked for early childhood education. This dedicated funding has underwritten rapid expansion in NM PreK enrollment, longer school-day and extended-year options, and salary parity for lead and assistant teachers in public school settings.

Michigan offers a third example. The state has steadily increased per-child funding for its Great Start Readiness Program while moving more children into full-school-day slots and raising the income eligibility threshold for priority enrollment to 400 percent of the federal poverty level in order to move toward a universal model. Funding can cover transportation, curricula, curriculum training, and family outreach, which helps districts budget for comprehensive services rather than only classroom staff.

## These approaches suggest several options for Oregon:

### Align with Existing Funding Structures

Explore ways to use or adapt the State School Fund formula to support preschool operations, particularly for 4-year-olds, building on Oregon's Student Success Act and its dedicated early learning investments.

### Strengthen Long-Term Revenue Streams

Rather than creating entirely new mechanisms, consider expanding or securing dedicated early childhood allocations within existing revenue measures to ensure predictable growth over time.

### Continue to Provide and Expand Multi-Year Commitments

Offer grantees multi-year operating agreements with clear expectations for quality and access. This stability supports workforce retention and long-term planning, which are critical for rural and small districts.

**Shared Lesson: Preschool expansion succeeds when funding is treated as an ongoing, core commitment—not a short-term grant program. Oregon's current policy framework provides a strong foundation to build on.**



## Strategic Investments

### **Strategic and targeted investments are needed in capital for facilities, workforce pipelines, and equity-focused outreach.**

Capital funding can help districts renovate or build spaces that are developmentally appropriate for young children. Workforce investments might include scholarships, paid practicums, and grow-your-own pathways for assistants and community members. Using waitlist and demographic data to guide investments can help ensure that new slots and supports are prioritized in communities with the greatest unmet need.

Oregon has made significant progress through one-time, targeted investments in early learning infrastructure, most notably via the Child Care Infrastructure Fund (CCIF), established by HB 3005 in 2023 and funded with \$50 million in lottery bonds. Through the first two rounds of CCIF grants, \$30 million was awarded to expand and improve preschool and childcare facilities statewide. However, to reach more communities, especially rural and smaller districts, Oregon must build on this momentum with further strategic investments in facilities, workforce development, and equity-focused outreach.

Alabama's First Class Pre-K provides a clear illustration of how targeted capital and quality grants can support growth. The program uses start-up funds for new classrooms as well as grants to help existing classrooms improve quality, which has allowed enrollment to increase over time without reductions in funding per child or quality standards (Friedman-Krauss et al.; Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education).

New Mexico has coupled its new, dedicated funding with investments in expanded hours, extended-year offerings, and higher teacher compensation, which required both facilities and workforce investments. Other states have structured strategic investments through collaborative grants.

Mississippi's Early Learning Collaboratives pool funds among school districts, Head Start programs, child care centers, and nonprofit partners, with state funds supporting classroom operations, curriculum, and coaching in communities that commit to shared quality standards (Mississippi Department of Education; Friedman-Krauss et al.) West Virginia's Universal Pre-K similarly uses braided funding and collaborative county teams to support capital, staffing, and transportation needs across school and community sites.

**For Oregon, strategic investments could include:**

#### **Facilities Grants for Preschool Expansion**

Build on Oregon's Child Care Infrastructure Fund (CCIF), which has provided one-time capital grants for child care and preschool facilities, by creating dedicated funding for districts to renovate or repurpose elementary school spaces for preschool—especially in communities with high unmet demand.

#### **Workforce Pipelines for Preschool Teachers**

Expand investments beyond CCIF's small business supports to include scholarships, wage supplements, and "grow-your-own" assistant-to-teacher pathways. These could align with proven models like T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood in other states to strengthen Oregon's early learning workforce.

#### **Data-Driven Targeting of Grants**

Use enrollment, waitlist, and demographic data to prioritize capital and workforce grants for districts with the greatest unmet need, ensuring equity-focused expansion that reaches rural and underserved communities.

**Shared Lesson: States that combine stable operating funds with strategic one-time investments—such as Oregon's CCIF—are better positioned to overcome structural barriers like space, compensation, and staffing.**

## **Honor District Strengths**

**Finally, state policy should honor and build on what districts are already doing well. This includes leveraging existing partnerships with community providers, strong family engagement practices, and locally designed models that fit community context.**

At the same time, the state can provide consistent expectations, tools, and technical assistance so districts are not left to navigate funding, quality standards, and data requirements on their own.

Several leading states demonstrate how to build statewide systems that still respect local strengths. New Jersey's Abbott Preschool Program and newer Preschool Expansion Program operate through a mixed-delivery model, with districts contracting with Head Start and private child care providers to deliver state-funded preschool that meets common quality standards, while maintaining strong district oversight and shared PD (Garver et al.; Education Law Center; New Jersey Department of Education). West Virginia's Universal Pre-K requires that at least half of classrooms be collaborative and, in practice, about 80 percent are offered in partnership with community providers, which allows local communities to build on existing Head Start and child care

capacity while aligning to a statewide quality framework (Garver et al.; Zero to Three). Mississippi's collaboratives similarly formalize local partnerships in statute and regulation, elevating the role of community-based providers in meeting state pre-K goals (Mississippi Department of Education; "Early Learning Collaborative Act").

Oklahoma offers another lens that is particularly relevant for Oregon. The state recognized that declining K–12 enrollment could undermine school viability and deliberately used universal preschool to repurpose capacity in elementary schools while expanding services for families. Evaluations of Tulsa's universal pre-K program show large positive impacts on school readiness and later outcomes, including a 12-percentage point increase in college enrollment and a benefit-cost ratio of roughly 2.5 to 1 (Bartik et al.; NASBE; Hechinger Report). For Oregon, aligning preschool expansion with K–12 planning can both support families and stabilize school systems.

**For Oregon, honoring district strengths could involve:**

**Formalizing and funding partnerships between districts and community-based providers**

Including Head Start, Tribal programs, and culturally specific organizations, modeled on New Jersey, West Virginia, and Mississippi.

**Amplifying strong local practices**

Such as bilingual outreach or inclusive classroom models, through state-supported communities of practice and shared tools.

**Offer state standards, user-friendly data tools, and technical assistance**

Designed to support and align local models not replace them. These resources should include monitoring systems that help districts track quality indicators, enrollment trends, and equity goals, while allowing flexibility for local innovation. A well-aligned monitoring framework ensures accountability and continuous improvement without imposing a one-size-fits-all approach.

**Incorporate preschool access and quality indicators into statewide data collection**

Explore embedding these measures into district and school report cards to drive transparency and continuous improvement.





# Looking Ahead:

## Building a Stronger Future for Oregon's Young Learners

Oregon has made meaningful progress in expanding preschool access and improving quality, but there is more work ahead. The findings and recommendations in this report underscore both the urgency and the opportunity to create a system where **every child, regardless of zip code or family income, can access high-quality early learning.**

By investing in **stable funding, strategic partnerships, and equity-driven practices**, Oregon can move beyond incremental change toward a comprehensive, sustainable preschool system.

With continued collaboration among state leaders, districts, communities, and across sectors, we can ensure that preschool becomes a foundational part of public education; **opening doors for children, strengthening families, and building a brighter future for our state.**

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# Appendices

## Survey Instrument

1	Please provide your contact information.	Open text: Name; Phone number; Email address; Position/Title; School name (if applicable); District
2	Does your district currently operate preschool for any students?	Single choice: Yes; No
3	How long has your district offered some kind of preschool program, either alone or in partnership with other agencies/groups?	Single choice: First year; 2–5 years; 6–9 years; 10+ years
4	If your district is planning to continue operating preschool services in the next year, what funding sources will be used?	Multiple choice (select all): District funds; Local levy funds; Title I funds; School Innovation Fund; School Improvement Grant funds; Early Childhood Special Education funds; Head Start funds (including Early Head Start and Migrant Head Start); Preschool Promise; Education Service District (ESD) funds; Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten; Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) subsidies; Parent tuition; Foundation/grant money; Discontinuing; Other (specify)

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5	How does your district help children and families in the transition to kindergarten in addition to a preschool program?	Multiple choice (select all): Kindergarten open house; Family home visit; Kinder Transition Programs; None; Other (specify)
6	How many school sites in your district currently offer a preschool program?	Single choice: 0; 1–2; 3–5; 6–9; 10+
7	How many preschool classrooms in total are currently operating in your district?	Single choice: 0; 1–3; 4–6; 7–9; 10+
8	How many children are currently enrolled in your district's preschool program?	Single choice: 0–10; 11–25; 26–50; 51–75; 76–100; 101–150; 151+
9	Over the past five years, has your district's preschool waitlist:	Single choice: Increased; Decreased; Stayed the same; No waitlist
10	What is the typical length of your preschool waitlist?	Single choice: 0; 1–10; 11–25; 26–50; 51–75; 76–100; 101+
11	Who supervises the preschool teaching staff in your district?	Single choice: Principal; Assistant Principal; Early Learning Director; Other (specify)

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12	Where are preschool classrooms located?	Multiple choice (select all or one depending on survey setup): Elementary school; Middle or high school; Separate building; Other (specify)
13	Does your district have sufficient developmentally appropriate facilities for preschool?	Single choice: Sufficient classroom facilities; Sufficient classroom and outdoor facilities; Insufficient facilities; Varies between different preschool sites
14	If your district has partnered with any community-based organizations to offer preschool, please list them below. Otherwise, please type N/A in the response box.	Open text
15	How has preschool administration changed due to funding shifts post-COVID-19?	Single or multiple choice (depending on setup): Increased administrative oversight; No major changes; More partnerships with community providers; Reduced administrative support; Other
16	How many hours a day does your preschool program run?	Single choice: Quarter day or less; Half day; Full day; Other (specify)

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17	How many days per week is your preschool program offered?	Single choice: 1; 2; 3; 4; 5
18	What percentage of enrolled preschoolers attend 90% or more of the school year?	Single choice: 0–25%; 26–50%; 51–75%; 76–100%; Attendance not tracked
19	What are the main reasons families withdraw children from preschool?	Multiple choice (select all): Transportation issues; Cost concerns; Relocation; Child's needs not met; Scheduling conflicts; Health concerns; Behavior challenges; Hours offered; Suspension of child; Other (specify)
20	Since 2020 (or later if you did not offer preschool in 2020), how has preschool attendance in your district changed?	Single choice: Increased; Decreased; Stayed the same
21	What is the primary funding source for your district's preschool program?	Single choice: District funds; Federal funds; State funds; Local levy funds; Parent tuition; Foundation/grant money; Other (specify)

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22	How does your district prioritize enrollment when there is limited preschool capacity?	Multiple choice (select all): Low-income families; Children with disabilities; English/Dual Language Learners; Children experiencing homelessness; Foster youth; Children from within district boundaries; Children of district employees; First come, first served; Lottery; Other (specify)
23	What percentage of your preschool enrollees are from historically underserved groups (for example: Low-income families; English/Dual Language learners; Students experiencing homelessness; Foster youth)?	Single choice: 0–25%; 26–50%; 51–75%; 76–100%
24	What best describes your district’s preschool program model?	Single choice: District-operated classrooms only; Community-based partnerships only; Hybrid of district-operated and community-based; Other (specify)
25	What curriculum or instructional approach does your preschool program primarily use?	Multiple or single choice (depending on setup): District-developed curriculum; Commercially developed curriculum; Play-based / emergent curriculum; Montessori; Reggio Emilia-inspired; HighScope; Creative Curriculum; Other (specify)



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26	Does your district use a universal preschool screening or assessment tool?	Single choice: Yes; No
27	If yes, which preschool screening or assessment tools does your district use?	Multiple choice (select all): Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ); Teaching Strategies GOLD; Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP); Brigance; PALS; Other (specify)
28	Does your preschool program follow any specific quality framework or standards?	Multiple choice (select all): QRIS/Spark; Head Start Performance Standards; NIEER quality benchmarks; District-developed standards; State Early Learning standards; Other (specify)
29	How does your district support kindergarten readiness through preschool?	Multiple choice (select all): Alignment of curriculum with kindergarten standards; Joint professional development between preschool and kindergarten teachers; Shared assessment practices; Transition meetings with families; Data sharing between preschool and kindergarten; Other (specify)
30	How often does your district provide professional development specific to early childhood educators?	Single choice: Monthly; Quarterly; Annually; Less than once a year; Never

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31	What types of professional development topics are most often offered to preschool educators?	Multiple choice (select all): Child development; Trauma-informed practices; Culturally responsive teaching; Special education / inclusion; English/Dual Language Learner support; Family engagement; Behavior management; Curriculum and instruction; Assessment and data use; Other (specify)
32	Do preschool educators participate in joint professional learning communities (PLCs) with K–3 staff?	Single choice: Yes, regularly; Occasionally; No
33	How does your district support inclusive practices for preschool children with disabilities?	Multiple choice (select all): Co-taught classrooms; Push-in support from specialists; Pull-out services; Separate special education classrooms; Collaboration with Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE); Other (specify)
34	Does your preschool program use a specific social-emotional curriculum or framework?	Single choice: Yes; No

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35	If yes, which social-emotional learning (SEL) curricula or frameworks are used?	Multiple choice (select all): Second Step; Conscious Discipline; PBIS; Zones of Regulation; Other (specify)
36	Are preschool teachers in your district required to hold an early childhood-specific license or endorsement?	Single choice: Yes; No
37	What percentage of your district's preschool students are English/Dual Language Learners?	Single choice: 0–25%; 26–50%; 51–75%; 76–100%
38	How does your district support preschool English/Dual Language Learners?	Multiple choice (select all): Bilingual classroom staff; Dual-language classrooms; Home language support; Translated materials; Family liaisons or cultural brokers; Professional development on language development; Other (specify)
39	How aligned are your preschool and kindergarten curricula in terms of content and instructional practices?	Single choice: Highly aligned; Somewhat aligned; Minimally aligned; Not aligned

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40	How often do preschool and kindergarten educators collaborate on curriculum, instruction, or student supports?	Single choice: Weekly; Monthly; A few times a year; Rarely; Never
41	What is the minimum qualification required for lead preschool teachers in your district?	Single choice: High school diploma or GED; Child Development Associate (CDA); Associate's degree in ECE or related field; Bachelor's degree in ECE or related field; Oregon teaching license with early childhood endorsement; Other (specify)
42	What is the minimum qualification required for assistant preschool teachers or aides?	Single choice: High school diploma or GED; Child Development Associate (CDA); Associate's degree in ECE or related field; Bachelor's degree in ECE or related field; Other (specify)
43	Does your district offer differentiated pay or stipends for preschool teachers compared to K–3 teachers?	Single choice: Yes, higher pay for preschool; Yes, lower pay for preschool; No, pay is the same; Not sure
44	What percentage of educators participate in well-being initiatives if they have been introduced?	Single choice: 0–25%; 26–50%; 51–75%; 76–100%

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45	Does your district provide additional supports or incentives to recruit and retain preschool educators?	Multiple choice (select all): Hiring/retention bonuses; Tuition assistance or loan forgiveness; Paid planning time; Reduced class sizes; Mentoring or coaching; Career advancement pathways; None; Other (specify)
46	How many years of experience do most of your preschool teachers have in early childhood education?	Single choice: 0–2 years; 3–5 years; 6–10 years; 11–20 years; 21+ years
47	Does your district have difficulty recruiting qualified preschool teachers?	Single choice: Yes, significant difficulty; Some difficulty; Little or no difficulty
48	Does your district have difficulty retaining preschool teachers?	Single choice: Yes, significant difficulty; Some difficulty; Little or no difficulty
49	What are the primary reasons for difficulty recruiting or retaining preschool teachers?	Multiple choice (select all): Low pay compared to K–12; Limited benefits; Lack of career advancement opportunities; Challenging working conditions; Limited access to professional development; High cost of living in community; Competition with community-based providers; Other (specify)



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50	Do preschool teachers in your district receive the same benefits as K–12 teachers (for example: health insurance, retirement, paid leave)?	Single choice: Yes; Partially; No
51	Are preschool assistants or aides in your district full-time employees with benefits?	Single choice: Yes; Some; No
52	Do preschool educators in your district have dedicated planning time within their paid workday?	Single choice: Yes; Sometimes; No
53	Are substitute teachers readily available to cover preschool classrooms when staff are absent?	Single choice: Yes; Sometimes; No
54	Do preschool teachers participate in district-wide professional learning days alongside K–12 teachers?	Single choice: Yes; Sometimes; No
55	Does your district have a designated early learning (or preschool) administrator or coordinator?	Single choice: Yes; No

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56	How does your district share information about preschool opportunities with families?	Multiple choice (select all): District website; Social media; Flyers or posters; Direct mail; Email or text messages; Elementary school communication channels; Community partners; Word of mouth; Other (specify)
57	Which languages are used in your preschool outreach and communication materials?	Multiple choice (select all): English; Spanish; Russian; Vietnamese; Chinese; Somali; Arabic; Other (specify)
58	Does your district have a dedicated staff person responsible for preschool outreach and enrollment?	Single choice: Yes, district-level; Yes, school-level; No
59	Does your district partner with community organizations to reach families about preschool opportunities?	Single choice: Yes; No
60	What outreach strategies has been most/least effective in increasing preschool enrollment?	Open text (may have been collected via a matrix but open-ended in content)

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61	How early in the year does your district begin outreach to families about preschool enrollment?	Single choice: Fall (September–November); Winter (December–February); Spring (March–May); Summer (June–August)
62	Does your district track which families inquire about preschool but do not ultimately enroll?	Single choice: Yes; No
63	If your district provides translated preschool materials in languages other than English, please list them below. Otherwise, please type N/A in the response box.	Open text
64	In your opinion, which communication platform for preschool outreach is most/least effective?	Open text (perception-based)
65	What percentage of eligible preschool-aged children in your district are enrolled in preschool (including your district's own preschool and other community-based preschool services)?	Single choice: 0–25%; 26–50%; 51–75%; 76–100%; Not sure

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66	What are the main barriers to preschool enrollment for families in your district?	Multiple choice (select all): Cost; Transportation; Limited program hours; Lack of available slots; Lack of information or awareness; Work schedules or child care needs; Language or cultural barriers; Eligibility requirements; Other (specify)
67	Which funding sources does your district rely on most to support preschool services?	Multiple choice (select all): District general fund; Local option levy; State grants; Federal grants; Preschool Promise; Head Start; Parent tuition; Foundation or philanthropic grants; Other (specify)
68	Does your district have capital needs that limit preschool expansion (for example: classroom space, facilities, playgrounds)?	Single choice: Yes; No
69	If yes, what types of capital investments would be most helpful to support preschool expansion?	Multiple choice (select all): New classroom construction; Renovation of existing space; Modular or portable classrooms; Playground or outdoor learning spaces; Furniture and classroom materials; Other (specify)

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70	How confident is your district in its ability to sustain current preschool services over the next 3–5 years?	Single choice: Very confident; Somewhat confident; Not very confident; Not at all confident
71	If your district received additional, stable funding for preschool, how quickly could you expand services?	Single choice: Within one year; Within 2–3 years; Within 4–5 years; Not able to expand even with additional funding
72	Outside of increased funding, what supports would most help your district expand preschool services?	Multiple choice (select all): Capital funding for space and facilities; Workforce recruitment and training supports; Technical assistance on program design and quality; More flexible funding rules; Stronger partnerships with community providers; State-level policy changes prioritizing preschool; Other (specify)
73	Does your district braid or blend multiple funding sources to support preschool?	Single choice: Yes; No
74	What percentage of your preschool budget is covered by state or federal funding?	Single choice: 0–25%; 26–50%; 51–75%; 76–100%; Not sure



# Appendices

75	Has your district had to limit preschool enrollment or reduce services due to funding constraints in the past five years?	Single choice: Yes; No
76	If yes, what changes did your district make?	Multiple choice (select all): Reduced number of classrooms; Reduced program hours or days; Increased class size; Raised parent tuition or fees; Reduced or eliminated transportation; Prioritized certain student groups for enrollment; Other (specify)
77	What factors have contributed most to the success of your preschool programs?	Multiple choice (select all): District leadership; Strong teacher recruitment; Effective curriculum; Community partnerships; Stable funding; Family engagement; Other (specify)
78	What are the biggest challenges your district faces in operating preschool programs?	Multiple choice (select all): Insufficient funding; Limited facilities or space; Workforce shortages; Transportation barriers; Administrative capacity; Alignment with K–12 system; Meeting diverse student needs; Other (specify)

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79	What are some practice areas that could be improved to facilitate preschool expansion in your district?	Multiple choice (select all): Increased funding and resources; Stronger K–12 alignment; Enhanced teacher training models; Expanded partnerships with community providers; Improved data and evaluation systems; Streamlined enrollment processes; Other (specify)
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