

## **With Jump Start Kindergarten, Nearly 1,500 Oregon Preschool Kids Were Ready to Spring into Learning**

This summer, schools across the state implemented the first two-week session of Jump Start kindergarten thanks to funding from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief III Funds (ESSER III). To date, 63 participating schools supported a transition program offering students entering kindergarten a prequel to what school will be like in the fall. Jump Start provides a critical bridge for early learners into the school community during that initial transition from preschool to kindergarten.

"Our Jump Start Kindergarten program was a wonderful resource for our families, and it also helped our early learning staff to get the school year off on the right foot. Our Jump Start teachers went over school rules and expectations, classroom routines, social skills, basic reading, writing, and math, and of course, showed the students how fun learning can be. Local partners Talent Maker City and Bugs-R-Us also helped get kids excited for the school year by providing great hands-on activities, which is so important at that age. Our teachers here say Kinder Jump Start's implementation has positively impacted kinder readiness while dovetailing nicely with our renewed focus on family engagement," according to Assistant Superintendent Tiffanie Lambert of Phoenix-Talent School District.

Jump Start Kindergarten programs include student and parent/caregiver programming at the student's school for two weeks or more. Students receive 30 hours of in-person activities with peers and staff. In addition, parents/caregivers receive at least 10 hours of school-based family engagement activities. There isn't a set curriculum; instead, the program implementation is fully customizable based-upon local and culturally relevant needs. The program will be offered again in 2023 and 2024 to any Title-1 school in an eligible district to enrich the support systems for students who represent historically underserved communities. (Title 1 is a federally funded program that provides monetary support to schools with high percentages of families identified as having a low income.)

The feedback from this initial round of Jump Start Kindergarten has been positive. One Lincoln County School District parent shared, "My child felt welcomed. He felt confident about his first experience with public school! A Forest Grove parent enjoyed that her student "was able to meet teachers and make new friends."

ESSER III will provide \$11,218,150 to Title-1 schools and has 23 districts participating, with more eligible for 2023 and 2024.

**About the Oregon Department of Education’s Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief III (ESSER III) Fund:** The American Rescue Plan Act, 2021 (ARP Act or ARPA) provides an additional \$122 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund III (ESSER III or ARP ESSER). \$1.1 billion was awarded to Oregon. ESSER III grants were awarded to LEAs in the proportion they received funds under Part A of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in the fiscal year 2020. ESSER III Fund grants can reimburse eligible expenses incurred between March 13, 2020, and September 30, 2024. We send out newsletters quarterly, so keep an eye out to stay up to date on ESSER III information.



Caption:

Jump Start Kindergarten participants from Phoenix-Talent Schools enjoy family engagement and time to connect with new friends and classmates.



Caption: A boy pauses to share a big smile during Jump Start class in Lincoln County School District.