

## **SB 978 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

### **Senate Committee On Education**

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**Prepared By:** Chris Bechtel, LPRO Fellow

**Meeting Dates:** 3/17, 4/9

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#### **WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

The measure requires school districts and education service districts to prepare annual reports summarizing the legal expenditures of the district and the legal processes involved. The measure specifies the content included within the report. The measure requires the district to publish the report and provide copies of the report to the respective district board and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) by October 15 of each year. The measure requires ODE to compile the reports into a single report, publish the report on ODE website, summarize the single report, and submit the summary to the Legislative Assembly by January 15 of the following year. The measure becomes operative in the 2025-2026 school year.

Fiscal impact: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

Revenue impact: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

#### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Legal expenditures
- Costs of special education disputes
- Current legal expenditure reporting
- Ability for families to have an attorney at IEP meetings
- Transparency of legal expenditures in school districts

#### **EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

-1 The amendment adds a definition for abbreviated school district day program and behavior intervention plan and removes 504 plan from the definitions. It modifies the content required in the reports. It specifies content requirements for districts with a ADM of 2,500 or more. It specifies that the report must include case number and caption titles.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Legal expenditures include attorney fees, court expenditures, and other legal costs such as expert witnesses and documents discovery. Attorneys fees can be hourly, flat fee, and contingent fee in most cases. Legal expenditures can impact school district budgets.