

February 14, 2024

TO: House Committee On Education  
FROM: Monamarie McCreary  
RE: My opposition to HB4161

Overall, this bill takes money from our public schools and gives it to so called “nonprofits” and charges districts to transport kids to the location they gave their money to. Using the term “savings account” sounds lovely but it essentially robs our public schools. That’s it. Pretty words with bad consequences.

People may want to move their kids to charter schools to get a “better education” but there’s no guarantee they’ll get that in equally underfunded charter schools. Underfunding education doesn’t make any sense when Oregon has an income surplus of **\$5.61 billion!**

**Oregon Constitution Article VIII Section 8.**

**Adequate and Equitable Funding.** (1) The Legislative Assembly shall appropriate in each biennium a sum of money sufficient to ensure that the state's system of public education meets quality goals established by law....

*In 2023 we all saw how Portland Public Schools struggled with their budget to give teachers a well-deserved pay raise. We also saw how the parents and kids suffered through this necessary strike.*

*Tim Nesbitt says it best in his commentary in the Oregon Capital Chronicle:*

**“With the exception of some local option levies and bonds for capital projects, every local school district budget is set by the state. In effect, the 90 members of the Legislature function as a super school board, telling their underlings what they have to spend while remaining at arms’ length from the consequences of underfunding or underperformance in our schools.”**

**“Meanwhile, lawmakers in Salem are wondering how their best budget ever for Oregon schools ended in such turmoil. And it’s not going to get better, until they take more responsibility for a K-12 system whose funding they control and whose challenges at the district level are, like it or not, their problems to solve as well.”**

<https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2023/11/28/what-state-lawmakers-should-learn-from-the-portland-teachers-strike/>

**Please vote NO. Don’t pass this band aid “buck”. Surgically fix the funding problem. Do what’s necessary to build a better budget for our public schools so we can provide the quality education our kids deserve in public schools, as stated in the Oregon Constitution.**