Early Learning and Literacy: OregonReads

In 2011-12, nearly 12,000 Oregon 3rd graders (28 percent) did not demonstrate proficiency in reading. Of underserved students, the percentage of 3rd graders who were not reading proficiently was nearly 10 percent greater (37 percent). Evidence demonstrates that for a student to be on a path to reading by 3rd grade, early learning experiences that prepare him or her to enter school ready to learn are crucial. Well-established research has shown that students who do not read at grade level by 3rd grade are four times less likely to earn a high school diploma. For students living in poverty, failing to meet this crucial benchmark makes them 12 times less likely to graduate. Moreover, beyond high school, success in college and the workforce requires that students are able to access, primarily through reading, increasingly higher levels of academic content. If we are to reach the 40-40-20 Goal, our state must invest in strategies that will provide the differentiated instructions necessary for every Oregon student to read in the primary grades. Nationally, well-designed early interventions have been found to generate a return ranging from $1.80 to $17.07 for each dollar spent on the program. In Oregon, we know that financial return is coupled with significant societal returns for our citizens – lower unemployment, less poverty, decreased crime rates, and increased levels of civic engagement.

The OregonReads initiative builds upon one of the main focuses of achievement compacts, which identifies 3rd grade reading as a key outcome for every student in Oregon, and includes an early beginning to our efforts to support developing readers. As districts align around this key outcome, the state must invest in and implement strategies to engage whole communities – parents, nonprofits, early learning providers, afterschool providers, businesses, local governments and volunteers – around language and literacy. We must engage, empower and support families in culturally appropriate ways with the goal of providing every Oregon child, regardless of native language, with the foundational skills and experiences necessary to develop a life-long love of reading. To reach this goal requires public and private partnerships that will focus community resources and commitment on evidence-based practices to support and engage not just students, but families.

Increased Reading Support and Opportunities for Reading

Oregon Reads will acknowledge that much of the work of getting kids to read comes through practice. For underserved students and those at risk, Oregon must provide more opportunities for practice, with individual support from an adult; and more access to books, computers, online curriculum, etc.

Through Oregon Reads, ODE would award grants and/or contracts (potentially leveraging federal dollars for school improvement) to proven providers of services (early learning hubs, districts, nonprofits, afterschool providers, libraries or others) to deliver:

- Resources and supports to families and caregivers around birth to grade 3 literacy and direct engagement of parents in schools or childcare settings, as classroom supports, etc.

- Expanded access (through high-quality school and public libraries, community centers, childcare and health care settings, schools and virtually) for children, students and families to books, curriculum, resources and computers
- Proven, high-quality, cost effective **expanded** or **individualized** learning time for students who are not proficient in reading. This could take the form of:
    - tutoring or small group instruction during or outside of school day
    - extended learning time, such as a longer day or year

    - high-quality and engaging "anytime, anywhere" learning opportunities (summer, weekends, afterschool, virtual) in reading, writing, literature, science, art

- Evidence-based or emerging best practices that are culturally relevant and highly likely to improve reading outcomes for students living in poverty, students of color, students with special needs and/or English language learners

Statewide Reading Campaign

OregonReads will build upon literacy efforts launched by districts and early learning providers, Oregon Department of Education, and the State Library, creating a statewide reading campaign focused on ensuring that parents, educators and caregivers of young Oregonians can support the foundation for all children's early and continued literacy skills. OEIB, in conjunction with ELC, will lead a statewide campaign aimed at:

- Harnessing and delivering resources and communications aimed at engaging and exciting citizens and communities across Oregon to support reading as an outcomes for all children;
- Equipping parents and caregivers with information that can empower them to support early literacy skills and reading;
- Creating actionable opportunities for business, nonprofits, local governments and other state agencies to organize around improving early reading and 3rd grade reading outcomes; and
- Increasing the focus on early learning and reading among Oregon's childcare and other early childhood professionals.

Reading Intervention and Support Programs

Through its Response to Intervention Network, ODE has contracted with the Tigard Tualatin School District to provide training, mentoring and support to more than 50 Oregon districts to implement multi-tiered approaches to instruction and support for struggling readers. The RTI Network initiative has increased the number of Oregon students who are proficient in reading at 3rd grade, and has also reduced the numbers of students referred to Special Education Services with learning disabilities. Nearly all of Oregon's model schools have instituted such an intervention program.

Through OregonReads, ODE, with leadership from successful mentor districts, would engage an additional 75 districts in the RTI Network.

Evidence:

Alexander, K. Entwisle,D., and Olson, L. (2007). Lasting consequences of the summer learning gap. American Sociological Review, 72, 167-180. http://www.nayre.org/Summer%20Learning%20Gap.pdf

Harvard Family Research Center (April 2010), Family Engagement as a Systemic, Sustained, and Integrated Strategy to Promote Student Achievement. http://www.hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/family-engagement-as-a-systemic-sustained-and-integrated-strategy-to-promote-student-achievement

Hernandez, Donald J. (2011). Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence

High School Graduation.
http://www.aecf.org/~/media/Pubs/Topics/Education/Other/DoubleJeopardyHowThirdGradeReadingSkillsandPovery/DoubleJeopardyReport040511FINAL.pdf

Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton- Pennell. (2001). Good Schools Have School Librarians: Oregon School Librarians Collaborate to Improve Academic Achievement. Terrebonne, OR: Oregon Educational Media Association.

NGA Center for Best Practices (2009), *Reducing Dropout Rates through Expanded Learning Opportunities*. National Governor's Association,
http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/0910ELOREDUCINGDROPOUTS.PDF;jsessionid=A5822A26DDCFC8509D5CFBDE02CA143E

Proven Benefits of Early Childhood Intervention, Rand Labor and Population Research Brief (2005),
http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_briefs/2005/RAND_RB9145.pdf

Outcome:

*By June 2015, Oregon will decrease the number of 3rd through 5th grade students who are not reading at grade level by X%, and will decrease achievement gaps by at least X%.

***Specific targets will be developed in conjunction with OEIB strategic plan**

Leveraged Funds & Programs: Early Learning Race to the Top, Ready to Read (state library), 21st Century, Title I and III, Oregon RTI, Oregon Literacy Framework, Reading First