



**Support House Bill 2992**  
**House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care**  
**January 23rd, 2025**

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair Javadi, Vice-Chair Nelson, and Members of the Committee:

Prevent Child Abuse Oregon (PCA Oregon) is a statewide nonprofit dedicated to child and family wellbeing. We urge your support of House Bill 2992 Students See Clearly Act. We partner with 40+ organizations, state agencies, and community leaders to advance comprehensive primary prevention efforts in Oregon.

An estimated 40,000 students in Oregon go to school every day without the glasses they need.<sup>1</sup> Research shows 80% of all learning in a child's first 12 years is through vision, and 95% of 1st graders in low-income communities who need glasses do not have them.<sup>2</sup> We also know that 3rd graders who can't read are more likely to drop out of school.<sup>3</sup>

This legislative action would improve Oregon's staggeringly low reading levels. According to a [multi-state analysis](#) by researchers at Harvard and Stanford universities, Oregon was the only state out of 30 states studied where "students as a whole have failed to regain either reading or math skills."<sup>4</sup>

A controlled, three-year John Hopkins study published in JAMA Ophthalmology showed providing students glasses improved their English Language Arts scores by an amount equivalent to six months of class time.<sup>5</sup> The improvement was highest for students in the lowest

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<sup>1</sup> Arellano, A. (2024, November 15). *Chavez Elementary students receive free prescription glasses thanks to non-profit*. KEZI 9 News.

[https://www.kezi.com/news/chavez-elementary-students-receive-free-prescription-glasses-thanks-to-non-profit/article\\_77f3eb76-a361-11ef-b941-7fbdb1b970f7.html](https://www.kezi.com/news/chavez-elementary-students-receive-free-prescription-glasses-thanks-to-non-profit/article_77f3eb76-a361-11ef-b941-7fbdb1b970f7.html)

<sup>2</sup> Arnold, C. (2016, September 7). *Children's success in school affected by Vision*. Johns Hopkins Magazine. <https://hub.jhu.edu/magazine/2016/fall/baltimore-kids-eyeglasses-program/>

<sup>3</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2011, April 8). *Third grade reading skills & drop outs*.

<https://www.aecf.org/blog/poverty-puts-struggling-readers-in-double-jeopardy-minorities-most-at-risk>

<sup>4</sup> Fahle, E., Kane, T., Reardon, S., & Staiger, D. (2024, January 15). *The First Year of Pandemic Recovery: A District-Level Analysis*. Education Recovery Scorecard.

<https://educationrecoverycard.org/>

<sup>5</sup> Neitzel AJ, Wolf B, Guo X, et al. Effect of a Randomized Interventional School-Based Vision Program on Academic Performance of Students in Grades 3 to 7: A Cluster Randomized Clinical Trial. *JAMA Ophthalmol*. 2021;139(10):1104–1114. doi:10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2021.3544

quartile of scores.<sup>6</sup> Gains were greater than those documents noted for 1:1 technology, extended school days, and charter schools — for dramatically lower cost per student.<sup>7</sup>

PCA Oregon believes in supporting families and children (0-18 years) with all essential supports and investments required for success in the communities where they live, work, learn, and play. We embrace a vision where all children live in safe nurturing homes and supportive communities regardless of race, class, culture, or geography. We believe every child should have access to the resources needed to thrive, and providing the resources and services outlined in HB2992 would relieve a tremendous burden on families. We believe that children are our future, and investing in our future means investing in our youngest Oregonians, including investments that ensure every child has what they need to learn and grow in Oregon.

It is imperative that we center families and children in the decisions made at the state level. PCA Oregon believes these investments are critical to enhancing the wellbeing of children, and to the prevention of child abuse and neglect. We urge you to prioritize our children's needs and future by supporting House Bill 2992.

Thank you for your ongoing support of Oregon's children and families.

Sincerely,

*Nicole Cunningham*

Nicole Cunningham  
*Executive Director*  
Prevent Child Abuse Oregon

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.