

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB2583

I am the parent of a charter school student and a teacher at a different charter school in Oregon. The Student Success Act was designed to help students who need it most, but virtual charter students are excluded. HB 2583 is about fairness—ensuring all students have access to SIA funds, no matter where they learn.

Since having my own student enroll as a charter school student and then moving from a "traditional" public school teaching position to teaching at a charter school, I have seen the amazing impact charter schools can have on students. These impacts are often in the areas Oregon needs most! Reading and math intervention and graduation rates. I have had numerous students who came to my school as a last resort, when other schools simply did not work for them. Many of these students were credit deficient, suffered from debilitating depression or anxiety, or were fearful for their physical and mental safety in a brick and mortar school. When they realized that they were in a place that could give them personalized instruction in content areas they had previously failed or struggled in, made connections with teachers and administrators, and felt safe, these students began to have success at school whereas before they hadn't. Not only did these students graduate, but many found a new sense of self-efficacy, confidence, and purpose they hadn't experienced before attending a charter school.

In addition, as the parent of a high achieving, neurodivergent, academic student, I cannot fathom what our high school experience would have been like without a charter school. Before my son attended a charter school, he was told to read a book, tutor other students, or do extra worksheets when he finished early. This was for his entire school experience from K-6th. Upon transferring to a charter school, he was able to take advanced courses that met his academic needs. He has had access to wonderful music programs, AP courses, and community service experiences, all while being supported academically and still being able to play sports for his local high school. Not all students fit in the box of traditional schools, we need to fund all schools that help Oregon students achieve success by providing equal funding.