

I am writing today to urge your support for HB 3444. I am a parent of two children who attend Springwater Environmental Sciences School (SESS) in Oregon City. I couldn't be more proud of the work the staff does day in and day out to provide a positive learning environment for my children. They do all this work while receiving 80% of the state funding for each of our students. The sponsoring district keeps the remaining 20%. This results in a funding gap of \$400,000 per year. The SESS staff have asked for the district to increase the pass through from 80% to 85% for the past 3 years. They have said no. In this relationship SESS has no bargaining power, the district has no incentive to increase this passthrough.

It is important to remember that this charter school serves the same Oregon City students as the Oregon City School District. They are providing public education options for families in Oregon City and surrounding areas. One major difference is the fact that SESS cannot participate or conduct bond measures. So while OCSD passed a \$163 million dollar bond for facilities, SESS will not be eligible for a dime of that. Charter schools who own their own building are in a very tight spot. For my children's school, passing HB 3444 and increasing the pass through to 95% would be a game changer. SESS could plan and save for future facilities repairs and improvement, including needed safety upgrades.

I firmly believe in the importance of public school. Charter schools are public schools. We need your support to continue to provide financial support for schools doing innovative work in the state of Oregon. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

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