

Submitter: Tracy Allen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1552

As a resident of the Eugene 4J school district, we were having trouble finding a school model within the district that fit our special needs child who struggles with dyslexia and anxiety. Schooling at home seemed to be the only real option.

We prepared to teach our little one at home but we really wanted more help and guidance along the way. We knew the best solution was to find a home based program that would allow individualization for both socialization and extra-curricular activities while also meeting her unique academic needs. What we did not know was if this would be something we could provide on our own. We began looking into charter schools.

We eventually found exactly what we needed in the Fossil Distance Learning Program Charter School which is outside of the 4J school district.

Our Education Specialist at Fossil helped us tremendously to create an individualized learning plan that fit our child's special needs. The curriculum she recommended was Logic of English which incorporates Orton-Gillingham and Lindamood-Bell approaches for learning. She also recommended supplemental reading apps and tutoring which the charter helped cover costs for through intervention and also through referrals. These approaches made all the difference. The one on one instruction was key to our child receiving the best education possible to meet individual needs. Our little one has developed into a fluent reader despite the dyslexia.

The plan also includes specific extracurriculars that provide limited large group settings which eliminates anxiety triggers while still allowing for ample socialization and skills training not to mention exposure to numerous cultures and diversity. These extracurriculars are uniquely chosen to reinforce the lessons and give our child the opportunity to test the knowledge gained through life application.

Within Fossil, our child has blossomed into a bright, hard-working, overcomer who reads well. Our little one likes to be around others and enjoys the activities the school offers both online and in-person. Also, our kiddo greatly enjoys taking time on each lesson so it is fully understood and loves learning in a hands-on way. This is something that would have been very difficult to achieve in a traditional public school setting. The classroom schedules, large classes, and bookwork would have been extremely challenging for our kiddo. We are very grateful for the opportunity to be

enrolled in Fossil Distance Learning Program Charter School as it is the best option we have found for home-based individualized instruction in the state. The guidance received from our Education Specialist has been invaluable. Had we not been approved to attend this charter, we would have chosen to homeschool.

Parents know their own child best. It is important to allow parents to choose the best educational route for their children - one that suits their individual needs and the needs of the family. We support the removal of the cap because we know the value of having charter schools as an option. We know each child has unique educational needs. We want every child to have the best possible option for their education. Every child and parent must and should have the ability to choose whichever school is best for their situation whether that be a charter school or a traditional public school.

Oregon lawmakers, a vote to remove the cap is a vote for academic success for Oregon families and children. Providing a family with all possible educational options available for their child is what will promote lifelong learning successes and true community.