



Senate Majority Office

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Senate Democrats Invest in Early Childhood Literacy

SALEM, Ore. - Yesterday, the Oregon Senate passed [House Bill 3198](#), the Early Literacy Success Initiative, which invests in research-aligned literacy instruction in Oregon classrooms and develops and expands student and family-centered early literacy supports. Funding will go toward literacy coaching and professional development for educators, tutoring, developing curriculum, and summer learning programming.

“When kids learn how to read, they are set up to succeed,” said **Senator Janeen Sollman (D - Hillsboro)**, a chief sponsor of HB 3198. “Oregon is investing in the science of reading and ensuring that all our children have the early tools they need to build a successful future.”

More than [half of Oregonian 3rd graders](#) are not proficient at reading, with greater disparities in BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People Of Color) and rural communities. Research shows that [75% of students who are not proficient](#) by 3rd grade will never fully catch up, with later interventions being more costly and less effective.

“Reading is foundational to all learning. It’s crucial that kids get a strong foundation. This investment will make that a certainty for Oregon’s kids. Not only will it help kids with their skills, but it will build their confidence and a hugely beneficial life-long love of reading,” said **Senator Michael Dembrow (D - Portland)**, chair of the Senate Education Committee who carried HB 3198 on the floor of the senate.

Investing in early literacy has been shown to have long-term [positive impacts](#) on state graduation rates, preventing dropouts and helping students succeed. In total, the Early Literacy Success Initiative invests \$144.3 million across three new grant programs: the Early Literacy Success School Grant, the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan, and the Early Literacy Success Community Grant. This funding is in addition to [record investments](#) made in the state’s education system this session.

Supporting students and educators is a key component of [Senate Democrats’ 2023 Oregon Works agenda](#).

HB 3198 is one of the hundreds of bills that Senate Democrats rescued by negotiating an end to the Senate Republican walkout. Thanks to Senate Democrats showing up, doing their jobs, and delivering results for the people of Oregon, HB 3198 now moves to the Governor's desk for consideration.

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