

House Committee On Education
HB 3444

Dear Chair Neron and members of the Committee:

My name is Stephani Walker and I am the Executive Director of the Arthur Academy Charter Schools. I am here today to ask for your support of House Bill 3444.

Currently, Oregon's law creates a funding disparity for public charter school students. By passing HB 3444, we can fix the issues with Oregon's school funding model and provide fair funding for public charter school students.

Per statute, Oregon's public charter schools can only access 80% of State School funds, and have limited to no access to the number of other revenue streams that districts receive. A recent report by ECONorthwest found that Oregon public charter schools receive less than half the funding of their district counterparts.

At Arthur Academy, this funding gap is evident in a multitude of ways:

- Our schools have less teaching staff per student
- Our teaching staff are paid significantly less than teachers in district run schools and it's becoming increasingly difficult to retain teachers
- We must use the State School fund dollars for our buildings which take a significant amount of our budget - this includes the building lease, repairs and ongoing maintenance

We provide our own HR, hiring, training and IT so there is no reason for 20% of the state school fund to be held back by a district.

Passing HB 3444 will help fix this ongoing disparity by:

- Allowing charter school students to access 95% of the ADMw provided through the State School Fund and
- Allowing charter school students to access local, state and federal education dollars that are currently available to non charter public schools.

Charter Schools are committed to educational innovation,
We are committed to providing specialized educational opportunities and,
We are committed to offering a high quality education to all of our students

Passing this bill will fix the funding disparity in Oregon. Since all of Oregon's public charter schools serve an important role for students and families, they deserve this bill to pass. Please carefully consider passing HB 3444.

Thank you
Stephani Walker
Arthur Academy Executive Director