

Submitter: Joi Kilby  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB633

Dear Senators,

My name is Joi Kilby and I am the parent of a student at Serendipity. I'm writing to ask you to support a bill that will come up for a hearing in the Senate Education Committee on March 21st. Senate Bill 633 sets aside critical funding for Oregon's highest needs students. The bill would establish special education multi-district collaborative model which promotes the establishment of a network of special education centers in Oregon dedicated to healing our youth who struggle with the most acute mental health and disability challenges.

My son is a student at Serendipity because he needs a high level of support that the school district cannot provide. Due to his behaviors related to his disability during his first few days of the 2021/2022 school year, I was told by the school district that he would be unable to attend school. They submitted a referral for him to attend a specialty school, but due to the high level of demand and the lack of resources, he remained on a waitlist for the entire school year.

My son was accepted to attend Serendipity starting the 2022/2023 school year. It has made such a big difference in his life. I have had the pleasure of watching him grow in so many ways while getting the support he needs, including significant improvement in his communication skills and his ability to regulate behaviors. It has made a difference in his life and it is clear that it will have an impact on his future.

I am concerned that my son will not be able to attend Serendipity next year because I am aware of the lack of resources and staffing special education programs like Serendipity are challenged with. That's why it's so important for the bill to be passed because without special therapeutic and education programs like Serendipity, my son will have no other options for a public school education.

As a strong believer in Serendipity Center's mission and model to provide evidence-based, trauma-informed services to public school students, I support Senate Bill 633. This bill would advance the field of special education and children's mental health in Oregon so that more students will receive an equitable education experience and thrive. Thank you for your consideration.