

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 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: 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 me, as an immigrant and a resident of Troutdale, my educational background played a significant role in my decision to enroll my son in a charter school. I grew up abroad and attended private Christian schools my entire life in the Philippines, later attending a private Christian university in South Korea. Throughout my education, I experienced structure, clear expectations, and a strong learning environment—things that I greatly benefited from. When it came time to choose a school for my son, I knew I wanted something similar for him. I recognize that this kind of setting may not be the right fit for every child, but for my son, his charter school has been exactly what he needed. It has provided him with structure and a sense of belonging in a social setting. He has learned when to be independent and when to collaborate with others in learning. This environment has been invaluable to his growth, and I want to ensure that all children in Oregon who thrive in similar settings have access to well-funded schools.

Though we attend a charter school, our school is part of our own school district. As the designated charter school for the district, it makes little sense that my son's full academic and economic support does not follow him to his local school. He is just as much a public school student as any other child in our district, yet the funding disparity suggests otherwise. Our charter school serves families in our community, just like any traditional public school, and it should receive equitable funding to provide students with the resources they need to succeed.

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 can't access transportation services, food security programs are limited, and schools lack essential supplies and mental health resources. By passing HB 3444, you can fix this ongoing disparity and provide fair funding for public charter school students who deeply need it.

Please vote yes on HB 3444.

Thank you,
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