

SB 953 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/19

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure establishes the Task Force on Transitions into Kindergarten as well as the Task Force's membership, responsibilities, operating procedures, reporting requirements, and staffing. It charges the task force with studying and making recommendations about best practices for supporting kindergarten transitions for children with disabilities.

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The rights of students with disabilities are enshrined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. IDEA codifies state and local responsibility for educating children with specific disabilities by requiring that schools provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to all students with those disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE), usually interpreted as mainstream classrooms whenever possible. IDEA also establishes requirements for identification and evaluation of children with disabilities. Additionally, the law grants parents significant influence over the educational programs for their children.

Children from birth to age three may receive early intervention services for developmental delays in any one of a number of developmental areas, including cognitive, physical, communication, self-help, and psycho-social development. In addition, for very young children, eligibility for services may be determined on the basis of medical diagnosis of a condition likely to result in developmental delay. Early intervention services can be provided to babies and toddlers at home, in a community setting, or one-on-one with a service provider. Early childhood special education (ECSE) is preschool-based schooling available for children with disabilities ranging from mild to severe, from the age of three to entry into public kindergarten. Need for services is based on identification of developmental delays or conditions such as vision impairment, intellectual disability, or autism. Services a child may receive include evaluation, speech therapy, physical therapy, vision and hearing services, and assistive technology.

Local school districts are responsible for identifying preschool-age children in need of services. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) then contracts with education service districts or school districts to supply those services. According to the [Oregon Department of Education](#), 78 percent of children with low levels of need, 54 percent of children with moderate need, and 20 percent of children with a high level of need received adequate levels of service in the state's ECSE program in 2024. ODE reports that in 2024, 14,544 children in Oregon were enrolled in EI or ECSE.