

# CONNECT | READ | THRIVE:

## *Literacy Begins at Birth*



The first sounds a child may hear or see (signed) are the voices of the people in their home and community. This experience builds neural pathways, the critical connections that help our brains grow. These sounds or signs serve as the first way children learn language. A child's learning happens through events in their daily lives. A child's unique language, culture, and identity are supported by family members and caregivers who are a child's first teacher.

In 2023, through the leadership of Governor Kotek, the Oregon Legislature decided that early literacy was a top priority. In creating the Early Literacy Success Initiative, they named five goals:

- Increase early literacy for children from birth to third grade.
- Reduce literacy academic disparities for student groups that have historically experienced academic disparities.
- Increase support to parents and guardians to enable them to be partners in the development of their children's literacy skills and knowledge; and
- Increase access to early literacy learning through support that is research-aligned, culturally responsive, student-centered and family-centered.
- Expand and develop language revitalization efforts by federally recognized Indian Tribes in this state

These goals will be achieved through four initiatives led by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC). More information about the three ODE led initiatives can be found here:



[ODE Early Literacy Success School District Grants](#)



[ODE Early Literacy Success Community Grants](#)



[ODE Early Literacy Success Tribal Grants](#)

# Birth to Five Literacy Plan

As part of the Early Literacy Success Initiative, DELC will create a Birth Through Five Literacy Plan. The plan will offer ways to support early literacy for children ages birth through five. This information will be submitted to the legislature as part of a report due in December 2024 for the legislature to determine funding and services to support Birth Through Five Literacy during the 2025-2027 biennium.

## DELC’s Progress to Date

The initial \$9.4 million awarded for the 23-25 biennium to support the Birth Through Five Literacy initiative is being used to leverage early literacy activities in two existing programs, the [Kindergarten Partnership Innovation Program \(KPI\)](#) and the [Early Childhood Equity Fund \(ECEP\)](#) that support Early Learning Hubs and community organizations to serve children and families. This funding is available for the '24/'25 program year, which ends 6/30/25. DELC has also initiated Tribal Consultation with the nine federally recognized Tribes within Oregon’s borders to disburse non-competitive funding to Tribal Nations to support the literacy initiatives.

## Community Engagement

To inform the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan, DELC will be reviewing and analyzing data to date from current literacy programs and practices already in place. There will be community engagement sessions to hear from families, providers, and community partners. The community engagement sessions will ask about what is working well in supporting literacy and where there are needs for additional supports to meet the goals of the Early Literacy Initiative.

## 2024 - 2025 Timeline

'24 - '25 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	ENGAGEMENT INFORMS PLAN	PLAN DEFINES PROGRAM MODEL	PROGRAM INFORMS RULE DEVELOPMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Kindergarten Partnership Innovation</li><li>Early Childhood Equity Fund (ECEP), exisiting new grantees</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Spring:</b> Engagement with families, providers, culturally specific partners</li><li><b>Summer - Fall:</b> Engagement with regional system partners and plan draft</li></ul>	Submit Plan to Legislature in December 2024	Launch of Birth through Five Literacy Program

## Resources

- [Birth Through Five and Community Grants Legislative Report](#)
  - [Executive Summary](#)
- [HB 3198 Legislation](#)
  - [ODE Literacy Success Initiative](#)

## Contact

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