

Date: January 29, 2020

To: Honorable Representative Doherty & Education Committee members

Title: Chair, House Committee on Education Oregon State Legislature

RE: Support for House Bill 4140 that proposes Requiring Department of Education to develop form for public education programs to use when student has been diagnosed with concussion or other brain injury

Dear Representative Doherty and other members of House Committee on Education,

As an Optometric Physician who has practiced at a university clinic for the past 3-decades, I have diagnosed, treated, and managed a large number of pediatric patients concussed from a variety of causes. A post-concussion commonality amongst the majority of these children from mild traumatic brain injury is difficulty with visual information processing. In the majority of cases, there was a direct impact on school performance.

As a professor who has taught neuro-rehabilitation for more than 2-decades, and as a researcher in the field, I have learned from the scientific literature that more nearly 70% of concussed individuals suffer visual consequences secondary to concussion. Those visual consequences (including eye-tracking, focusing, eye-teaming, and visual perceptual information processing deficits, etc.) interfere with school performance in the vast majority of cases. Although many of these post-concussion sequelae resolve within 3-months of the head injury, symptoms will persist for a minority of these children. To boost the chance for academic success following concussions, it is imperative for all stakeholders in the educational enterprise to not only recognize the symptoms of concussion, but also how the related-deficits can impact the child's learning and well-being. To wit, our state should implement a sensible form for public education programs for use to accommodate children who have been diagnosed with concussion.

On a side note, as a clinician and researcher, I developed a concussion symptom survey questionnaire that has been validated for mild to moderate traumatic brain injury. The Brain Injury Vision Symptom Survey (BIVSS) is now commonly used on 4-continent to screen for mild traumatic brain injury/concussion. If it is

of interest to your legislative committee or Oregon Department of Education, I will be happy to provide you with that tool. It is not only useful but free.

Sincerely,



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We strive to inspire our students to think, care, create, and pursue justice in our world

President, Brain Injury Connections-Northwest (BIC-NW) Board of Directors
Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Assn (NORA) Advisory Board
Northwest Congress of Optometry (NWC) Board of Directors