

Submitter: Autymn Galbraith
On Behalf Of Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB 1558

To the Esteemed Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 1558, which aims to amend the existing requirements for abbreviated school days to accommodate IDEA students (special education/504) in Oregon. As an educational administrator who supports students with special needs, and an advocate for inclusive education, all students and their families deserve equal access and parent choice to educational opportunities, regardless of their abilities.

Senate Bill 1558 addresses a crucial issue facing families of students with disabilities by striving to ensure that they have the same rights as other families without students with disabilities. Currently, parents of IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) students are unfairly discriminated against and often burdened with additional requirements, such as mandatory meetings every 30 days/90 days/or annually under SB 819. Parents of students with disabilities, including medically fragile, are being told that they do not have the right to parent choice to determine the length of their child's school day or the model of schooling they wish for them to attend. Remarkably, families without students on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan are not obligated to fulfill these requirements.

This disparity is deeply concerning as it undermines the rights of families with students with disabilities to make informed decisions about their child's education. By imposing additional requirements and limitations on these families, we are effectively denying them the freedom to choose what is best for their child's unique needs. This not only perpetuates inequality but also restricts opportunities for students with disabilities to access quality education on an equal footing with their peers.

Senate Bill 1558 seeks to rectify this injustice by ensuring that families of students with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as other families. By amending the existing requirements, this bill will eliminate discriminatory barriers and empower parents to make decisions that are in the best interest of their child's education and well-being.

Every child deserves to receive an education that meets their individual needs and supports their academic and personal growth. Therefore, I urge you to support Senate Bill 1558 and stand up for the rights of students with disabilities and allow their families parent choice for equal access to educational opportunities in Oregon.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Autymn Galbraith
Director of Special Education
Dallas School District

