

HB 2056 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Dembrow

Senate Committee On Education

Action Date: 05/10/21

Action: Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 3-2-0-0

Yeas: 3 - Dembrow, Gelser, Gorsek

Nays: 2 - Robinson, Thomsen

Fiscal: No fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 4/21, 5/10

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Repeals statutory requirement that students take four credits of English to graduate high school. Replaces it with a requirement that students take four credits of language arts. Repeals statutory definition of English courses. Establishes statutory definition of language arts courses to include reading, writing, and other communications in any language. Expands definition of "world languages" to include any language other than a student's native language. Repeals statutory requirement that instruction in all subjects in public, private, and parochial schools shall be conducted primarily in English.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Benefits of removing English requirement
- Needs of bilingual and biliterate students
- College and university admissions requirements

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Modifies definition of world languages.

BACKGROUND:

In the 2018-2019 school year, the most recent year for which data is available, Oregon had 53,559 English language learners enrolled. This equates to 9.24 percent of Oregon's K-12 students. The most commonly spoken languages among Oregon's English language learners include Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese, Arabic, Somali, and Korean. House Bill 2056 A allows these students to fulfill graduation requirements by taking language arts classes in their native languages.