

Submitter: Iliana Fontal
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3444

Dear to whom it may concern,

My husband and I have experience first hand the high quality of education and safe environment provided at Arthur Academy in Reynolds SD and in Gresham SD. Our twin daughters completed elementary and until 6th grade in the Reynolds location of Arthur Academy many years ago and until this day they continue the relationship with some classmates and the school. They remember those years as their best because of the close knit community that the school created, they have zero tolerance with bullying, parents and highly involved, the academic standards are high while they accommodated to our daughters ESL needs, and attending school there was life changing for them.

In sum, we could not be more grateful with the school for the awesome education our daughters received! At this moment they are 20 y.o. and one of them is pursuing Nursing and the other one pursuing Mechanical Engineering, and they both have a 4.0 GPA with straight As. They claim this is because of the math and reading focused education they received in Arthur Academy.

Nowadays our youngest daughter is a second grader at Gresham Arthur Academy! she is very artistic and loves sports and we are very glad that the school just started to offer arts this year, however the school is doing it with very limited funding and thanks to the parents donations of materials and time. We think it is crucial for the school to get the funding they deserve, to keep running and not to eliminate teachers and crucial offerings for the kids like (arts, music, PE).

As a parent of an Oregon Public Charter school student, I am writing today in support of House Bill 3444. HB 3444 will fix a deep disparity currently happening in Oregon Schools. Over the last 10 years, charter school enrollment has gone up, but funding relative to enrollment has decreased. Public charter school students like our three daughters are public school students, and it's past time to fund their education fairly.

Please vote YES on HB3444.

Sincerely, Iliana Fontal & Alvaro Velasco

PD: our reason to search for a smaller school was the trauma we lived when the shooting of Emilio (a 15 y.o.) happened at Reynolds HS. we lived across the street from the High School and his little siblings attended Arthur Academy.