



Mission: Empower Oregon families experiencing disability in their pursuit of a whole life by expanding awareness, growing community, and equipping families.

March 14, 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

FACT Oregon is a family-led nonprofit that works toward a future where communities are accessible, inclusive, and empower the self-determination of people with disabilities. We support families, youth with disabilities, and partners to hold high expectations, navigate special education and disability systems and advocate for the supports and opportunities needed for youth with disabilities to thrive at home, in school, and in community. **Since 2012, we have served as the state and federally designated Parent Training and Information Center [PTI] for special education.**

Every child has the right to receive an equitable education, and for students with disabilities, that right is embedded in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]. Yet today, students with disabilities [SWD] disproportionately face vast systemic inequities, leading to among the worst outcomes of any student group in our state. They have one of the lowest graduation rates, experience huge achievement gaps in reading and math, and with unsupported behavior needs, they continue to be disciplined twice as often as other nondisabled students.

While disability overlaps all demographic student groups, including other priority populations that the Student Success Act and Student Success Plans supports, none of these plans specifically address the specific barriers and ableism that impact students with disabilities.

Given ongoing inequities for students with disabilities, we must take decisive action to create targeted strategies for students with disabilities that will improve educational access, equity, and outcomes. Using a targeted universalist approach, SB 575 would:

- **Provide professional development** in best practices for educators and staff to **improve outcomes for SWD.**
- Create a system to **improve data disaggregation** to help us hone in on disproportionate outcomes (academic proficiency, disciplinary action, non-completion, and diploma acquisition) by educational placement, disability classification, race, ethnicity, gender identity, economic instability, geographic location, and other intersections.
- **Create authentic engagement between families and educators** by establishing Special Education Advisory Councils in each school district, or within education service districts serving small districts.

We support SB 575 as it shifts the state from a “one-size fits all” approach to one that is proactive, creative, provides educators with adequate training and information to support students, and allows management of limited resources to ensure that the most vulnerable students receive an equitable education.

FACT Oregon is joined in support by the partners that have included their logos below.



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Thank you for considering this testimony.
Christy Reese, Executive Director of FACT Oregon

Partners in Support



Creating Opportunities



Familias en Conexión



FEATT



The Arc of Lane County / Families Connected

OREGON FAMILY TO FAMILY HEALTH INFORMATION CENTER

Oregon Family-to-Family Health Information Center



COSA – Coalition of Oregon School Administrators