

Subject: Re: Support for SB 819 and SB 820

Dear Chair Roblan and Members of the Committee,

April 7th as you consider SB 819 and SB 820, I urge you to vote "yes" to passing the bills out of Committee. Unfortunately, public charter schools currently receive 42% less funding per pupil. That would change with the passage of SB 819 and 820.

My son has attended SW Charter School for the last six years. This publicly funded school offers its students an opportunity to learn by making connections with their local community, also called place based learning. Smaller classes and a focus on civic responsibility allows my son to thrive at school. He learned about the history of immigration by attending an U.S. Citizenship swearing in ceremony and meeting the newest citizens. He learned about how laws are passed by working with a city commissioner to propose a "no smoking" ban in city parks. This hands on learning is partially funded by the generous donations of parents, friends and local businesses through its annual fundraising auction. Unfortunately, this creates a great burden on families and does not reflect the tradition that public schools are solely funded with public funds.

Finally, as a public school, we hope that our student body can reflect the true demographics of the State. Access by all citizens is critical to this and SB 820 would help meet this goal.

I urge you to vote "yes" to SB 819 and 820.

Sincerely,

Aaron Britton
Board President
Southwest Charter School
Portland, OR