

SB 142 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires school districts to ensure that fourth graders who do not meet grade-level standards for reading are screened for symptoms of Irlen Syndrome beginning with the 2017-18 school year. Requires State Board of Education (SBE) to enact rules governing qualifications of individuals who will conduct screenings. Requires the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to designate an Irlen Syndrome specialist. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

BACKGROUND:

Irlen Syndrome, also known as scotopic sensitivity syndrome, was first proposed in 1983 by Helen Irlen, a therapist conducting a federal grant-funded study of learning disabilities. Her proposal was that certain individuals who had difficulty in reading would be helped by various color overlays due to the way their brains process visual information. However, ophthalmological and optometrical studies dispute the existence of Irlen Syndrome as a diagnosis, instead referring to the symptoms as the result of a variety of refractive, binocular, and accommodative disorders.