



NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

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Early Learning Bill Advances *HB 4165 Will Have Oregon Kids Ready for School*

SALEM- The Oregon House of Representatives took a big step forward to improve early childhood services and prepare children for kindergarten today with the passage of HB 4165, which puts in motion the Early Learning Council process for better coordinating state services for children ages 0-6.

The legislation, one of the highest profile bills of the session, eliminates the State Commission on Children and Families and replaces it with the leaner Early Learning Council. The ELC aims to reorganize the policies, administration, and planning for the various commissions and agencies governing early childhood programs. By streamlining the efforts and placing them under a central council, House Democrats will improve accountability and coordination to guarantee our children are prepared to enter school ready to learn.

Rep. Carolyn Tomei (D-Milwaukie), Co-Chair of the House Human Services Committee applauded the bill's passage. "Learning is a continuum that starts at the moment of birth. By promoting creative approaches and requiring accountability from early education and development programs, we support our local communities' efforts in working with young children, and help provide resources and assessment tools to build on success."

HB 4165 outlines a robust process for the ELC to engage stakeholders and local communities to develop models for how services can be provided to meet unique local demands and ensure children are given the tools for success when they reach school.

"These early years play a huge role in a child's future educational achievement," said Rep. Betty Komp (D-Woodburn), a long time educator and former school principal. "This bill will help all Oregon children arrive at school ready to learn and have a fair shot in the world."

ELC members will build off the success of many of Oregon's existing programs and identify a comprehensive children's budget that maximizes our current resources and to meet our goals.

“We’ve done a lot of work this session to streamline government and do more with less,” said Rep. Val Hoyle (D-West Eugene). “This bill continues that drive for excellence. This sends a message that we’re committed to Oregon’s kids and we are serious about giving them the tools to succeed.”

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