

A-Engrossed
House Bill 2247

Ordered by the House March 19
Including House Amendments dated March 19

Introduced and printed pursuant to House Rule 12.00. Pre-session filed (at the request of House Interim Committee on Early Childhood and Family Supports)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure.

[Directs] **Establishes Oregon Imagination Library Project** in Early Learning Division *[to develop, implement and administer Oregon Imagination Library Project]* to improve **kindergarten readiness and third-grade** reading proficiency *[and high school graduation rates]* by providing enrolled children with *[age-appropriate]* **free** book once each month **from birth to age five. Prescribes methods by which division shall support project.**

Establishes Oregon Imagination Library Account within Early Learning Division Fund for purposes of funding project.

Declares emergency, effective *[on passage]* **July 1, 2019.**

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to encouragement of reading in young children; and declaring an emergency.

3 Whereas Oregon ranks third worst in the country in high school graduation rates; and

4 Whereas learning to read by third grade is a key indicator for future high school completion,
5 but less than half of Oregon's third grade students meet proficiency benchmarks in reading; and

6 Whereas at kindergarten entry, 37 percent of Oregon children are unable to recognize a single
7 letter and an even higher percentage cannot recognize a single letter sound; and

8 Whereas parents have the greatest impact on the lives of their children; and

9 Whereas according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, the single most important activity
10 an adult can engage in to prepare a child for a life of learning is to read frequently with the child,
11 preferably every day; and

12 Whereas there is a direct correlation between the number of books in the home and future ac-
13 ademic success; and

14 Whereas mailing books each month to preschool children has been shown to dramatically in-
15 crease the percentage of families reading to their children and the frequency of parents reading to
16 children; and

17 Whereas sending age-appropriate books to preschool children is the broadest and most cost-
18 effective way to elevate early literacy benchmarks; and

19 Whereas preschool children enrolled in a program that sends a book to them each month score
20 higher on kindergarten readiness assessments; now, therefore,

21 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

22 **SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section:**

23 **(a) "Local Imagination Library program" means a program that is provided to a com-**
24 **munity or to a county as part of the Oregon Imagination Library Project and that provides**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 free age-appropriate books each month to enrolled children from birth to age five.

2 (b) "Local Imagination Library program affiliate" means an entity that:

3 (A)(i) Is an organization exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal
4 Revenue Code; or

5 (ii) Is a school district; and

6 (B) Has entered into a contract with a national book gifting foundation to provide to ev-
7 ery child enrolled in the program an age-appropriate book each month from birth to age five.

8 (2) The Oregon Imagination Library Project is established within the Early Learning Di-
9 vision for the purpose of improving kindergarten readiness and third-grade reading profi-
10 ciency by providing free books to children who are enrolled in a local Imagination Library
11 program each month from birth to age five.

12 (3) The division shall support the Oregon Imagination Library Project by:

13 (a) Entering into a partnership with the national book gifting foundation that has con-
14 tracts with local Imagination Library program affiliates for the purpose of having the divi-
15 sion pay 50 percent of the monthly contract cost.

16 (b) Assisting local Imagination Library programs:

17 (A) With the establishment of programs in communities or counties that are not served
18 by a local Imagination Library program;

19 (B) In recruiting volunteers for the implementation and administration of the programs;
20 and

21 (C) In enrolling children in the programs.

22 (4) The division may enter into a contract with a statewide organization that is exempt
23 from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code to raise moneys and to
24 assist in the implementation of the project.

25 (5) The division shall distribute moneys for the project from the Oregon Imagination Li-
26 brary Account established under section 2 of this 2019 Act. Distributions shall be made as
27 prescribed by rules adopted by the Early Learning Council.

28 (6) The division may create an advisory committee to make recommendations to the di-
29 vision on how best to develop, implement and administer the project in this state.

30 (7) The council, in consultation with the division, shall adopt rules to implement the
31 provisions of this section.

32 **SECTION 2.** (1) The Oregon Imagination Library Account is established within the Early
33 Learning Division Fund. Separate records shall be maintained for moneys in the account.
34 Interest earned by the account shall be credited to the account.

35 (2) Moneys in the account are continuously appropriated to the Department of Education
36 for use by the Early Learning Division for the Oregon Imagination Library Project described
37 in section 1 of this 2019 Act.

38 **SECTION 3.** The Early Learning Division shall distribute funds from the Oregon Imag-
39 ination Library Account established under section 2 of this 2019 Act for the Oregon Imag-
40 ination Library Project described in section 1 of this 2019 Act as follows:

41 (1) Beginning January 1, 2020, for programs not described in subsection (2) of this sec-
42 tion.

43 (2) Beginning June 1, 2021, for programs that:

44 (a) Are located in counties that have a population of less than 100,000; and

45 (b) Existed prior to July 1, 2018.

