

February 19, 2025

Chair Frederic, Vice Chair Dobson, Vice Chair Weber, and Members of the Senate Education Committee:

The Oregon School Psychologist Association (OSPA) is writing in support of SB 953, but we ask for an amendment to include school psychologists. School psychologists serve as key members of multidisciplinary teams serving students with disabilities. School psychologists bring unique contributions to kindergarten transition planning including assessment, school-based intervention, consultation, counseling, and family and community collaboration. Given school psychologists' unique role in supporting kindergarten transitions, OSPA requests that SB 953 be amended to include “one member who represents school psychologists” on The Task Force on Transitions into Kindergarten.

There is a significant need to improve kindergarten transitions. National surveys of kindergarten teachers indicated that **only 48% of kindergarteners experienced a successful transition** (Rimm-Kaufman, et al., 2000). Additionally, caregivers of children with disabilities expressed more concerns about the kindergarten transition process in meeting their child's needs.

School psychologists bring unique contributions to early childhood education and kindergarten transition planning. School psychologists also play a critical role in the accurate identification of students with disabilities and addressing racially disproportionate misidentification of students of color by supporting educators with improving instruction for students including implementing multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). Examples of services school psychologists can provide to support early childhood education and kindergarten transition include:

- Collaborating with early childhood programs to implement academic and social-emotional MTSS (e.g. Teaching Pyramid, a multitiered preventive preschool social-emotional framework).
- Partnering with families and other educators to support the transition from early childhood to kindergarten.
- Connecting families with community resources that may further support academic and/or social-emotional needs and family needs.
- Supporting schools with implementing universal design for learning to better meet the learning and social-emotional needs of all students.
- Providing group or individual counseling to students and families

School psychologists bring unique contributions to early childhood education and kindergarten transition; however, shortages of school psychologists impact access to these services. A complete solution to improving kindergarten transition services for students with disabilities must address the shortage of multidisciplinary educators with unique training in supporting these services, including school psychologists.

OSPA commends SB 953 critical efforts to improve kindergarten transition for students with disabilities. OSPA requests the opportunity to participate and contribute to SB 953 task force efforts to identify high-leverage strategies for improving services.

References

- [Students of color are disproportionately misidentified with learning disabilities and behavioral disorders, often altering the course of their lives. A UM-Dearborn professor is trying to help teachers be part of the solution.](#)
- [The Transition to Kindergarten for Typically Developing Children: A Survey of School Psychologists' Involvement](#)
- [Collaborating With School Psychologists: Moving Beyond Traditional Assessment Practices](#)
- [Teachers' Judgments of Problems in the Transition to Kindergarten](#)
- [NASP Position Statement on Early Intervention Services](#)