

Subject: Support for HB 3444: Equitable Funding for Oregon Charter Schools

House Committee On Education
Oregon State Senate
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

March 9, 2025

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and Esteemed Members of the House Committee on Education:

On behalf of the engaged parents and dedicated students of Hope Chinese Charter School, I am writing to express our unequivocal support for House Bill 3444. We recognize the paramount importance of HB 3444 in rectifying the substantial funding disparity that currently disadvantages Oregon public charter school students, including those at Hope Chinese Charter School.

As you are aware, Oregon's public charter schools are integral components of our state's public education system, providing diverse and valuable educational opportunities for families. However, the existing funding structure results in public charter school students, such as those at Hope Chinese Charter School, receiving approximately 48 cents for every dollar allocated to district students. This inequity poses significant challenges to our institution and directly compromises the educational experience we strive to provide.

Hope Chinese Charter School is committed to providing a student-centered bilingual environment and delivering exceptional instructional quality. Our dedicated educators and staff work diligently to cultivate a positive and enriching learning experience, evidenced by our consistent record of academic achievement in past assessments.

The chronic underfunding of our charter school presents numerous severe challenges. Due to increased student enrollment, our aging teaching spaces are manifestly insufficient. Students lack adequate space for essential activities, and our school facilities are in urgent need of modernization. Regrettably, Oregon's current school funding model results in significant underfunding for public charter schools. This translates to outdated and inadequate facilities, a lack of transportation services, limited access to food security programs, and insufficient provision of essential school supplies and mental health resources. For example, our limited budget means we cannot afford a full-time school counselor, impacting students' access to vital mental health support.

These are not theoretical concerns; they are the daily realities faced by Hope Chinese Charter School and numerous other public charter schools throughout Oregon. By supporting HB 3444, you have the opportunity to redress this fundamental inequity in Oregon's education funding model. The enactment of this bill would represent a crucial step towards ensuring that all public school students, regardless of their attendance at a district or charter school, have access to the resources necessary for a high-quality education.

We respectfully urge the Committee to provide favorable consideration to House Bill 3444. The passage of this measure is imperative to establishing a more equitable and just public education system in Oregon, one that values and adequately funds all public school students. We are confident that your thoughtful deliberation will culminate in a positive outcome for the students of Hope Chinese Charter School and for public charter school students across the state.

We strongly encourage you to vote in favor of HB 3444.

Thank you for your time, dedication, and unwavering commitment to the students of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Chung-Hsien Yang
Parent of Hope Chinese Charter School Student