

Submitter: Andrea Killion  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3444

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:

I am writing in support of House Bill 3444. I am a parent of an Oregon public charter school student. HB 3444 will fix a deep disparity currently happening in Oregon schools: that Oregon public charter school students are essentially funded at 48 cents on the dollar compared to district students. Public charter school students are public school students, and it's past time to fund their education fairly.

Almost every public charter school parent has a story as to why a public charter school became the right fit for their child. Many started out in traditional public schools, but couldn't receive the education they deserved, often due to learning challenges that required specialized attention beyond what a public school classroom could provide, or physical, developmental, or mental health challenges that public schools simply couldn't, or wouldn't, accommodate for.

My seven year old child attends Arco Iris Spanish Immersion School in Beaverton where she is thriving academically and socially. The staff is tirelessly dedicated to their students, and the community of parents, students, and volunteers come together daily to support the school in numerous ways. As an active parent volunteer, I realize first hand the transformative effect extra funding would have on our, and every, charter school.

Unfortunately, because of Oregon's current school funding model, public charter schools are significantly underfunded. Many buildings are old and in need of upgrades, students have no access to transportation services, there are no paid library staff, food security programs are limited, and schools lack essential school supplies and mental health resources. For example, at my daughter's school, there is no trained counselor. There is a student success coach, but this individual does not possess a graduate degree in school counseling as do the counselors at the non-charter elementary schools. By passing HB 3444, you can fix this ongoing disparity and provide fair funding for public charter school students who deeply need it.

I urge you to vote yes on HB 3444.

Thank you,

Andrea Killion