



Chair Fredrick, Vice Chair Webber, and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Education Association (OEA) strongly supports HB 2992. As an organization representing over 41,000 educators and education service professionals across the state—including teachers, bus drivers, custodians, teacher assistants, nutrition specialists, and community college faculty and staff—we recognize the profound impact that access to vision care has on students' ability to learn and thrive in the classroom.

HB 2992 proposes a critical solution to improve access to vision care for underserved children across Oregon by creating a new, third-party administered program to provide free eye examinations and eyeglasses. This program would be supported through ongoing state funding and access to federal resources such as Medicaid and CHIP, ensuring that all children receive the essential care they need to succeed academically and beyond.

Our members see firsthand the challenges students face when they lack access to adequate vision care. A child's ability to see clearly is foundational to their ability to learn. When students struggle to read the whiteboard, follow along in their textbooks, or complete assignments, their confidence and academic performance suffer. Too often, educators witness students falling behind academically not because they lack capability, but because they lack glasses.

Currently, many students must endure long waits for special education testing before they can even access basic vision care. This delays their ability to fully participate in class and exacerbates disparities in educational outcomes. HB 2992 would address this gap by removing barriers to timely and accessible vision services, ensuring that all children—regardless of their family's financial situation—can thrive in their classrooms.

This legislation is not only a matter of equity but also of educational success. With better access to vision care, students will be better equipped to engage in their studies, which will, in turn, improve achievement scores across the state. It will also allow educators to focus on what they do best: teaching and supporting their students. When students can see clearly, they can fully participate in the classroom, and educators can dedicate their time to fostering learning rather than navigating systemic barriers to basic care for their students.

We believe that investing in this program will have far-reaching benefits. By leveraging both state and federal resources, HB 2992 offers a sustainable solution that will improve student outcomes and reduce the strain on our educators. We urge the Committee to support this vital legislation and to take a meaningful step toward ensuring that every child in Oregon has the opportunity to learn and succeed, free from the preventable challenges caused by undiagnosed or untreated vision problems.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to Oregon's students. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or require additional information.