



## News Release

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Contact: Holly Barnes Higgins, 202.862.9863, [hhiggins@preknow.org](mailto:hhiggins@preknow.org)  
Tina Trenkner, 202.862.9874, [ttrenkner@preknow.org](mailto:ttrenkner@preknow.org)

### **National Report: Oregon Legislature Makes Impressive Strides for Children** *New funding increases guarantee two years of quality pre-k for at-risk children*

(Washington, DC) – Oregon’s legislators are applauded in “Votes Count: Legislative Action on Pre-K Fiscal Year 2008,” a national report released today by Pre-K Now. With an increase of \$14 million for FY08 and an additional projected increase of \$11.8 million the following year, the annual state-by-state analysis of legislative support for pre-k ranks Oregon among a cadre of new state leaders at a time of historic momentum for funding early education across the country.

“Oregon lawmakers led the state into the limelight after years of stagnant funding for pre-k,” said Libby Doggett, executive director for Pre-K Now. “We also recognize the important role the state’s business community played in communicating the return on investments in early learning.”

Oregon was among the 36 states – including eight which anticipate enrollment-based budget growth – that increased funding for pre-k, a number that breaks last year’s record of 34, and far exceeds the FY05 record of 15. A total of 528 million new dollars will allow at least 88,000 more children to attend pre-k. Seven states are now providing or phasing in pre-k for all children and three states moved to fully fund pre-k for all eligible at-risk children.

Additional report findings include:

- Over the biennium, Oregon’s increased funding will expand access to an additional 3,200 3- and 4-year-olds through *Oregon Head Start Pre-Kindergarten (OPK)*;
- A total of \$4.8 billion dollars will be spent in FY08—a \$2 billion increase in just three years;
- Iowa and Pennsylvania had the highest increases at 241 and 135 percent, respectively; and
- Ten states still do not have pre-k programs, resulting in more than 500,000 children without access.

“Legislators came together across party lines to identify the expansion of pre-k as a top priority,” said State Senator Vicki Walker. “The research is clear: there is no better investment we can make for our kids and the future of our state. Every Oregonian wins when we invest in pre-k.”

A PDF of the report can be accessed at: [www.preknow.org/documents/legislativereport\\_Sept2007.pdf](http://www.preknow.org/documents/legislativereport_Sept2007.pdf)

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*Pre-K Now collaborates with state advocates and policymakers to lead a movement for high-quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten for all three and four year olds. The following funders contribute to making this important work possible: The Pew Charitable Trusts, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the McCormick Tribune Foundation, the Foundation for Child Development, RGK Foundation, CityBridge Foundation, PNC Financial Services Group, and the Schumann Fund for New Jersey.*