

## **Ready for School Initiative**

The **Ready for School** initiative has three important elements.

### **Full-day and extended-day kindergarten**

Schools with Title I funds have been encouraged under this initiative to consider full-day and extended-day kindergarten as a means for closing the achievement gap. A document with funding options was developed and shared with school superintendents. The document provided information about the following:

- Circumstances in which Title I funds could be used and the implications.
- Considerations in planning full-day kindergarten programs, such as curriculum, scheduling, facilities, staffing, and evaluation of the program.
- Sample programs in Oregon that have been successful and contact information to allow for networking between districts.
- A common message for the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to deliver.

Subsequent questions were raised about the design of programs for schools that did not have Title I funds or that had committed those funds to other programming choices. A second document was developed and shared with school superintendents in August 2004.

### **Increase the number of eligible children having access to Oregon Pre-Kindergarten services**

It is the intent under this initiative to allow more quality access to early learning for more children. The focus is on Oregon children from low income families.

### **Early Childhood content standards and subsequent statewide systemic assessment system**

This element of the initiative coordinates an effort to monitor and report progress of children in all early childhood programs funded by ODE, including the special education programs. The system will be voluntary for other programs. Student progress will be measured through observational techniques and be aligned to the *Oregon Early Childhood Foundations* content standards and Head Start standards. The goals of this initiative are to prepare information for the Oregon Legislature to show how funds are being spent and to supply kindergarten teachers with information about the children enrolling in their classrooms.