

Submitter: Jenny Reid

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education

Measure, Appointment or
Topic: SB5515

I am an Intake Specialist for NW Regional ESD for the last 4 years. The intake department is the first point of contact families have with Early Intervention. We meet with a diverse set of families. Our families are ethnically and economically diverse but they all have the same common purpose, all the families that reach out to program for services want the best in special education services. When our program is fully funded and fully staffed, we can offer our families and their children the best in special education services. We care about each family that enters our program and we want to be able to offer their children the services they desperately need to succeed in their lives. Educational studies have shown that Early Intervention services (for children aged 0-5) increases the success of a child with developmental delays. If families wait until their child reaches school age to get speech therapy or other needed therapy, it really puts that child behind his peers. It can also affect the child's educational future because the child can become overwhelmed and frustrated because they do not have the tools to communicate.

All the families I speak with are so thankful and appreciative that Early Intervention program services exist. They are excited to work with our Service Providers and learn new tools on how to work with their children at home. Our Service Providers do more than work with the child, they work with the family. They offer support to the family and guide them. Service Providers educate the families to show them their child is not abnormal, that they are not broken. The Service Provider can show the family and child different avenues in the learning process.

All Special Education programs are essential and our Special Education programs in Oregon are unique and stand out among other states. In Oregon, we should be proud of how we make even the youngest of children a priority. We should be proud we care about all our Special Education students at any age. We ask our budget decision makers to show the families we care by fully funding Special Education programs and services. We ask that they show families their children matter too. We want to see all children succeed and reach their goals. Thank you.