

The Honorable Brad Little
Governor of Idaho
Idaho Capital Building
Boise Idaho 83702

April 1, 2020

Dear Governor Little,

I am writing you first to congratulate you on your support of education in Idaho. I have a particular interest in the funding and attention to the needs of special education children.

I have a great grandson who is 11 years old who has been diagnosed with autism. He was born in Oregon and started school in Salem. He was sent back and forth at his elementary school between regular classrooms and a special education class taught by interns, not regular school teachers.

In 2017 his Mother moved with him back to Boise. My great grandson could not read. In the third grade he knew only a half dozen words. His grandmother, my daughter, recognized he was in trouble to be so far behind his grade level. She is a

retired Idaho second grade teacher and luckily for him , she started working with him with books from all the grades he had been passed though. A special education student needs more one on one help than they are receiving in both the Salem schools and the Meridian schools. The fact that his grandma has challenged him successfully to bring his reading skills up to the 5th grade level proves that individual help is a priority. A big noticeable change in him was when he was heard at bedtime reading out loud to his dog!

Many of the special education students are just sliding through their classes and I fear many of them may end up as homeless on our streets, unable to find employment or lead a normal life. It surprises me that we don't hear more complaints from their frustrated parents.

With your special interest in education, I am asking you to prioritize this growing group of children to receive the one on one help they need to succeed in learning. Very few special education students have a grandmother with the skill and love

to save the life of a child struggling with behavior and learning disabilities. It is a problem that just must be addressed. I have seen what is happening from afar in the schools in both Oregon and now Idaho to be alarmed.

I would appreciate a timely reply to my letter. Thank you for your consideration and attention to this special education challenge that is growing and not going away.

Sincerely,

Darleen M. Gilbert

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