

February 17, 2025

Dear Oregon House Education Committee,

I write to urge you to vote in favor of HB2953. As a parent and board president at a public charter school in Eugene, I have seen firsthand that Special Education services are critical to our students' wellbeing and success. I am confident that lifting the cap on Special Education funding will positively impact not only the students who receive services, but also SpEd staff, these students' parents, and entire school communities.

Every single day, our highly qualified, dedicated school staff is obligated to perform a process of triage to ensure that qualified students receive services. This is because numbers of students who qualify for Special Education services continue to rise even as numbers of Special Education providers decline. Increased funding will help attract and retain more qualified SpEd educators who can provide the services and support our students deserve.

Money directed toward Special Education is money well spent. Every dollar allocated to SpEd goes directly to services including specialized staff, therapies, and classroom support. Schools must maintain spending and justify services through Individualized Education Programs and 504 Plans. All SpEd educational activity is documented, and schools are held accountable for their spending. If you support allocating much-needed resources directly to Special Education instructors and the students they support, then you should support HB2953.

In the 2022-23 school year, 19,447 students did not receive the full funding they needed due to the Special Education funding cap. For several weeks at the beginning of this school year, many of our qualifying students did not receive services because of a staffing shortage at our sponsoring district. Oregon should do better for these students. Raising the cap to 15% would ensure funding matches the actual needs of students.

Students cannot thrive when schools are understaffed and underfunded. The people in the trenches—teachers, administrators, parents—are already experiencing the concrete consequences of inadequate funding. And these challenges are not going away; in fact, they are poised to get worse. Your support for HB2953 reflects your powerful support for Oregon's educators, families, and students.

HB2953 is an investment in Oregon's future. Special Education services help students reach their full potential. Lifting the funding cap ensures that every Oregon student gets the education they deserve, regardless of their needs. The legislature must pass House Bill 2953 to ensure special education funding keeps up with the needs of students today.

Sincerely,

Jenny Noyce

President, Ridgeline Montessori Public Charter School Board of Directors

[jenny.noyce@ridgeline.org](mailto:jenny.noyce@ridgeline.org)