

My name is Judith Becker. I reside at 7955 Stapleton Rd., Independence, Or 97351. I am a retired teacher who now screens for Irlen syndrome through my private business Power2Learn. I have worked with at risk kids for almost 25 years and have been an Irlen Screener for eight years. I support Bill SB142.

My family consists of 23 people. Of the 23, nine have some degree of Irlen Syndrome. All in the family who wear colored lenses have had success with headaches/migraines, attention, and educational issues. The kids tested all have educational issues that have either majorly improved or have been completely overcome by wearing lenses.

Overlays have helped considerably in my professional life as well. For six years I worked at the Ballston Community School (BCS) a charter school in Amity School District. It is now known as Eola Hills Charter School (EHCS), and serves grades 1-12. Almost all of the students that attend BCS were at risk youth. One of my jobs at BCS was to Irlen screen students who had been identified as possible candidates for Irlen overlays. In the six years I was there I tested 36 students. All but one needed overlays. Only **one didn't** find overlays helpful in some way, shape, or form. Every single student that **did** use the overlays improved in fluency, could (a majority of the time) self-correct when reading. And most importantly, they **enjoyed** reading more! Also an add bonus was marked improvement in regards to behavior. As one of my co-workers put it, "The "squirmies" tend to calm down when we use the overlays."

At one point when we were state testing, if a student could not pass a test we would allow them to pick an overlay to use on the computer for their next scheduled test. Students were allowed to choose which they preferred. In all cases where a student used an overlay for the next test, **they passed, improved significantly, or greatly exceeded their last performance**. I would love to be able to give you hard numbers and statistics, unfortunately all these records were lost in the fire when BCS burned some years ago. I can assure you, however, that students didn't forget to come ask for overlays when they misplaced them, and happily used them whenever they were in our lab.

In closing I would like to say that in all my years of working with students who presented varying learning and behavior issues, I have never seen anything that helped as much as using Irlen overlays or better yet, Irlen lenses. I truly believe that if students could be tested earlier in their elementary education, quite possibly 20 to 30% would find reading easier and more fun, and school would be a place they would enjoy so much more. Furthermore, if Irlen testing and overlays were made available to students who needed them, teachers just might find they are teaching in a less stressful environment. And we all know that in itself would be huge.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.