



Oregon School Employees Association

www.osea.org

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April 24, 2023

House Committee on Education
Representative Courtney Neron, Chair

Re: Testimony in Support of SB 756A

Chair Neron and Members of the House Committee on Education:

For the record, my name is Misty Talerico. I am an OSEA member, and I live in Bay City, Oregon. I am testifying in support of SB 756A.

SB 756A allows classified employees access to the Individual Education Plans (IEPs) required by the state for all special education students. An IEP is the blueprint for a child's special education experience at school.

The combination of access to the planning documents and the identification of classified staff as key members of the IEP teams is an important step in better understanding the needs of our special education students.

Special education assistants are usually responsible for student behavior management, implementing IEP goals and collecting data on the IEP goals. There should be paid time to allow for staff to have a very baseline opportunity to review updates and plan how best to support their students every day given that many classified employees are scheduled in shifts of three or three and a half hours a day, so many times we are going in without any context.

As full time classified employees, we start our day with a morning bus duty as students arrive to school, and we end our day with students getting on busses. This leaves us with about 5-10 minutes of planning, documenting, cleaning and setting up for the next school day. This scenario does not set up the education team or student for success.

In my eight years as a classified special education assistant the majority of time, I was not invited to IEP meetings, even though I spent the majority of the day with that student as their 1:1 support staff. Many times, I was neither aware that there was a meeting scheduled nor was I asked to give input on the student and how best to support their needs. There have been times when I was not aware of changes to IEPs or behavior support plans. I gathered the outdated data for weeks because I was not given access to the necessary information.

Many districts will say that we cannot afford to have classified employees at the IEP meeting. They are wrong. We believe that Oregon cannot afford to exclude us at these vital meetings. As a mother to children on 504 plans and IEPs I want the staff who spend the





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majority of their time with my child there at the meeting giving important information to the IEP team and being fully aware of changes that need to be made.

By investing in the quality of employment of these vital roles, we believe the rate of retention and recruitment of classified employees will increase, so that together, we may support a higher quality public education experience for all students.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today.

Misty Talerico
Bay City, Oregon

