

February 4, 2026

Chair Lew Frederick

Vice-Chair Suzanne Weber

Members of the Senate Committee on Education

### **Opposition SB 1572**

Dear Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Committee,

FACT Oregon is a family-led nonprofit that empowers families, youth, and communities to navigate disability systems, advocating together for disability justice and policy change so that people with disabilities have what they need to thrive at home, in school, and in their communities. Since 2012, FACT Oregon has served as the state and federally designated Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) for special education. FACT is also a member of the Oregon Consortium of Family Networks, supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

Every child has the right to a quality education. Every educator deserves a teaching environment that enables them to provide quality education. Legislative decisions intended to uphold these fundamental rights and truths must be grounded in research-based and evidence-based practices that improve student outcomes.

**We strongly urge the committee to oppose SB 1572.** This bill relies on tools and strategies that are not supported by research and which directly conflict with federal disability law.

### **Removal of Students from Classrooms**

SB 1572 significantly expands the authority of educators to unilaterally remove students from classrooms using broad and subjective standards. This type of exclusionary discipline has been extensively researched and consistently shown to be ineffective at improving behavior or academic outcomes and results in higher rates of removal for students with disabilities and students experiencing behavioral, emotional, or mental health challenges.

For students with disabilities, this approach raises serious legal concerns. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) guarantees the right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and requires schools to provide individualized supports and positive behavioral interventions when behavior is related to a student's disability. Increasing removals without first ensuring these supports are in place violates federal law.

Notably, SB 1572's emphasis on classroom removal also contradicts [existing statutory requirements](#) that school discipline policies must<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills\\_laws/lawsstatutes/2019orlaw0267.pdf](https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/lawsstatutes/2019orlaw0267.pdf)

- *Keep students in school and attending class, and*
- *Use approaches shown through research to be effective in reducing misbehavior.*

The [June 2022 Neutral Expert Report](#)<sup>2</sup>, prepared for *United States District Court for the District of Oregon*, Case No. 6:19-cv-00096-AA clearly states (p. 4):

*“Disciplinary exclusion does not improve academic or behavioral outcomes. In fact, it increases risk for academic failure, disengagement, and involvement in the juvenile justice system.”*

SB 1572 moves Oregon further away from these evidence-based principles.

### **Mandatory Third-Grade Retention**

SB 1572 also mandates retention for third-grade students who do not meet reading proficiency benchmarks, allowing only limited and unclear exceptions. Decades of research show that retention does not improve long-term literacy outcomes and is associated with higher dropout rates and disengagement, particularly for underserved students.

The Neutral Expert Report confirms this concern (p. 5):

*“Retention policies tend to disproportionately affect students who are already underserved by the system... and do not reliably improve long-term academic achievement.”*

Retention is not a substitute for early intervention, targeted instruction, or adequate staffing. Codifying it into law ignores research and best practice on growing literacy skills. Meanwhile, IDEA does not require students with disabilities to be at grade level in order to access general education classrooms, so this may violate federal law as well.

### **Reinstating Essential Skills as a Graduation Barrier**

SB 1572 revives the Essential Skills graduation requirement despite Oregon’s own findings that the policy was burdensome, did not result in meaningful improved student learning outcomes, and was not associated with college and career success. Additionally, it was especially harmful for students with disabilities and other underserved students who struggled to demonstrate learning through a single exit requirement.

Reinstating this requirement reintroduces barriers without evidence that it meaningfully improves learning.

### **What Evidence Actually Supports**

There is no shortage of research on how to improve instruction, literacy outcomes, and school climate. The Neutral Expert Report is explicit (p. 6):

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<sup>2</sup> [Neutral Expert Report](#)



**Mission:** FACT Oregon empowers families, youth, and communities to navigate disability systems, advocating together for disability justice and policy change. Our goal is that people with disabilities have what they need to thrive at home, in school, and in their communities.

*“What schools need most is capacity-building... punitive policies implemented without foundational supports will not improve outcomes.”*

Proven, evidence-based solutions include:

- Fully funding Tiered Interventions and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Expanding school-based mental and behavioral health services
- Ensuring educators receive training in trauma-informed, restorative, disability justice-based, and culturally responsive practices
- Strengthening family-school partnerships, particularly for families navigating disability systems

SB 1572 does not invest in these solutions.

### **Vote No on SB 1572**

SB 1572 places the burden of systemic underinvestment onto children, particularly those who require additional instructional or behavioral supports, and codifies approaches contrary to evidence, research, and federal law. Rather than strengthening Oregon’s education system, it risks increasing exclusion and legal vulnerability for schools and contradicts research-backed practices.

**For these reasons, FACT Oregon strongly opposes SB 1572 and urges the committee to reject it.**

Respectfully submitted,

Christy Reese

Executive Director

FACT Oregon