

HB 3204 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Education

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Meeting Dates: 3/8, 3/22

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Modifies timelines for students wishing to enroll in virtual charter schools sponsored by districts other than their resident district. Requires school district to provide notice of decision to approve or not approve within five business days of receiving request. Requires school district to base calculation of three percent on the most recent enrollment data. Requires school district to provide parents with data used in decision-making process. Requires State Board of Education to issue decision within 14 days of appeal, reduced from 30. Requires Oregon Department of Education to collect and compile virtual public charter school enrollment data and make data available to school districts for use in making determinations. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Needs of students and families
- Importance of timely information

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Adds requirement for charter to submit information to Oregon Department of Education (ODE). Adds exception to approval requirement for students who had been enrolled in a virtual charter school and then move to a different resident district. Requires decision to include reasons for not giving approval. Requires database to include most recent information.

BACKGROUND:

ORS 338.005 defines public charter schools as an elementary or secondary school offering comprehensive instructional program operating under written agreement between sponsor and applicant operating pursuant to Chapter 338. Virtual public charter schools are defined as a public charter school that provides online courses, and does not include public charter schools that primarily serve students in a physical location.

In its most recent annual statewide report card, the Oregon Department of Education reports that a total of 19 charter schools, or 14 percent of all charters, identify as fully or primarily virtual. These schools enroll approximately 40 percent of all charter school students in Oregon.

Current law sets a cap of three percent on the number of students from any school district that can enroll in a virtual public charter school sponsored by a different district and charges students' resident districts with approving enrollment above that cap. House Bill 3204 modifies the timelines for parental notification of districts' decisions and state appeals of those decisions.