

Submitter: Moira Finnegan

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure: HB2895

I have worked as a Speech-Language Pathologist with Portland Public Schools for 12 years. I have worked with students at every grade level, from Kindergarten all the way up to adult transition services for students age 18 to 21. There are many things I love about my job. There are also things that make my job really hard. Probably the hardest thing about my job, and the job of so many of us working in special education, is the fact that we don't have enough staff to meet the needs of our students.

Both special needs students and students without special needs suffer when we don't have the funding needed to provide enough staff to help students with special needs. Some students who need extra help in the classroom understandably struggle and engage in disruptive behaviors when they don't have the help they need. This impacts their learning as well as the learning of the entire classroom.

The only way for school districts to provide adequate staffing for special education is for the legislature to provide adequate funding for special education. That's why I'm asking you to remove the limit on state special education funding for Oregon schools. I'm also asking that you make the increase in special education funding a true increase in the total amount of state school funds going to districts, rather than a re-allocation of existing funds.

You have an amazing opportunity with this bill to improve the lives of thousands of students across Oregon. Thank you for your support!