

# Appendix A

## Previous Research on Core Priorities

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2025 - 2029



### Introduction

The 2025-2029 Research and Policy Agenda exists to set a vision for the research and policy priorities we know matter deeply in early childhood, but it didn't emerge out of nowhere. The Research and Policy Agenda builds off of decades of previous research and evaluation on the early childhood education system. While it would be impossible to summarize decades of important research on early childhood education, best practices in early childhood policy, and evaluations of early childhood programs, the authors of the agenda have gathered research and evaluation reports from the past 4 years that were funded by or supported by DELC.

Many of the reports listed below connect to multiple of the 5 core priorities listed in the agenda; however, the authors have chosen to summarize each report in the context of goal they are most connected to. Interconnected priorities only help us further move towards achieving our research and evaluation goals as an agency.

Please use this appendix to direct you towards previous research that exists and supports our research agenda. One doesn't need to be a formally trained researcher or data analyst to have a curious mind or have research be applicable to their work. We encourage you to peruse and explore this research with curiosity, hoping it will lead you to ask even more questions and consider creative alternatives to continuously improve our early childhood education system

### The Research, Analysis, and Data Office, 2025

## Priority 1 – Understanding and Improving How Oregon’s Early Learning and Care System Meets Family and Community Needs

### Market Price and Supply Study (recurring)

Link to report: [Oregon Child Care Market Price Study 2024 | College of Health | Oregon State University](#)

Since the 1990s, Oregon has conducted Market Price and Supply Studies (MPSS) to systematically assess the price, and thus availability, of child care for families in Oregon. The research questions and methods of the MPSS have evolved over the years to respond to state-level research and policy needs, like creating Oregon’s Child Care Deserts report which identifies areas of the state with inadequate supply of child care. Maintaining this body of work is critical for DELC’s continued understanding of the price and cost of child care and gaps that exist with affordability and supply and aligns with priority 1.

DELC’s Market Price and Supply Study allows DELC to systematically assess the price of child care that families face when looking for child care and the availability of child care in Oregon. This study takes place every 2 years and requires a concerted partnership with regional Child Care Resource and Referrals and the Research Institute at Western Oregon University to collect current price and supply data from Oregon’s child care programs. The Oregon Child Care Research Partnership at Oregon State University analyses the collected data to help DELC understand current prices and supply of child care as a state, across regions, by type of child care program, and over time. These analyses are published in multiple reports (including the Market Price Study Report, the Child Care Desert Report, and State and County Profiles) for multiple audiences (e.g., DELC, regional Hubs and CCR&Rs, the public). These reports help DELC understand the shifting landscape of child care in Oregon and inform DELC’s policy and program decisions (e.g., informs rate-setting for Employment Related Day Care).

### Preschool Development Grant Strength and Needs Assessment (one time)

[Link to PDG Report](#)

From 2019–2023, DELC (and its predecessor, the Early Learning Division) conducted a comprehensive strength and needs assessment of Oregon’s Early Care and Education System as part of our federally-funded Preschool Development Grant. This funding opportunity allowed DELC to create and implement foundational tools to understand the needs of families with young children and the early care and education workforce. These tools include the Statewide Household and Provider Surveys which track

experiences with Oregon's early care and education system over time. Continuing the use of these tools is critical for DELC's ongoing understanding of the experiences and needs of families with young children and the early care and education workforce. Furthermore, the continuation of the Statewide Household and Provider Surveys is explicitly included in DELC's strategic plan Growing Oregon Together (Activity 6.5.b).

### Statewide Household Survey (recurring) [Link to 2022 report](#)

The Statewide Household survey was originally funded as part of the PDG work, the survey was first conducted in 2019 to determine how the early childhood education services and supports changed between 2019 – 2022 during the COVID-19 pandemic. This initial survey, and it's ongoing work, allows DELC and all policy makers, leaders and early child care practitioners to understand the needs and experiences of both childcare providers and families with children 5 and under seeking childcare.

### Statewide Provider Survey (recurring) [Link to 2022 report](#)

Also funded through the PDG in 2019, this report dives deep into the challenges faced by early childhood education providers including workforce challenges, operational challenges, mentorship and training challenges, and shares opportunities for improvements educations need the most. This survey is being conducted a second time as of 2025 and results will be available early 2026.

## Priority 2 – Evaluating Access, Implementation, and Effectiveness of DELC Programming

### Early Childhood Equity Fund (ECEF) Evaluation (recurring) [Link to report](#)

The ECEF evaluation is grounded in collaborative planning and design with grantees and centers the experiences of children families that are served by ECEF, specifically families from non-dominant cultural backgrounds. The evaluation builds capacity for grantees to participate in evaluation efforts, including data collection capacity building and was driven by an Evaluation Leadership Group, consisting of ECEF grantees, who lead evaluation efforts and co-interpret findings with research partners. The ECEF evaluation is an example of how DELC's evaluation efforts can be grounded in the principles of equitable research and evaluation and future evaluation efforts can build from this groundwork. [Link to report](#)

## Healthy Families Oregon Evaluation (recurring) [Reports & Publications – NPC Research](#).

The HFO evaluation is an external evaluation that has been conducted by NPC Research since 2001 to study the effectiveness of a statewide home visiting program for at-risk families.

## Kindergarten Readiness and Partnership Innovation Fund (KPI) Evaluation (2010 – 2025) [Eight Years of Kindergarten Readiness Partnership](#)

This KPI evaluation was created to support the innovative and community-driven work that focuses on improving children's readiness for school and improve outcomes of children through a prenatal to grade 3 (P3) approach.

## Oregon Early Education State Profiles (recurring)- [Oregon Early Care Education State Profile 2024](#)

These state and county level profiles provide overview statistics and policy-relevant information related to Oregon's children and families and the early care and education system; summaries are offered at both state-wide and at the county level.

## Preschool Promise Impact Report (2025) (one time)

Conducted by Pacific Research and Evaluation, this report studies the experiences of providers who administer and families who are enrolled in the preschool promise program.

## 2025 Capital Landscape Analysis Report (2025 )(one time)

First Children's Finance partnered with DELC to conduct a comprehensive landscape analysis of capital resources available to licensed child care businesses in Oregon from 2019-2024. The analysis examined diverse funding streams including:

- DELC's Publicly Funded Early Learning and Care Programs: Employment Related Day Care (ERDC), Preschool Promise, Baby Promise, and Oregon Pre-natal to Kindergarten (OPK)
- Small Business Administration Lending: 7(a) and 504 loan programs
- COVID-19 Relief Capital: Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and Child Care Stabilization Grants (CCSG)

The study analyzed participation patterns across business demographics including license type, language preferences, and the provision of infant care. Access to capital for child care entrepreneurs is vital to ensure the supply, sustainability, and quality of services.

### **Oregon Child Care Business Sustainability Survey Report (2025) (one time)**

Authored by First Children's Finance, the Oregon Child Care Business Sustainability Survey builds on the previous year's analysis (2024) and affirms that the core challenges facing child care businesses—staffing shortages, rising costs, facility maintenance needs, under-enrollment, and financial strain—remain. The results from 205 reinforce previous findings while revealing modest changes that help us better understand child care business owner experience and guide targeted interventions.

## **Priority 3 – Quality Care for Oregon's Early Childhood Education System and Publicly Funded Programs**

### **A Path Forward: Examining and Overcoming Barriers for Oregon's Early Childhood Workforce (2023) (one time)**

Conducted by AB Cultural Drivers, Leonard Research & Evaluation, and Fifth Element Community Research & Consulting and was mandated by 2023 House Bill 2991 to understand the barriers faced for early childhood workforce including things like compensation, recognition, training and technical assistance and provides recommendations from the workforce in collaboration with key workgroups that include DELC and the early childhood equity collaborative.

### **Reconceptualizing Quality - Centering Community Wisdom and Power & Putting the Early Childhood Education Technocracy to Bed (2024) (one time).**

[Reconceptualizing Quality: Centering Community Wisdom and Power & Putting the Early Childhood Education Technocracy to Bed](#)

This report challenges how the early childhood education space has defined "quality", providing a guiding framework for how to rethink how quality is defined and measured. It also emphasizes the importance of incorporating community voice and provider expertise when defining quality.

Oregon's Reconceptualizing Quality report and the nationally focused Equity is Quality report are responses to tension experienced by ECE providers and

minoritized communities, who recognized that there are limitations to the generally accepted definitions of quality in ECE settings. For DELC, they are invitations to revisit how quality is defined, discussed, and measured in DELC programs. The lessons learned in these reports should carry forward into DELC's approach to priority 3. This means using a critical, innovative, and equitable lens in our approach to quality that acknowledges the experiences of minoritized communities. Doing so will allow DELC to embody its stated values (e.g., equity, relationships, continuous improvement).

### *Accessing Child Care for Infants and Toddlers: Family Perspectives and Challenges in Receiving Quality Care (2022) (one time)*

This report was conducted as part of the Oregon Preschool Development Grant and includes information from family focus groups aimed at understanding the experiences of Oregon families accessing and using affordable quality care for their infants and toddlers. The report presents findings on what factors are important to families when identifying quality care for their children.

### *Families' Experiences with Early Childhood Education and Child Care: Lessons for Creating Quality Care for Oregon's LGBTQIA+ Families (2022) (one time)*

In an effort to create an equitable early learning system that meets the needs of all Oregonians, and through using funds from the Preschool Development Grant, a report was conducted to gather information from LGBTQIA+ families about their experiences finding and using childcare. Findings are presented about how LGBTQIA+ families identify and find quality child care and what components of child care are important for their children.

### *State-funded Preschool Classroom Observation Initiative (2021 – present) (Recurring) 2021*

This report was conducted by The Research Institute (TRI) at Western Oregon University to support a statewide initiative to support continuous quality improvement using measures of classroom quality. Data are used to support local training and technical assistance and DELC's research and reporting needs on program quality.

### *Equity is quality, Quality is Equity: Operationalizing Equity in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (2021) (one time)*

This report identifies important equity and quality indicators that states can use to redesign their Quality Rating/Recognition and Improvement Systems (QRIS) in a way that advances equity and improves transparency for families.

### *Measuring the Quality of Early Learning Environments (2022) (one time)*

This report and guide provide information on the purposes, uses, and implications of quality measurement while highlighting important equity issues to consider when analyzing quality in the early childhood education space. It also provides an appendix of numerous measures that states can use to capture global measures of quality using measures at the program, classroom, and system level.

## **Priority 4 – Effectiveness of Workforce Investments**

### *ELMO and RUO data dashboard (recurring)*

Established as part of the PDG research and evaluation work (2019–2023), these tools visualize data related to Oregon's early care and education system and broader early childhood system. ELMO explores geographic trends, while the RUO data dashboard explores state-level data over time.

### *Navigating the Early Years: Recommendations to Support Oregon Child Care Businesses in the Critical Years After Launch (2025) (one time)*

This report examines what child care business owners need as they transition out of start-up, generally defined as the first two years of operation, and establish strong, sustainable programs. The findings are based on interviews with grant administrators, focus groups and interviews with child care business owners, as well as a secondary analysis of First Children's Finance's (FCF) 2024 Child Care Business Sustainability Survey. The recommendations in this report were developed by synthesizing provider insights, grant administrator perspectives, data trends, and promising models of child care funding and technical assistance.

### *Business Sustainability & Survey Report (2023 – present) (recurring)*

Conducted by First Children's Finance.

### *Tech Ecosystem Mapping Project (2025) (one time)*

Conducted by Opportunities Exchange.

### *Preschool Development Grant Research Recommendations (2019 – 2023) (multi-year, one time)*

While many of the reports commissioned under the Preschool Development Grant were developed for purposes other than evaluating or reviewing current workforce investments, many of the reports generated findings applicable to improving investments and infrastructure available to the early learning workforce.

### DELC Grantee Wage Enhancement Survey Questions (2019 – 2023) (multi-year, one time)

An internal survey was conducted from 2024-2025 on DELC grantees on utilization and impact of wage enhancement grant funding.