

## HB 2992 -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### House Committee On Education

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**Sub-Referral To:** Joint Committee On Ways and Means

**Meeting Dates:** 2/3, 4/7

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#### WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

This measure requires the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to establish a program to provide free eye examinations, prescription eyeglasses, and replacement prescription eyeglasses to students in Oregon K-12 schools that qualify for Title I assistance or where more than 50 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price meals. The measure allows for certain nonprofit and community organizations to administer the program, establishes parameters for the adoption of administrative rules related to the program, establishes reporting requirements, and creates the Eye Examination and Correction Fund. The measure declares an emergency and takes effect on passage.

#### ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Unmet need for eye exams and glasses
- Number of students going without eyecare
- Challenges finding eye care for students on medicaid
- Existing screening - parents often don't follow up
- Role of Lions Sight and Hearing Fund

#### EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-3 The amendment modifies the definition of qualified school, modifies the definition of qualified student, places primary responsibility for the program with the Oregon Health Authority, adds follow-up services to the program, places rulemaking authority with the Oregon Health Authority instead of the State Board of Education and modifies the rulemaking authority, requires funding be available to nonprofit organizations by May 1, 2026, and appropriates \$11 million to the Oregon Health Authority for the Eye Examination and Correction Fund.

#### BACKGROUND:

In 2013, passage of [House Bill 3000](#) required education providers to ensure that every child age 7 or younger receive a vision screening or an eye examination. The bill also directed the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to make recommendations regarding regular vision screenings in the public schools. The department, in its [report](#) dated December 2013, recommended that the state provide vision screening to every student in kindergarten, first, third and fifth grade. In 2017, [Senate Bill 187](#) appropriated funding to reimburse education providers for these screenings, and in 2023, [Senate Bill 1049](#) adjusted the reimbursement rate.

Many schools in Oregon rely on the Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation to conduct vision screenings, which are quick checks of a student's overall visual acuity. Eye exams are conducted by medical professionals and involve a more thorough evaluation of a person's ocular health.