



Irrigon Junior-Senior High School

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Rose Palmer, Principal

Maria Ortega, Vice Principal

Mike Royer, Counselor, Athletic Director

To: Chair Neron and the House Committee on Education

RE: House Bill 4079

My name is Jose Ortiz and I am a teacher for students with exceptionalities at Irrigon High School in the beautiful high desert of Eastern Oregon. Like you, I am a passionate advocate for these kids and what they need. I have to tell you, that I am leaving this career. This is my 6th year teaching, and it only took 6-month of Special Education in order to cause me to seek employment elsewhere. I am not leaving because of the education part. I am not leaving because of the kids. In fact, my top prospect keeps me in this same building as the student's mental health counselor.

I am leaving Special Education because the current environment I work in does not afford me the time to focus on the thing that matters most; **the students**. My current focus is too heavily involved in "paperwork". File reviews, planning documents, meeting coordination, report typing, progress reports, and searching for signatures. The effort I get to spend on the children is appalling. My district, like so many, needs more funding in order to get me out of the filing cabinets and in front of the students. I want to take my eyes off the computer and focus them into the future of our state; **the students**.

We have a legal responsibility to provide every student the resources they need to succeed. The 11% cap on SPED weights is an arbitrary cap that does damage to our kids, and pits those who need support the most against one another. Please vote yes on HB 4079, and ensure it receives the funding it needs so our special education programs can receive the funding it needs.

Jose Ortiz, MPA, M.S. Psych, M.A.T.
SPED Teacher & Case Manager
Irrigon Junior Senior High School
Irrigon, Oregon