SB 496 -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Meeting Dates: 2/11, 4/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs school districts to ensure that all students have equal access to educational facilities unless facilities are not appropriate to meet students' needs. Prohibits school districts from placing alternative education, English language learners, or special education students in unequal, isolated, or restricted education settings. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2019.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Access to quality facilities for all students
- Substandard facilities
- Unequal access to lunch rooms, gyms, and playground spaces
- Special education students, English language learners, and alternative education students
- Portables
- School district policies

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-3 Replaces bill language.

Requires school district to provide the same access to specialized or common areas to special education students, alternative education students, or English language learners as it does for traditional students. Provides exception for behavioral issues and for compliance with court order or law enforcement agency.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon law defines special education as specially designed instruction that is provided at no costs to parents to meet the unique needs of child with a disability. According to the 2017-2018 Statewide Report Card, 78,867 students received special education services, representing 13.6 percent of the total student population.

Oregon law defines alternative education programs as a school or separate class group designed to best serve students' educational needs and interests and to assist students in achieving the academic standards of the school district and state. According to the 2017-2018 Statewide Report Card, school districts served approximately 13,300 students statewide in alternative programs.

Oregon law defines an English language learner as a student who has limited English language proficiency because English is not the native language of the student or the student comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the student's level of English language proficiency. According to data from the ESEA Title III: English Learner Collection for 2017-18, Oregon public schools served 54,408 English language learners, representing about 9.4 percent of the total student population.

PRELIMINARY