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Colt Gill

Director of the Department of Education

SB 290: Clarifying Educational Duties
Senate Education Committee
February 7, 2023

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the committee, I am Colt Gill, Director for the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). Thank you for the opportunity to provide information on Senate Bill 290 regarding clarifying the educational duties of the State Board of Education, the Department of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and district school boards. At this time, ODE has no position on this bill.

Background

Before we turn to analysis of this particular bill, ODE must first recognize the grounding truth that our system doesn't serve all its students equitably. The agency is fully committed to creating lasting systems change in partnership with the Legislature; we must make real progress for our students. Our ultimate goal as an agency is ensuring that every student who interacts with our educational system feels that not only have they received what they are legally entitled to, but they have truly received an inclusive and meaningful education—full of joy, understanding, exploration, and learning.

Opportunities

Senate Bill 290 clarifies the duties of ODE, the State Board of Education, the Director of ODE, and district school boards. However, the bill does not fundamentally change the process by which the State Board of Education determines whether school districts are in compliance with the law or the mechanism by which ODE enforces compliance.

Additional Considerations

Senate Bill 290 specifies that the Director of ODE has the duty to enforce state and federal laws not conferred on another agency. However, this directive is not congruous with current statutory processes related to which laws ODE regulates and how the agency regulates them. ODE would benefit from



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increased direction on how the bill is intended to impact those processes. ODE would benefit from the inclusion of an applicability clause that clearly denotes the date or school year to which the bill first applies. ODE looks forward to working with you to resolve this issue and others that may arise during the legislative process.

Respectfully submitted,
Colt Gill
Director