

Submitter: M  
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 Dobso and McIntire, and members of the Committee:

As an Oregon public charter school student, I am writing today in support of House Bill 3444. HB 3444 will fix a deep injustice currently happening in Oregon schools: that Oregon public charter school students are effectively funded at 48 cents on the dollar compared to district students. Students at Ridgeline Montessori Charter School are public school students, and it's past time to fund our education fairly.

Each student here at Ridgeline Montessori Public Charter School has a story about why this school has made a positive difference in their life. 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.

Montessori and Charter Schools deserve the same funding as public schools because even though those schools might not use the same type of curriculum as public schools, there are other benefits. At Ridgeline Montessori Public Charter School students are motivated to do work instead of a teacher giving them an assignment and the student doing it just for them, there is a community focus, and the classes are smaller which means that each class is able to be their own close community.

Students are also given free work time where they are able to choose what work they do and for how long they do it which teaches independence. In each class there are two teachers and smaller classes which means that each student gets more individual attention from teachers. Montessori schools teach their students how to care for the environment, the students are able to do a lot of presentations which teaches them how to learn how to present and talk in front of many people, there is a flexible learning environment especially when we are younger.

Montessori curriculums focus on learning about global issues, Montessori students learn how to solve problems on their own, and in Montessori environments there tends to be a lot of group work which helps to teach students how to work with other people. All of these reasons support the idea that Montessori and charter schools deserve the same amount of funding as public schools do.

Unfortunately, because of Oregon's current school funding model, public charter schools are significantly underfunded. This directly impacts me as a student. Many buildings are old and in need of upgrades, students can't access transportation services, food security programs are limited, and schools lack essential school 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.

Sincerely, Student of Ridgeline Montessori Public Charter School