



Oregon Department of  
**Early Learning  
and Care**

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**DRAFT**  
**DELIC Strategic Plan**

Goals, Objectives and Strategies





# Engagement Process

- Engagement started in 2023 and has continued into 2024
- Partners throughout Oregon and DELC staff shared their needs, pain points, and desires through a series of engagement sessions
- Community engagement sessions offered during the day and in the evening
- To date, 14 meetings with families, providers and other partners
- Nearly 100 families have participated
- Nearly 419 partners such as providers, advocates, etc. have participated
- Within DELC, engagement process reached 220 staff

## Sample of Key Engagement Questions:

1. Thinking about the past year, what do you see as some of DELC's strengths or greatest contributions?
2. What are some of the most urgent needs for children and families that DELC can address?
3. What are some things DELC can do to support early learning and care providers?
4. What does DELC need to do in the next 2-3 years to get closer to achieving our mission and vision?

## Input Received From:

- Family members
- Child Care Resource & Referrals
- Early Childhood Equity Fund Grantees
- Early Learning Equity Engagement Committee
- Early Learning Hubs
- Early Learning Advocates
- Healthy Families Oregon
- Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten Grantees
- Providers (all types)
- DELC staff



# Strategic Plan Engagement Themes

**Increase access to coordinated, affordable early learning and care that meets provider, family, and community needs**

**Increase funding and supports for children with additional learning and emotional needs**

**Increase authentic engagement with communities through establishing feedback loops and strengthening connections**

**Support workforce initiatives and equitable career pathways that empower careers in the early learning sector**

**Streamline and improve DELC's processes, system, and data to decrease complexity and redundancy for staff and partners**

**Strengthen cross sector relationships with other agencies**

**Strengthen customer service through increasing consistency, reducing response times, expanding language supports, and increasing collaboration across teams**

**Expanding resources and program supports for infants and toddlers**

**Increase provider and partner support, technical assistance, professional development, and compensation**

**Promote quality, health, and safety of child care in an equitable and transparent manner**

**Increase transparency through clear policies, procedures, and rules that reflect DELC's Mission, Vision, and Values**

**Promote growth, belonging, and communication across DELC internal staff**



# Plan Development Summary

DELC engaged community, DELC staff, and reviewed existing plans and reports and developed the initial DELC Strategic Plan.



- 8 Goals
- 29 Objectives
- 122 Strategies



DELC analyzed staff capacity, funding, and timeline needed to support the DELC Strategic Plan and refined it to ensure the plan is both ambitious and achievable.



- **6 Goals**
- **24 Objectives**
- **75 Strategies**

*Plan development inputs include:*

- *DELC's Mission, Vision, Values*
- *Raise Up Oregon: A Statewide Early Childhood System Plan*
- *Tribal Consultation on Raise Up Oregon*
- *DELC Community Engagement*
- *DELC Staff Engagement*
- *DELC SWOT/Strengths and Opportunities Analysis*
- *DELC PESTLE: Early Learning Ecosystem Scan*
- *Governor's Expectations for State Agencies*

**Note:** *DELC's strategic plan aligns with the Draft DEI Action Plan, which will also be submitted on June 1.*



# DELC Strategic Plan: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

**Goal 1: Access** - All families have access to high-quality (culturally responsive, inclusive, developmentally appropriate) and affordable early learning and care that meets their needs.

**Objective 1.1** Programs within DELC are expanded and enhanced to meet the needs of and support families.

- 1.1.a Expand access and enhance core program services to better meet family needs.
- 1.1.b Implement strategies to promote awareness of and enrollment in programs that meet families' needs.
- 1.1.c Implement Birth Through Five Literacy plan, including consultation with community.

**Objective 1.2** Programs are expanded for families to secure access to high-quality early learning and care.

- 1.2.a Explore eligibility criteria, including expanded income, aligned eligibility criteria (e.g., income, family characteristics, age), and eligibility criteria for core programs.
- 1.2.b Explore which DELC programs could include sliding scale for families with higher incomes.
- 1.2.c Complete and implement Spark quality initiative redesign, including financing, technical assistance, and workforce resources to support implementation.
- 1.2.d Develop and implement a robust quality assurance model for core programs.

**Objective 1.3** Licensing provides foundational support for programs, and is clear, accessible, culturally relevant, honoring diversity, equity and inclusion for Oregon children and families.

- 1.3.a Revise Child Care Licensing Division practices to support consistent, equitable, and reasonable enforcement.
- 1.3.b Leverage microcenter pilot to identify and implement more flexible licensing models.
- 1.3.c Streamline licensing inspections by using risk assessments and key indicators to help predict majority compliance and reduce associated risks.
- 1.3.d Develop an intentional referral process with Child Care Resource and Referral to leverage licensing and external partners to monitor quality and promote health and safety compliance.



# DELC Strategic Plan: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

**Objective 1.4** DELC's administration of programs is flexible, accessible, and not administratively burdensome.

- 1.4.a Streamline, align and simplify administrative requirements across core programs.
- 1.4.b Explore blending funds at the state level to be delivered locally (i.e. single programs with multiple funding streams).
- 1.4.c Create integrated technology tools to promote coordination between licensing and program administration.

**Objective 1.5** Communities have the infrastructure they need to mitigate suspension and expulsion activities in early learning and care settings.

- 1.5.a Provide culturally responsive and culturally specific infant and early childhood mental health (IECMH) supports in early learning and care.
- 1.5.b Leverage community expertise and experience in infrastructure development.
- 1.5.c Launch and expand regional suspension and expulsion prevention program supports and statewide entity to provide consistent technical assistance and quality assurance.
- 1.5.d Ensure professional development supports in critical areas such as anti-bias, are available to support the community infrastructure.
- 1.5.e Fully implement the warmline for providers to access suspension and expulsion prevention supports.
- 1.5.f Implement the enforcement of the 2026 ban, with the Child Care Licensing Division providing technical assistance and referral to the prevention program.

**Objective 1.6** Availability of early learning and care is increased and strengthened.

- 1.6.a Develop and implement a plan to increase the availability of early learning and care settings throughout Oregon.
- 1.6.b Provide support to providers, during their first five years of operation, to promote their success, including as a business.
- 1.6.c Collaborate with Business Oregon's Child Care Infrastructure Fund for expanded facilities and provide technical assistance to participating programs.



# DELC Strategic Plan: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

**Goal 2: Tribal Sovereignty** - DELC honors and recognizes the sovereignty of the nine federally recognized Tribal Nations within Oregon and ensures strong government-to-government relationships to benefit Tribal communities.

- Objective 2.1** Staff have the information and tools they need to support authentic Tribal consultation.
- 2.1.a** Co-develop and implement DELC Tribal Consultation Policy to provide guidance, tools, and expectations for DELC staff.
  - 2.1.b** Build internal capacity to support relationships, partnerships, collaboration, and sovereign nation awareness through training and technical assistance for all units.
- Objective 2.2** Historical harm is acknowledged, current harm caused by the State of Oregon is reduced, and trust is built by establishing positive relationships.
- 2.2.a** Establish in-person and virtual communications and connections between DELC and Tribal leadership that fosters and elevates ways to honor and respect Tribal and Native community needs.
  - 2.2.b** Collect and use data from Tribal communities within the context of historical injustice and discrimination.
- Objective 2.3** Funding and programs are designed to meet tribal early learning needs and goals.
- 2.3.a** Develop procurement and contractual timelines and processes that recognize and respect government-to-government relationships and consultation.
  - 2.3.b** Co-develop guidance, direction, and capacity for DELC partners (such as Early Learning Hubs, CCR&Rs, etc.) to engage with Tribal Nations on implementation of grants and contracts.
  - 2.3.c** Seek the establishment of a dedicated Tribal Early Learning Fund and Tribal set asides within existing funding streams.



## DELC Strategic Plan: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

**Goal 3: Infants & Toddlers** - All families with infants and toddlers are supported through early learning and care programs that recognize and meet their unique needs.

**Objective 3.1** Infant and toddler provider and partner support, technical assistance, professional development, and compensation are increased.

3.1.a Coordinate local technical assistance and Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation supports for infants and toddlers.

3.1.b Ensure access to Infant Toddler Specialists, professional development opportunities, infrastructure funds, shared services, and business acumen supports.

3.1.c Explore the provision of a monetary award for infant toddler professionals who achieve a credential in infant and toddlers.

**Objective 3.2** Access to infant and toddler early learning and care programs that honor the unique needs of families is increased.

3.2.a Expand core infant and toddler programs.

3.2.b Explore continuous eligibility for infant, toddler, and preschool-age care to promote continuity of care.

3.2.c Expand access to culturally and linguistically responsive family education and support opportunities.

**Objective 3.3** Supports for infants and toddlers experiencing developmental delays and disabilities are increased.

3.3.a Coordinate and partner with Early Intervention to provide more services in early learning and care programs that support infants and toddlers with delays, and disabilities, including for DELC funded programs.

3.3.b Design and fund staffing models in early learning and care programs that support infants/toddlers with delays, complex needs and disabilities.





# DELC Strategic Plan: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

**Goal 4: Workforce** - The early learning and child care workforce is diverse, culturally responsive, high-quality, and well compensated.

**Objective 4.1** Multiple accessible pathways exist to enter and grow within the early learning and child care workforce.

- 4.1.a Examine and address barriers and inefficiencies within the professional learning system such as the early childhood workforce registry and international college transfer.
- 4.1.b Adopt and implement core competencies for early educators, based on national recommendations.
- 4.1.c Work with the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to implement access to higher education for early learning and care professionals.
- 4.1.d Work with Early Learning Hubs, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs), and other community based organizations to identify potential providers, provide training, share best practices, and support recruitment.
- 4.1.e Develop a recruitment and retention plan, and begin to implement it.

**Objective 4.2** The early learning and child care workforce is recognized and compensated as professionals

- 4.2.a Study, establish and improve salary scale in core programs.
- 4.2.b Implement Alternative Rate Methodology for Employment Related Day Care.
- 4.2.c Explore innovative models for addressing the compensation needs of the early learning and child care workforce.

**Objective 4.3** All early learning and child care programs have access to professional learning supports.

- 4.3.a Expand coaching supports to reach core programs, including child care.
- 4.3.b Expand the Consortium Model to include additional professional learning opportunities across Oregon.
- 4.3.c Expand the availability of bias management, inclusion, racial identity development, trauma-informed care, social emotional development trainings, in multiple languages and set levels.
- 4.3.d Expand regionally based Inclusive Partners services statewide.



# DELC Strategic Plan: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

**Goal 5: Relationships** - DELC deepens engagement and increases community empowerment.

**Objective 5.1** Community voice is embedded in DELC's policy, implementation and budget decisions.

- 5.1.a Develop and implement an engagement & partnership plan to strengthen meaningful collaboration with families, providers, and partners.
- 5.1.b Increase racial, ethnic, linguistic, ability, geographic, family, and provider diversity in DELC's staff and advisory groups to better represent the communities they serve.
- 5.1.c Expand feedback loops and increase opportunities for families, providers, and partners to inform DELC's policy, implementation, and budget decisions.

**Objective 5.2** Cross-sector partnerships in support of aligned service delivery and collaboration are strengthened with other state agencies.

- 5.2.a Learn about family and community engagement and culturally specific partnership approaches of Raise Up Oregon state systems partners and identify opportunities for collaboration.
  - 5.2.b Collaborate with Oregon Housing and Community Services to increase the number of co-located housing and child care facilities.
  - 5.2.c Collaborate with Oregon Department of Human Services on the functionality of Employment Related Day Care to improve accuracy and timeliness of eligibility determinations and payments and make the program more understandable and user-friendly for providers and families.
  - 5.2.d Collaborate with Department of Land Conservation and development on local zoning issues to address barriers and seek solutions to make it easier to build or renovate child care facilities.
- (Continued on next slide)



# DELC Strategic Plan: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

**Goal 5: Relationships** - DELC deepens engagement and increases community empowerment.

**Objective 5.2**  
(Continued)

Cross-sector partnerships in support of aligned service delivery and collaboration are strengthened with other state agencies.

5.2.e Revise, disseminate and provide professional development for the shared Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines with Oregon Department of Education, inclusive of infancy through kindergarten.

5.2.f Collaborate with ODE and DELC partners to facilitate Kindergarten transitions through support for children, families, and educators in early learning and care, Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE), and kindergarten.

**Objective 5.3**

Collaboration is supported between DELC and early learning initiatives in county, city, and tribal governments.

5.3.a Coordinate with local governments on early learning initiatives such as Multnomah Preschool for All

**Objective 5.4**

DELC's communications are accessible, inclusive, and tailored to the unique needs of DELC's customers.

5.4.a Develop tools and processes, and increase website, social media and other engagement for consistent, timely, and relevant information sharing with partners.

5.4.b Increase accessibility of communications by considering reading level and expanding availability in multiple languages.



# DELC Strategic Plan: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

**Goal 6: Foundations** - DELC develops and improves operational foundations to efficiently serve Oregonians.

**Objective 6.1** DELC has the structures, systems, and processes to collaborate and operate effectively.

6.1.a Define, publish and maintain formal policies, processes, procedures and service catalogs.

6.1.b Define and maintain governance processes for organizational cooperation and decision-making.

6.1.c Establish foundational technology, data tools, and staff capacity to deliver secure, reliable, accessible, and user-friendly solutions.

**Objective 6.2** DELC staff have a sense of belonging, understand how their work connects to other divisions, and are supported in their development.

6.2.a Implement DELC's DEI and Affirmative Action Plans, to cultivate belonging and provide training on inclusive practices and diversify DELC's workforce.

6.2.b Expand leadership development opportunities for DELC staff.

6.2.c Provide feedback loops for DELC staff.

**Objective 6.3** DELC staff have the information and tools they need to provide exceptional service to DELC customers.

6.3.a Develop and implement a customer satisfaction survey, leveraging results to improve customer service practices.

6.3.b Establish and implement training and infrastructure to serve customers in an inclusive, cohesive, timely and accurate way, no matter how they contact DELC.



# DELC Strategic Plan: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

**Goal 6: Foundations** - DELC develops and improves operational foundations to efficiently serve Oregonians.

**Objective 6.4**

Initiatives are consistently identified and launched that provide better service to Oregon residents and increase accountability to partners.

6.4.a Uphold commitments through consistent and transparent policies and on-time payments for grants and contracts.

6.4.b Increase accountability to the public through data visualization, accessible through DELC’s website, rules, procedures, and technical assistance that align with DELC’s Mission, Vision, & Values.

**Objective 6.5**

Data is used to inform decisions and high-quality data and research is shared with the public.

6.5.a Collect and expand access to data for decision-making, and maintain dashboards on publicly available data.

6.5.b Implement a community-responsive, person-centered research agenda including a continuation plan for the Household Survey & Provider Survey.

6.5.c Build, maintain, and monitor a strategic set of performance metrics to enhance operational excellence.



# Feedback

- What is exciting to you about the draft plan?
- What is most important for you about the plan?
- What additional considerations would you like to share with us?

Please [use this form to leave feedback.](#)

Questions? Please reach out to [Gaby](#) or [Karina](#).