

3/10/2025

Re: HB 2508 ODE administered statewide student information system.

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and House Education Committee Members,

In my quarter century as a school psychologist in Oregon, I have had the opportunity to be a part of the vendor reviews, selection, and implementation process for two of the largest scale student information systems used in this state in the last two decades. I often did this volunteer work for my districts in addition to my regular duties as a school psychologist. I've also facilitated the statewide workgroup for the special education modules of these systems on and off over the years and have interacted frequently with the Department of Education when they've been willing to engage.

In my schools, I have frequently experienced the issues around receiving records for students, whether part of their regular education, special education, health, progress, or assessment records. The majority of the issues in getting records are around students moving in from other states, and within Oregon for students who are highly mobile.

While I can empathize with the intent of this legislation, I write in opposition to the current bill as drafted for several reasons:

- 1) The bill seeks to provide a solution to a problem while clearly not studying or understanding the root causes, frequency and impact of the actual problem.
- 2) The bill significantly underestimates the scope, cost and technical requirements of scalable student information systems, while overestimating the capacity of the department of education.
- 3) If implemented, it is likely that there would be significant disruptions to the investments and energy districts have made into customizing existing systems around Oregon's current requirements, including existing standardized data collections and reporting.
- 4) ODE has a history of discounting or minimizing data security concerns, even punishing employees for speaking out about their concerns, and,
- 5) The proposed technical advisory committee largely lacks the roles and expertise necessary to even minimally understand the nature of the tasks they would be charged with.

To me, this bill as drafted runs the risk of becoming another CoverOregon multimillion dollar failed venture, and the disruption it would likely cause to districts could be immeasurable. There are many experts in this state, one of the few states who have maintained a coordinated ongoing consortium of districts and workgroups to support implementations, who would be happy to inform the legislature about the potential impacts of this proposal and suggest alternative solutions.

Thank you for your consideration,

Justin Potts, MS NCSP
School Psychologist

Disclaimer: I have no financial interest in any of the vendors currently or previously in use in this state, have never worked for them, and have never received any income or financial benefit from them.