



Advancing Opportunities

May 8, 2023

To: Sen. Gelsler Blouin, Chair, Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Leslie Sutton, Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition

RE: Support for SB 819A (with the -13 Amendments)

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Sen. Gelsler Blouin and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition (DD Coalition) is a group of approximately 40 organizations across Oregon that promote quality services, equity and community integration for Oregonians with developmental disabilities (DD) and their families. Our members include a statewide coalition of people with DD, peer-based family support organizations, support services brokerages, advocacy organizations and DD providers.

Every child has the right to learn in Oregon's schools. For students with disabilities, this right comes from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) which grants students a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Yet, each day many of Oregon's students with disabilities – including students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) – are denied the opportunity to learn alongside their non-disabled peers when they are placed on shortened school day programs.

Many of these students' parents disagree with their child being put on the shortened day. Further, parents do not feel they had a say in the decision to implement a shortened day.

As a group that represents many different parts of the Developmental Disability Community, we know the power that access to education gives students with IDD. Often much of that power comes from being part of the school community, complete with peers from various backgrounds. Removing students from the school community not only creates isolation for the student, but it also denies them the opportunity to learn, grow and connect with their peers.

We support SB 819A with the -13 amendments because it will ensure that parents receive notice specifically about shortened days and their right to consent to, revoke consent or oppose the shortened day for their child. Further, the -13 amendments require regular meetings to discuss the shortened school day. This will ensure that there is a consistent plan to provide supports to the student while they are on shortened day and a plan for when the student returns to full time school.

Now is the time to affirmatively follow IDEA and welcome all students into Oregon's schools. SB 819A (with the -13) ensures that students with disabilities are in school with their peers or have a plan to return to school. We urge you to support SB 819A with the -13 amendments.