



HB 3046: Charter School Application Process Waiver

Creating a transparent, accountable process for districts to better focus their charter school application submissions to the needs of district students

Bill Summary

Allows State Board of Education to grant waiver related to public charter school application process if school district board meets specified criteria.

Policy

The primary goal of HB 3046 is to allow school districts to request a waiver from the existing charter school application and evaluation process in order to bring about greater focus to start-up applications and to provide greater relevance of charter schools to a local district's targeted educational goals.

- Currently, the charter school application process is governed by ORS 338.045, which dictates the minimum proposal requirements, and ORS 338.055, which describes the evaluation process, criteria, and timelines.
- Under the current law, a district must accept and review any and all applications submitted, and must evaluate each based on the same set of criteria, regardless of the focus of the application or the needs of the students in the district.
- HB 3046 would allow a district to better align its charter school application process with its own goals for increasing student achievement, and with its state accountability framework by providing the opportunity to request a waiver from the State Board of Education (SBE) of ORS 338.045 and ORS 338.055.
- A district seeking a waiver of these sections of the statute would be required to submit a proposal for an alternative application process and set of evaluation criteria to the SBE for approval.
- The proposal must describe:
 - The alternative application process
 - How the process aligns with the district's goals for increasing student achievement and its state accountability framework
 - How the process would increase equitable access to underserved families.
- The SBE would evaluate the proposal based on whether or not these components were satisfactorily described, and would approve or deny the waiver request.
- There is existing precedent in current charter law for waiver requests. ORS 338.025(2) states that "...the State Board of Education may grant a waiver of any provision of this chapter if the waiver promotes the development of programs by providers, enhances equitable access by underserved families to the public education of their choice, extends equitable access to public support by all students or permits high quality programs of unusual cost."
- This bill simply seeks to outline a process and define parameters by which a district may request a waiver of the application and evaluation requirements in charter law, as well the process by which that request would be evaluated by the SBE.
- Districts can choose whether or not to seek a waiver; it is not mandatory; districts choosing not to seek a waiver would simply default to the current statutorily defines process.