



Mission: Empower Oregon families experiencing disability in their pursuit of a whole life by expanding awareness, growing community, and equipping families.

March 21, 2023

Chair Dembrow

Vice-Chair Weber

Members of the Senate Committee on Education

RE: Opposition of SB 633 – Regional Centers for Special Education and Related Services

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber and Members of the Committee,

FACT Oregon is a family-led nonprofit that works toward a future where communities are accessible to, inclusive of, and empower the self-determination of, people with disabilities. We support families, youth with disabilities, and partners to hold high expectations and set positive trajectory, navigate special education and disability systems and services, and advocate for the supports and opportunities youth need to thrive at home, in school, and in community. **Since 2012, we have served as the state and federally designated Parent Training and Information Center for special education.**

FACT Oregon appreciates the intentions behind SB 633 as it attempts to address the educational crisis Oregon faces due to workforce shortages and lack of professional development on how to best meet the needs of students with disabilities. However, there are vast concerns about the bill that require attention so that the burden of these challenges are not unintentionally shifted onto our most vulnerable students.

Senate Bill 633:

- Is a duplication of effort as school districts and education service districts are already required to serve all students with disabilities with individualized instruction designed to meet their unique needs. This bill diverts funds way from these existing programs to create new programs which reduces the capacity of the public school system and all students.
- Lacks the specific criteria about which students with disabilities it is intended to serve.
- Lacks the specific descriptions of services that it provides to students with disabilities that can't be met within a school district or education service district.
- Does not address how it promotes academic rigor and diploma acquisition, particularly for modified and extended diplomas that require access to general education curriculum.
- Has the potential to inadvertently incentivize segregation of children with the most significant support needs in special education, rather than apply strategies learned from 40+ years of best practices.
- It risks creating the perception that students with disabilities are better served in segregated settings, leading to reduced efforts to integrate students with disabilities into general education classrooms, which extensive research supports.



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- Does not invest in a statewide system to provide high quality professional development for educators by experts on supporting students with complex needs.

FACT Oregon appreciates that there has been willingness to continue this conversation and respectfully urges the committee to reconsider Senate Bill 633 and instead explore alternative ways to support students with disabilities by investing in high quality experts that would travel to train district staff on working with students with complex behavior support needs, providing additional resources to schools to support students with complex support needs, and using targeted universalism to move us past outdated, ableist beliefs that may unintentionally promote segregation.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Christy Reese
Executive Director
FACT Oregon