



Office of Senator Sara Gelser Blouin

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Bipartisan Senate Bill Enforces Students with Disabilities' Right to Education**

*SB 819 restores student access to full time school beginning next month*

**SALEM, Ore** - Today, the Oregon State Senate voted overwhelmingly to enforce students with disabilities' right to attend school full time. [Senate Bill 819](#) will require informed and written parental consent before a student can have a shortened school day. It also requires the Oregon Department of Education to enforce the law and empowers the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission to investigate and hold superintendents accountable for refusing to restore equal access to schools for students with disabilities.

Today, nearly 1,000 students with disabilities in districts across the state are denied a full school day. In some cases, students receive as little as 25 minutes a week of instruction for years on end. If SB 819 is signed into law, beginning on March 27, parents of these students can file a written objection to their student's shortened day schedule. The district must return the student to full time school within 5 school days. Failure to do so can lead to loss of state school funds and discipline for the responsible administrator.

"Students with disabilities have had the right to full time public education since the 1970s. It is inexcusable that many districts routinely deprive students of the chance to learn reading, math and social skills by shutting the schoolhouse door in their faces," **said Senator Sara Gelser Blouin (D-Corvallis)**.

"Today, the Oregon State Senate sent a clear message: There is no excuse for school districts to violate the civil rights of students with disabilities, and the Oregon Department of Education is expected to enforce state and federal law. With rapid action from the House and Governor, Oregon students will be able to realize the promise of a free and appropriate public education next month."

The bill will now go to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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