

YES ON HB 3953

*From the desk
of Tawna Sanchez*

Federally recognized Tribes in Oregon face systemic barriers when attempting to establish public charter schools through traditional local sponsorship processes. These challenges limit Tribal sovereignty in education and hinder the development of schools that honor Indigenous culture, language, and community needs.

HB 3953 would create a direct pathway for federally recognized Indian Tribes in Oregon to apply for public charter school sponsorship through the State Board of Education, ensuring equitable access and fostering culturally relevant, community-driven education for Native students.

This legislation would:

- Align with state and federal commitments to Tribal sovereignty and self-determination in education
- Ensure that the application process upholds accountability standards while respecting Tribal governance and educational priorities, such as the integration of Indigenous languages, values and history
- Address educational disparities by providing Native students access to responsive, community-based learning environments
- Reduce bureaucratic barriers that have historically prevented Tribes from becoming charter school sponsors

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