

Disability Rights Oregon Supports HB 2945

HB 2945 requires school districts to provide needed support services, including services to meet the student's mental and behavioral health or the student's educational needs, when a student receives an out-of-school suspension or expulsion is imposed. Although DRO strongly believes that out-of-school suspension and expulsions are not an effective way of dealing with student misconduct, we do strongly support providing needed services to students who are impacted by these practices.

In Oregon and around the country, we know that suspensions and other discipline are not doled out equitably. We know that Black and Native youth are more likely to be suspended, that youth with disabilities are more likely to be suspended, and that Black and Native youth with disabilities are most likely of all to be suspended from school.

Sometimes those suspensions are the result of implicit or explicit bias in the classroom. Sometimes those suspensions result from a failure of the school district to accommodate the needs of the student. Too often, school districts just blame the students. Wherever these disparities occur, school districts need to look for how they can keep kids in the classroom and make sure they are learning, not staying home. Suspending a student instead of trying to meet their needs makes them more likely to drop out of school. Suspending a student makes it more likely the youth will end up in the child welfare system and in the juvenile justice system.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding DRO's position on HB 2945 please call Meghan Moyer at 503-432-5777.

