

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Portland State University
Vanport Building
1810 SW 5th Ave, Portland, OR 97201

March 14, 2023

Randall L. De Pry, Ph.D.
Professor/Department Chair
Department of Special Education
Portland State University

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Randall De Pry and I serve as Department Chair and Professor of Special Education at Portland State University. I've served in that role for 12 years. I'm writing to you today to express my unequivocal support for Senate Bill 572. This bill titled "Inclusive Postsecondary Education for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities" will extend the transformative work that has been happening at Portland State University focused on inclusive postsecondary education and provide opportunities for other IHEs to learn and grow from our work and effectively implement programs in their communities.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to Senator Gelser Blouin and Representative Ruiz for their sponsorship of SB 572. I am confident that with the passage of this bill that lives will be changed-- including the lives of students who participate in these programs, their families, college and university faculty and staff, and employers who will hire individuals who have completed programs like the Career and Community Studies program at Portland State University. In my view, this bill has an opportunity to transform our thinking about participation in postsecondary education, competitive and integrated employment, social engagement in inclusive postsecondary settings, and independent living.

The Career and Community Studies program is focused on three pillars: (1) academics, (2) employment, and (3) campus life. The CCS program provides access to fully inclusive classrooms with concomitant academic coaching and individualized learning plans, activities that are centered on career exploration and development, and access and participation in the wide range of campus activities and events provided on our campus.

Our program is a 4-year, pre-baccalaureate certificate program that was funded by a grant from the Transition and Postsecondary Program for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) office of the US Department of Education. Think College Inclusion Oregon provided opportunities for students, families, educators, and community partners to engage in innovative and collaborative thinking and planning. With a central focus on inclusion, individuals came to the table to create a vision of what post-secondary inclusive education could mean at Portland State University and worked together to create the non-degree certificate program that is now known as Career and Community Studies. One of the key outcomes of our funded project was to sustain this work after federal funding ended. I believe that SB 572 moves us closer to that goal by sustaining the work started at Portland State University while at the same time serving as a model demonstration site for Oregon colleges that wish to develop programs of

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their own. If given the opportunity, we look forward to working with the Higher Education Coordinating Commission and community college partners to establish inclusive post-secondary programs in communities across the state of Oregon.

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the Senate Education Committee for their tireless work in supporting education in the state of Oregon and ask that you vote “Yes” on SB 572.

Respectfully submitted,

Randall L. De Pry

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