

Submitter: Nancy MacMorris-Adix  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure: HB3198

Chair Neron, Vice Chairs Hudson and Wright, members of the committee, I am writing in support of HB 3198 and would like to share my daughter's story as an example of why we must do better. My daughter started first grade in the fall of 1993. She was a hard worker and yet wasn't learning to read. Her teacher thought there was a problem and asked if we would like her tested to determine what the issue was. At the time, a child needed to be 3 years behind grade level to get tested. Yes, you read that correctly, the plan was to wait until she was 3 years behind before testing and planning interventions. Both the teacher and I pushed to get the testing. It was done all orally and we were told that she simply had a low IQ and we shouldn't expect much. We worked hard with her and her teacher continued to believe in her abilities. When she started 3rd grade, the teacher asked if we would consent to having her tested because she was now 3 years behind. I was initially resistant because what parent wants to be told their child has a low IQ? Ultimately she was tested and was found to be in kindergarten first month in her ability to decode words. This is because she was not taught phonics- whole language was the approach in those years. Her ability to guess correctly what words were by their context was high enough that she again did not qualify for any help. In the summer after 3rd grade, we sought a reading tutor, paid for it ourselves and drove her to Portland for it 5 days a week for the entire summer break. We were desperate because her self esteem was so low from 3 years of struggling. She learned to read that summer thanks to an amazing tutor who knew how to assess her needs, meet her where she was and give her the tools she needed to be successful. She never looked back. Today my little girl with the low IQ is a health care provider with a doctorate who is thriving. The fact that my family income was such that I could afford this level of intervention was not lost on me. It was my motivation to run for school board to fight for all children to get early intervention to be successful. Teaching kids in a way that works for them, that is based on science is necessary to insure that all Oregon kids get a great start in learning to read. Please vote yes on HB 3198 and send it to the floor with a do pass recommendation.