

Good Afternoon,

I am Chris Demianew, a parent, a middle school teacher, a college instructor, and a dyslexic. I have traveled to Salem from Pendleton to share the importance of effectively screening students at an early age for dyslexia. It is also critical to continue to have the input and voice from the specialists, administrators, stakeholders, general and special education teachers whom work with dyslexics and their families to have an advisory role in the continued development of Oregon's Dyslexia Program.

I am happy to support the amendments submitted by Senator Taylor. I am proud of the collaborative approach that the workgroup has taken at preserving the importance of early screening for dyslexia, supporting the clear need for a trained resource in dyslexia in every primary school, and in assisting families in providing resources and guidance for their children to get the education they deserve.

The one item that I strongly encourage this body to continue to support through legislation is the inclusion of an amendment that would continue the work of the Oregon Dyslexia Advisory Council. This council is a group of administrators, specialists, teachers (special education and general education), non-profit stake holders, college university faculty, TSPC representatives, representative from the Oregon Education Association, parents, and staff from the Department of Education. They have been charged to develop a plan for implementing SB 612, but as we all can see today, the work of that body is not finished.

Oregon is a lead member in a group of States that have recognized the need to address the needs of dyslexic children. California, Maryland, Alabama, Colorado, and the list goes on and on of states that have advisory councils for dyslexia. They have joined Oregon in understanding the need to include a wide and diverse group of people and organizations in an advisory and supportive role to the Dyslexia Specialist established in SB 612. As SB 1003, moves forward it is important to re-charge the ODAC group to continue to advise and support the work of the Dyslexia Specialist, ODE, and the vast network of schools throughout the state.

Thank you for your time and attention to these concerns and suggestions.

Chris Demianew
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