

Dear Representatives, Senators, and Governor Kotek,

My name is Jennifer Brooks, I am a constituent and a parent of 3 children in the Lake Oswego School District.

I am reaching out to ask you to SUPPORT [House Bill 2895](#), a bill removing the limits on state funding for special education.

In 2018 I had to become a full-time parent advocate for my then 2nd grade son when the district refused to evaluate him without PWN and despite Child Find mandates. When he finally received an IEP for severe dysgraphia and dyslexia, I then found myself having to fight endlessly for intervention approaches that were based in science and provided meaningful instruction for him, which at that time did not exist in our district. The district was adamant that the “little of this and a little of that” intervention approach was in fact systematic, explicit, and taught with fidelity. When I told them the intervention was not working, the then head of SPED said to me, “The role of SPED is not to teach your son to read and write. It is to allow him access to the general education through accommodations like books on tape.” He also stated, “The IDEA says while we can’t provide de minimus, we don’t have to provide much more.” Year after year Hudson’s district IEP goals remained largely the same and in the 5th grade he was still reading at a 1st-grade level. After years of meaningless intervention, Hudson gave up not only on the district but on himself. We finally removed him from school to try to help him close the gap and to help him with his anxiety and feelings of inadequacy. Hudson is now in 6th grade and we continue to have his literacy intervention handled privately. We have removed all literacy goals from his IEP because the district simply does not have the tools and credentials to help him.

As a parent, I have found myself on the opposite side of the educators. It is a difficult place to be. And it isn’t because they don’t care, they do what they do because they care so much yet aren’t provided what they need to have success with so many Oregon kids. I was later thanked by the specialists for not just fighting for Hudson, but for trying to create changes for all kids. Schools don’t have the funds or the oversight to do what is needed for these kids under IDEA to be able to provide FAPE for all. It is a huge loss for all these kids who are the future of this state. If you don’t invest in them now, what will that cost Oregon tomorrow?

Please support House Bill 2895 so funding and strategic oversight can be afforded for all of the kids in Oregon who are counting on you.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Brooks