

Hello,

I am the parent of a student at Aloha High School with an IEP who receives social-emotional, behavioral, Special Education, and mental health supports through the Beaverton school district. I am also a member of the Beaverton School District Special Education Parent Advisory Council. I am writing this email specifically to ask you to increase Oregon's investment in pre-K through grade 12 education through HB 2019.

As a district and as a community, we have seen a significant increase in the need for funding in the areas of social-emotional, behavioral, Special Education, and mental health supports for children and youth. The needs are growing much faster than the funding the school district is receiving from the feds or the state legislature. And in fact, we are seeing more and more reductions to our funding for these programs each year. This cannot continue.

It is commonly known the Special Education is not funded at the level that has been promised by the federal government and no stop gaps have been forthcoming from the local government to compensate for these shortfalls. Oregon House Joint Memorial 3 urges the United States government to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The lack of federal funding for IDEA, a lack of increased education funding from the state level, an increase in the expenses to educate students has resulted in yearly reductions to Special Education, Counseling, Health Services, 504, multilingual, and English Language Learner Supports.

In our district, there are cases where one special educator is supporting 42 students with disabilities and some special education classrooms have class sizes as high as 20 students in the class. This directly impacts the quality of education that my child receives and drastically reduces the chances that each of these special needs students will graduate. The graduation rates of special needs students are not even being addressed in the graduation goals being discussed.

Our district nurses have to provide health care management for at least 3,000 students or four schools. Our social workers are responsible for supporting at least 11 schools. Our Special Education Department alone will be experiencing \$932,000 in reductions for students with disabilities. This is a crisis of morality; it is unacceptable that our state is continuing to fail the needs of our most needy students like my son.

Our state keeps saying how we are focused on improving our education system and our graduation rates, but our legislation and our budgets do not reflect these goals. We do not provide the funding required to meet the needs of the typical students, let alone the needs of our special needs students, such as my own. Its time to put our money where our mouth is and fully fund special education programs to ensure our special education students' needs are being met and that these students graduate.

I am begging the Joint Committee on Student Success to increase funding for PK-12 education and specifically to appropriate better funding to address the Individuals with Disabilities who are serviced by Special Education, Counseling, Health Services, and 504 programming. My son's education depends on it.

Thank you,

Linda Odermott

Direct 503.417.5362