

Submitter: Amanda Brown
On Behalf Of: Oregon Speech-Language and Hearing Association
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: HB2618

I am two years into my career as a school-based SLP and I feel constantly overwhelmed. My duties include fulfilling the direct service minutes for 60+ students PLUS:

- drive time between sites
- lesson planning for individualized goals and special interests of each student
- attending Annual Review meetings and other student support meetings
- documenting 6 month progress, annual progress, end-of-year progress
- creating individualized social stories, visual aids, etc
- developing and providing professional development
- trialing, obtaining, and programming augmentative and alternative communication devices (AAC)
- consulting with teachers and educational assistants
- billing Medicaid
- providing documentation and proof of skilled service for each visit in order to bill Medicaid
- writing funding reports
- providing recommendations on how to modify environment for students' success
- providing recommendations on accommodations for students

The immensity of the time and energy required to complete my duties has me questioning whether I want to continue to work in this setting. The workload is more reasonable in private practices and other medical settings (i.e. hospital, outpatient) and the compensation is considerably higher. I believe that these school-based services are essential for our students' success, especially students with disabilities, but I question whether effective intervention and therapy is possible with such heavy workloads. I feel that I work extremely hard every day but I'm spread so thin that I am not able to see the tangible progress of each student. This is because I am unable to provide the frequency and dosage of therapy that I believe would be beneficial for each student. If I were given a more reasonable workload, I could dedicate more time and energy to each student. Students would progress faster and be exited from services sooner; saving time, money, energy, and resources for the school-based health professionals and the school districts.

I hope that we are able to identify a methodology for determining appropriate number of students on workloads. This bill is an important start of a process forward to solutions.