

03/13/2025

Joint Subcommittee on Education  
Oregon State Legislature

Subject: Testimony in Support of Increased Funding for EI/ECSE and Regional Inclusive Services

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Joint Subcommittee on Education,

I am submitting this testimony as an Itinerant Teacher of Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI) with Northwest Regional ESD, as well as the statewide Teacher on Special Assignment supporting BVI students and their teams in math and science. I am writing to urge you to fully fund Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) and Regional Inclusive Services to ensure equitable access to education for students with disabilities in Oregon.

Our current funding does not meet the needs of the students we serve. My colleagues and I work tirelessly to provide specialized instruction, accommodations, and essential support to students with visual impairments. However, our caseloads are unmanageably large, and the time we have with each student is not sufficient to provide the level of instruction and support they require to be successful. This is especially dire in rural areas, where services are already stretched too thin.

Additionally, students with visual impairments require specialized equipment, assistive technology, and adapted materials to access their education. Unfortunately, due to insufficient funding, these resources are often delayed, inadequate, or entirely unavailable. Many students would also benefit greatly from one-on-one support, but funding limitations prevent this from being a reality.

To address these urgent needs, I urge the Legislature to:

- Adequately fund special education for children under 5 (EI/ECSE) at \$432.8 million.
- Increase the special education cap in the State School Fund formula from 11% to 15%.
- Provide 100% reimbursement to school districts for high-cost disabilities.
- Adequately fund Regional Inclusive Services at \$122.4 million.

These investments are critical to ensuring that children with disabilities receive the education and support they need to reach their full potential. Without them, we are failing our students, their families, and the educators who are dedicated to their success.

I respectfully urge you to prioritize funding for these essential services. Thank you for your time and your commitment to Oregon's children.

Sincerely,  
Jeannette "JJ" Isaacson, M.Ed., TSVI]  
Itinerant Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments, NWRES  
Statewide TOSA for BVI Students in Math and Science