

March 13, 2023

Chair Dembrow
Vice-Chair Weber
Members of the Senate Committee on Education

RE: Support of SB 575 – Student Success Plan for Students with Disabilities

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jan Morton a parent of a student receiving special education services in Portland OR, Multnomah county - PPS and I am writing in support of SB 575 to establish the Student Success Plan for Students with Disabilities.

My son is Autistic and nonverbal and has just started in kindergarten last September. It has a hard journey so far to be able to get him the supports he needed to even start Kinder, and this year is very much learning by doing. I don't believe this is the right approach or condition for any child to start school.

We need to properly equip all Teaching/Support staff to be properly trained to understand and support students with disabilities. We need to set the staff and students up for success with research-based training and understand the needs of the students better. It is NOT one size fits all and this is a complete miss to assume it is – this is what is demonstrated today in PPS.

All children deserve to have the right conditions to learn that can be adapted as needed to allow them to thrive. I believe that SB 575 will set the right foundational expectation and inclusion for all.

SB 575 would create targeted strategies to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities by:

- **Better preparing teachers and school staff** to serve students with disabilities through professional development and inclusionary best practices.

- **Improving data disaggregation** to reveal disproportionate outcomes at disability intersections like race, ethnicity, gender identity, location, educational placement, and disability type. This will help us target our approach to the students who are at greatest risk of being left behind.
- **Fostering better engagement between families and educators** by establishing Special Education Advisory Councils in each school district, or within education service districts serving small districts.

Please support SB 575 and the creation of a Students with Disabilities Success Plan, so we can ensure that all students have the resources they need to thrive.

Thank you,

Jan Morton