

House Committee On Education

Oregon State Senate
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and members of the Committee,

As **Board Chair of Portland Village School**, a **public charter school**, I urge you to **support House Bill 3444** to address the inequitable funding model that disadvantages charter school students across Oregon.

Public charter schools serve a critical role in Oregon's education system. We provide innovative, personalized learning environments for students, many of whom struggled to thrive in traditional district schools. Our model prioritizes equity, autonomy, and student success—yet **charter school students receive significantly less funding than their district counterparts**, limiting our ability to provide the resources and support they deserve.

The Problem: A Deepening Funding Disparity

Oregon's **public charter schools receive only 80% of the State School Fund Grant**, with no access to the additional **state, local, and federal revenue streams** that district schools benefit from. A **recent ECONorthwest report** found that charter schools receive **less than half** the funding of district-run schools, despite rising enrollment. This widening gap threatens the ability of charter schools to serve students effectively.

At **Portland Village School**, this funding shortfall is evident in the challenges we face:

- **Neurodiverse students are underserved.** Many families choose our school because their children's needs weren't met in traditional settings, yet **special education support has only decreased** while the number of students needing services has grown.

- **Classroom behavior support is inadequate.** Post-pandemic shifts in student behavior require **more in-class support for teachers**, but with our current funding model, hiring additional staff is unaffordable.
- **Facilities costs create additional strain.** Unlike district schools, **charter schools must fund their own building purchases and maintenance**, adding significant financial burden without access to local bond funding.

The Solution: HB 3444 Ensures Fair Funding for All Public School Students

Passing HB 3444 would:

- **Increase the portion of the State School Fund Grant allocated to charter schools from 80% to 95%**, reducing the inequity in funding per student.
- **Grant charter school students access to local, state, and federal education funds** that district schools already receive.
- **Expand transportation options** by allowing charter schools to provide student transportation within their sponsoring district and access transportation reimbursement grants.

Every **public school student in Oregon deserves access to an equitable, well-funded education**, no matter which public school they attend. On behalf of **our teachers, staff, and most importantly, our students**, I strongly urge you to **support HB 3444** to ensure that all students have access to the resources they need to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ian Terrell, MLIS (he/him)

Board Chair
Portland Village School
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