

SB 16 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Meeting Dates: 3/4, 3/20

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Expands list of health practitioners that may conduct medical exams for special education evaluations. Removes references to health assessment. Adds audiology assessment as type of exam. Allows appropriately licensed, out-of-state health practitioners to conduct medical, visual or audiology exams. Requires health practitioners to report exam results to school districts. Applies to exams conducted on or after effective date. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Housekeeping bill
- Updating terminology
- Difference between health assessment and medical exams
- Out-of-state providers
- Reporting requirements for exam results
- Purpose of emergency clause

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In the 2017-2018 school year, Oregon school districts provided 78,867 students with special education services through the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), representing 13.6% of the total student population.

To receive special education services, a student must undergo an evaluation, which may include health examinations. Current law permits licensed physicians to perform medical exams and licensed nurses to perform health assessments for special education evaluations. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) reports that, in practice, medical exams and health assessments are the same type of exam. Senate Bill 16 removes health assessments from statute and permits nurses and physician assistants to conduct medical exams. The bill adds audiology exams to the statute to allow reporting of exam results to school districts. The bill permits naturopathic physicians appropriately licensed in another state to conduct exams, similar to the other health practitioners. It clarifies that all health practitioners must report exam results to school districts.