



Oregon Program Autism Training Sites and Support

March 11, 2019

To the Senate Committee on Health Care:

Chair: Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson

Vice-Chair: Senator Dennis Linthicum

Members: Senator Lee Beyer, Senator Shemia Fagan, Senator Tim Knopp

Dear Senator Anderson,

I am Professor Emeritus at Portland State University and I hold a Ph.D. in Special Education/Rehabilitation. With forty years of experience as an educator, researcher, and trainer in the field of autism, I have supported a variety of initiatives to improve educational services to students with autism throughout Oregon. I am the founder and president of Star Autism Support, Inc. and currently the director of the Oregon Program Autism Training Sites Project.

As someone who has been involved with the research, development, and implementation of a variety of evidence-based strategies, including the many strategies under the ABA umbrella, I am uniquely qualified to provide insight into this issue. The attached summary of literature demonstrates the breadth of research that has been compiled documenting the effectiveness of educators in public schools implementing evidence-based practices, including ABA strategies. While the students for whom ABA is effective often have significant needs and educators should constantly strive to improve their services to these students, there is ample evidence that school professionals can and should provide ABA services.

The Oregon Program Autism Training Sites (OrPATS) Project is a network of 40+ training sites throughout the state modeling evidence-based practices for students with autism. As part of the project we track the fidelity of implementation of teachers and other school-based professionals in Oregon. Our fidelity data has found that special education staff, with appropriate training, are implementing ABA strategies with fidelity. Educators are licensed in the State of Oregon by TSPC and are uniquely qualified to deliver specially designed instruction, including instruction based on the principles of ABA. Many educational curricula used by special education teachers in schools include ABA methodology. It is not logical to require these certified staff to obtain a BCBA before they can use an educational curriculum or implement effective ABA strategies.

Passage of SB135-Amendment 2, as written, will have significant unintended adverse consequences on services for children with ASD, their families, and for school-based providers.

Sincerely,

Joel Arick, Ph.D.

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A Sample of Relevant Research Articles Regarding School-Based ABA Interventions

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