

Submitter: Monique Boehme  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure: HB3204

Chairperson Neron, Vice Chairs Hudson and Wright, Members of the Committee, Thank you for considering my testimony regarding the ODE appeal process. I am a parent of two students in Springfield, OR, who up until this school year were exclusively homeschooled. I also hold a Master's degree in education. Our family moved back to Oregon from Texas last summer. We faced numerous challenges in our transition, including multiple moves with temporary housing. We had no way of knowing how long we would reside in any particular school district, and we had no intent of ever enrolling in traditional brick and mortar school. After researching all educational options at length, we decided the best fit for our students would be Frontier Charter Academy, a virtual public charter school. Upon submitting our letter of intent to Springfield Public Schools, we were immediately denied, and subsequently had to go about appealing through ODE. There were few resources to help us navigate this process, some of which were confusing and even contradictory. In my appeal, I clearly demonstrated that it was in the best interest of my students to be enrolled in FCA. Having waited over 20 days after submitting our appeal, I began making phone calls to urge a decision. I would not accept a beaurocratic bottleneck preventing my children from attending their first week of classes. Thankfully, my persistence paid off: our appeal was approved by ODE on September 1st.

While our experience ended favorably, the process could (and should) be improved and streamlined. No family should have to blindly jump through hoops in attempt to provide the best possible educational environment for their children. I believe HB 3204 is vital to ensuring Oregon families' right to school choice. Thank you.