

Dear Representatives, Senators, and Governor Kotek,

I'm writing because over 60% of Oregon 3rd graders aren't reading at grade level - even though research shows that 95% of kids can learn to read, given clear, structured instruction. I'm concerned that as currently written, [HB3198](#) and [HB3454](#) leave it up to individual districts to choose whether to apply for literacy funding that addresses our reading crisis. What happens to kids who live in districts that choose not to apply? The failure of these students to receive this education will cause irreparable harm.

Oregon needs mandates, data, and accountability here. The state needs screening to identify struggling readers, K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade structured literacy programs, and then screening to identify readers that continue to struggle. With proper instruction, Oregon will be able to solve the challenges for a number of struggling readers, reducing the number of students that need more intensive instruction. With the structured literacy, 75% to 90% will be able to read at grade level, leaving a much smaller population that would require more intensive instruction.

Measures [HB3198](#) and [HB3454](#) may be good first steps toward addressing our crisis. However, we need legislation that ensures our students get what they need. I'm asking you to consider the following changes:

- Center students who struggle the most with reading. Instead of a voluntary grant application process for districts, funds and resources should be specifically and explicitly dedicated to schools with the highest numbers of struggling readers, administered and directed by the Oregon Department of Education.
- Ensure the instruction and tools that children need to succeed are grounded in scientifically based research about reading. An example of guard rails could be a Governor-appointed task force that vets specific assessments, curricula, teacher training, and other resources.
- Prioritize tutoring and teacher training. Intensive, high-dosage tutoring helps struggling readers immediately, while teacher training is a long-term investment in our educators as professionals that pays dividends for generations. Both should be prioritized in funding, vetted by the above task force, and coordinated by the Oregon Department of Education.

Sincerely,

Jared

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