

Senate Bill 612

Testimony: Oregon School Psychologists Association (OSPA)

OSPA neither supports nor opposes SB 612. OSPA voices its concern for how this bill would be operationalized within the context of Oregon's current literacy framework. Below is a list of our concerns.

SB 612 requires school districts to screen students for risk factors for dyslexia.

OSPA supports universal screening for all students with research-based assessments. DIBELS, EasyCBM, and other measures are already in place at many but not all Oregon schools. These tools are based on the Big Ideas of Reading. They are sufficiently valid to identify students at risk for dyslexia. Setting up a separate universal screening measure for dyslexia will not add to Oregon's early identification and intervention efforts. The Oregon Legislature should work to insure that currently available universal screening measures are being implemented in all Oregon schools rather than set up two different systems.

SB 612 ensures specified staff members receive training related to dyslexia.

OSPA supports all-staff training for dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities.

SB 612 directs Department of Education to designate dyslexia specialist.

OSPA does not oppose the creation of an ODE dyslexia specialist; however, any dyslexia specialist would need to have the expertise of supporting the synthesis of assessment and intervention efforts for both 1) federal categories of specific learning disabilities (SLD) and; 2) dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dsycalculia. Dyslexia is already included in the federal definition of a learning disability. Several Oregon school districts synthesize the research regarding dyslexia into their special education comprehensive assessments for SLD (e.g., Portland Public Schools). School teams need training in how to synthesize the research regarding SLD and dyslexia into current systems of early identification and intervention. Our concern is that SB 612 may set up a separate and silo'd dyslexia specialty within ODE. An ODE dyslexia specialist needs to be someone who could integrate and coordinate current Oregon Literacy Plan elements and special education law with dyslexia. Texas is an example of the inefficient and bifurcated assessment and service delivery systems we would like to avoid.

Requires teacher education institutions and teacher education programs to provide course on dyslexia.

OSPA supports a requirement that teacher education institutions and teacher education programs provide pre-service preparation on dyslexia.

