

17 February 2025

Chair Courtney Neron
Vice-Chair April Dobson
Vice-Chair Emily McIntire
Members of the House Committee on Education

Support for HB 2953 – Special Education Cap Funding

As parents of a special needs first-grader in the Portland Public Schools, we are writing to advocate for the passage of HB 2953 and legislation that fully funds special education services.

We believe that every student in Oregon deserves the support they need, and we believe that teachers and staff should be equipped with the resources necessary for every child to succeed. Adequate funding supports important social development resulting in a decrease in school absenteeism and disciplinary issues. Students are more fully integrated into the school community when their educational and social development needs are met.

Adequate funding for students with special needs is central to addressing equity in education, but it is not simply a question of equity. When the needs of those with particular challenges are appropriately addressed, the needs of all students are better met, and the education of the whole community improves.

Without adequate support, how will our daughter obtain the education necessary for her to become an independent, engaged, and productive citizen? How will she give back to the community in the form of her unique contributions, not to mention contributing her share of the tax burden for the education of the next generation of Oregonians? She and her classmates deserve an adequately funded and appropriate education. We urge you to move forward in passing HB 2953 with a full funding commitment to remove the outdated and arbitrary limits that no longer reflect the realities of today's special education needs in the public schools.

Thank you for your time and leadership in ensuring that Oregon upholds its commitment to students with disabilities and to all students.

Peter Gunn & Lee-Anne Flandreau