

Submitter: Kelly Ellerman  
On Behalf Of: Oregon Charter Academy  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB1552

Good morning!

I am a mom of a student that attends Oregon Charter Academy. I have two boys they are 8 and 11 years old. They were attending the local public school up until the pandemic hit. This is due to two things AutoImmunity issues, one of my sons has sensory issues, and can't physically wear a mask longer than 5 minutes. I think about this cap and think if we were not able to make the change prior to the schools holding strong to the 3% rule for funding, which I do get, what about the students? Some students are not able to attend public school, but really want to try so the parent will enroll them, and then the student struggles. Then what? Punish the student for struggling? Punish the family for trying to make changes, but they didn't work?

Will we have pandemics often, probably not, will this one go away, probably, but it brought up a great stance on this rule. How is it the school's choice where a family chooses to go? The school might not fit where the family members work and having the students locally isn't an option due to raised childcare cost to have someone watch the child/children after school, weighted against a parent being able to pick them up. The school might not have the right fit for a student that need special education services, the student might not be able to attend public school due to health issues, but the school can say yes or no? Then the family gets into trouble, parents are turned in for negligence, and nobody wins especially the student. This needs to be about the students, isn't that what school is all about, the students? The future America?

If we fell into the time where schools, as in now are saying no especially in our small town, I would have to fight this, which I already had to speak to the Superintendent to get the approval, but it was before things go tougher. My child would have to one go to a school that isn't Oregon based, we would have had to move, which in turn is not a job loss for two working Oregians, and my farmstead would be upended. This is all because a school has a choice to say, "No"!

The time is now to make this change, if the pandemic has taught us anything let it be empathy, understanding and the fact voices do matter!

Thank you

Kelly