



Representative Hoa Nguyen
Oregon House District 48

SB 953 - TRANSITIONS TO KINDERGARTEN

2/19 Senate Education Committee

Thank you, Chair, vice chair and members of the committee. For the record I am Sarah Arbuckle, Chief of Staff for State Representative Hoa Nguyen.

Rep Nguyen is not able to attend this meeting today, however I am honored to be here to share her written testimony for SB 953—I will read the Representative's testimony into the record now.

I am State Representative Hoa Nguyen, and I represent House District 48, which includes outer Southeast Portland and North Clackamas County.

I am here today to express my **support** for **SB 953**, legislation that will create a **task force** to develop best practices for supporting children with disabilities during one of the most pivotal transitions of their educational journey: the move from early childhood special education (ECSE) to kindergarten.

For many children, kindergarten is a time of excitement, growth, and discovery. However, for students with disabilities and their families, this transition can also be daunting. A shift from the **small, structured setting** of an ECSE classroom to a **larger, more complex** kindergarten environment brings significant changes—a **longer school day, increased class sizes, new routines, unfamiliar teachers, and different peer dynamics**. These factors can be overwhelming, particularly for children who rely on consistency and specialized support to thrive.

For parents of children with disabilities—especially those with challenging behaviors—this transition can be filled with **anxiety and uncertainty**. They worry about whether their child's needs will be understood, whether accommodations will be in place from day one, and how well school staff

will be prepared to support them. Too often, families face **gaps in communication and preparation**, leaving children vulnerable to unnecessary stress and setbacks.

SB 953 takes **a proactive, solutions-driven approach** to addressing these challenges. By **establishing a task force**, this bill ensures that Oregon is committed to developing **evidence-based best practices** that will:

- ✓ **Improve communication** between early childhood providers and kindergarten staff to ensure continuity of care.
- ✓ **Ensure accommodations, specialized equipment, and services** are in place **before** a child sets foot in the classroom.
- ✓ **Promote summer programs** that familiarize children with their new school environment, reducing anxiety and increasing confidence.
- ✓ **Provide training and guidance for educators** so they are equipped to meet the diverse needs of incoming students.

A well-planned and well-supported transition to kindergarten can **set the foundation for a child's long-term academic success and well-being**. By passing SB 953, we can take an essential step toward making our schools **more inclusive, equitable, and prepared** for every learner.

I **urge your support** for this vital legislation and Oregon's continued commitment to an education system that works for all students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.