

I have been an educator for almost 30 years & have seen many changes impact students along the way. I'd like to share with you some of the impacts of increased class sizes and caseloads that I have experienced in the last 15 years of my teaching here in Oregon. In 2008, I had been teaching more than a decade & had a Master's degree in special education. It took three different part time positions for me to get 32 hours of work as a special education teacher. I had a caseload of almost 50 students to assess, to develop instruction for, then to train aides in that instruction, to deliver that instruction, to assess the efficacy of instruction, to adjust & to start again. That's just the teaching part of the caseload; the additional case management of student with special needs involves frequent collaboration with teachers across subject & grade levels, meetings with parents & service providers, IEP development, advocacy for student support needs at building and district levels, and teacher trainings & professional development. 32 hours a week to serve 50 families in three different roles. The next year, it took four different part time positions, adding the testing & intervention needs for 200 students to my duties, to get 32 hours a week of work. In 2011, I had five different teaching positions in two schools, adding another 40 students for English language arts to my caseload to get my 32 hours a week.

The following year, I added a third school to get 36 hours a week, and the year after, I was the special education teacher at four schools with six aides to train and supervise, along with my caseload of more than 50 students plus the four different school schedules to coordinate, four different school staff meetings and staff trainings, four different sets of parent conferences & student events, four different classrooms' worth of materials to maintain, across four different regions of my school district. Trying to serve as the only special education teacher in four different elementary schools was beyond taxing, and well beyond 40 hours a week of work I was given. I developed insomnia and experienced panic attacks trying to serve my students. I logged over \$1000 in mileage traveling between all the meetings at various schools. I had to promise my family to not do any work on Saturdays, not even peek at work email, to give them a full day of Mom and to give me a full 24 hours of rest. I was working close to 60 hours a week & still not maintaining the best practices I knew my students deserved, but I simply couldn't work any harder and not sacrifice my family or my health. My administrator admitted my job was impossible. I left those schools the following year; my mental & physical health could not sustain that impossibility. I watched elementary students that had been successful for years in their grade level classrooms suddenly relegated to the learning center, away from their peers, because numbers had risen so high in those classrooms that the sensory input was overwhelming. At least one of these children no longer attends public school, larger class sizes were too much to overcome. Going from a class of 25 to a class of 32 restricted not only their teacher time, it restricted friendships, restricted time to develop social-emotional skills with their peers, limited their childhood educational experiences, & their access to the education their friends received. This is not equitable education, nor does it work for our children. I urge you to support SB580.