

21 February 2014

STATE SCHOOL FUND TASK FORCE

Testimony Requesting:

- * Moving Long Term Care and Treatment education services into the State School Fund
- * Amending the funding formula for LTCT to make it more consistent with the SSF distribution formula
- * Increasing funding for LTCT programs at this time be raised from 2x to 3x weighted ADM (“Parrish report” in 2007 recommendation is x4.8)

Oregon Alliance of Children’s Programs membership has children in 64% of the long-term care and treatment programs. This includes children in school district operated classrooms as well as classrooms providers operate.

We are a statewide non-profit association, supporting good budgets and good policies for children and families -- so that we can make children Oregon’s greatest asset.

We do this by representing \$205 million in small businesses, delivering services and programs for over 100,000 children. We have a payroll of \$152 million for 5,500 employees and raise \$35 million in philanthropic resources each year.

Member programs span child welfare, juvenile justice, mental health, addiction, runaway and homeless, developmental disabilities and prevention. Every one of them has educational success as a top priority.

WHO ARE THESE 1150 CHILDREN?

In a review of Alliance member LTCT programs, the children receiving LTCT educational services have four consistent and compelling characteristics:

- 43% of them are children of color
- Essentially all of them are impacted by poverty
 - 94% of them are in free-and-reduced lunch programs
 - 99% of them are in the Oregon Health Plan
- They are all impacted by trauma, mostly abuse and neglect
- They all have a disability
 - they have a behavioral or mental health issue requiring treatment, or are developmentally delayed

These children are disenfranchised because of poverty, because of race, and because of the stigma of their disabilities. They are further disenfranchised by the State of Oregon – who, in the majority of



707 13th Street SE
Suite 290
Salem, Oregon 97301
Phone: (503) 399-9076
www.oregonalliance.org

these cases, are their “parents” – by being separated and treated differently than other children in the state’s school system.

And what will happen to these children if they do not get their fair shake at school? They are not likely to become healthy, productive adults who pay taxes. We know who the “high flyers” are... the small percentage young people and adults who use up the majority of tax payer services.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

The current LTCT funding formula is arbitrary, inequitable and wholly inadequate. The most recent example:

- In 2013, children in the SSF received a 13.2% increase in the funding formula, while LTCT children received only a 1.54% increase.
- The formula and decision to fund education services for children was developed 35 years ago.

Despite major changes in all of the companion systems for ODE and these children over the last three decades, escalating issues with the funding formula have yet to be resolved.

SOLUTIONS!

In 2006 the Oregon legislature provided a pathway to the solution, by mandating that the Oregon Department of Education conduct an analysis of the funding mechanisms for LTCT. The ODE hired the American Institutes for Research, and Thomas B Parrish conducted the research (thus the “Parrish report”).

- The report concluded that the funding formula was not rational, and not tied to the overall funding system; and that the funding was not adequate.

Further, the ODE communicated to the Governor and the legislature that...

- “The formula and method of funding ... is inequitable, not cost-based and bears little resemblance to the overall K-12 funding model.”

The fiscal impact on the SSF to include these children amounts to 34 cents per month per weight, or \$4.10 per year per child currently in the SSF.

And now, we have the information and the simple solutions to fix this discrimination and create education opportunities for these children that they are entitled to. All we have to do is follow the continuing recommendations that have consistently been made by the ODE for the last eight years.

Please don’t hesitate to contact Janet Arenz, Executive Director of the Alliance, with any questions or comments.

janet@oregonalliance.org

503-399-9076

Thank you