



Allison Galvin
Executive Director

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Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Senate Education Committee,

For the record, I am Allison Galvin, Executive Director at Oregon Charter Academy. Oregon Charter Academy is the state's most tenured nonprofit, independently operated virtual public charter school, serving students in Oregon for nearly 18 years. Thank you for hearing HB 3204 A and for the opportunity to share the importance of ensuring greater transparency and efficiency in administering the 3% cap on virtual charter school enrollment. In our many years of experience working with families seeking to enroll their children in our school, we have become aware of obstacles and challenges that they face when encountering the 3% cap and navigating the appeals process. This bill seeks to reduce many of those challenges and streamline the process for parents and school districts while centering the educational needs of students, which is why we are all here.

Currently, families must wait up to 14 days for a district to respond whether or not the district will be denying the student's enrollment into a virtual public charter school due to their district being at 3%. Within existing law, the district is allowed to use any enrollment number from the past 12 months as the basis for their calculation. Additionally, the districts are not required to submit any evidence of their calculation, leaving families needing to trust that the district calculation of 3% is an accurate one. The family then has the right to appeal a district denial within 10 days, strictly based on whether the district followed the proper protocols currently in place. This appeal goes to ODE who has 30 days to respond. It is only at this point that the district will be requested to demonstrate the calculation used to deny enrollment based on 3%.

This current process often subjects students to be out of school for up to 60 days while they await a decision, and the responsibility lies solely on the family. HB 3204 A reduces that burden by shortening the timeline for district denials and appeals, reducing the amount of time children are out of the classroom awaiting a decision. It also requires school districts to calculate the enrollment data on which they base their decisions at least twice a year and reveal their calculations to parents when they issue denials based on having reached the 3%. This bill takes important and reasonable steps to increase data integrity and transparency in decisions that impact school access.

Oregon values transparency in government. HB 3204 A is a bill that provides greater transparency and efficiency within our system. Where a parent chooses to send their child to school is critically important, and the decision to deny that access is potentially life-altering for that student. If these decisions hinge on the 3% cap, essentially a math problem, we should do everything possible to ensure that the calculation is accurate and based on the most recent information available. This bill is an important first step in bringing transparency and integrity to the virtual school enrollment process and I hope the state will continue to facilitate greater public access to this incredibly important data.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring this bill forward, and I urge your support of HB 3204 A.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Allison Galvin".

Allison Galvin
Executive Director
Oregon Charter Academy