

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.

I have a neurodivergent son. Not only is a public charter school the best option for my son, because of its specialized learning environment, but maybe the only option that ensures he has a quality education in a healthy, inclusive environment. Simply put, public charter schools provide an educational environment that other public schools cannot. Which is why it is patently cruel and unfair that public charter schools are critically underfunded when they serve a critical need for the Oregon education system.

The current system takes 20% from public charter schools and gives it to the "administrative oversight funds" when those funds **do not benefit the charter schools**. That 20% could be better served repairing and/or upgrading old buildings, providing transportation services, allowing for food security programs, and otherwise funding essential school supplies and resources.

Consider fixing this disparity and providing more funding for public charter school students who also deserve a quality, financed education.

Please vote yes on HB 3444.

Thank you,
Stephen Thomas