

Subject: Support SB 819 & SB 820

Chair Roblan & Committee, Tomorrow SB 819 and SB 820 will be before the Senate Committee on Education and I emphatically urge you to pass these two critical measures. Public charter schools are a vital source of energy and experimentation in public education. While traditional public school environments may adequately educate most students in a cost effective manner, there are children, like mine, for whom this system does not work. Four of my five children currently attend Southwest charter School (SWCS) and have had such a positive experience, and a positive attitude at school. Our oldest graduated from SWCS last year & is thriving at Milwaukie Academy of the Arts (Clackamas Co charter school). Our oldest was doing poorly and becoming lost in the shuffle at our neighborhood district school. Not all children fit each assigned school's model of teaching, nor do they all thrive in a classroom setting with over 35+ kids. It is so important to have these options, but also for great schools to have fair and adequate funding and resources to achieve these goals. Unfortunately our school, like many other charter schools, must make all this happen with 42% less funding than district schools get. The Chalkboard Project just did a thorough study of this and the results are discouraging. As a tireless SWCS volunteer and president of the PTO, I know firsthand how difficult it is to achieve the results we have, and are being held to, with such a drastic reduction in funding compared to our district counterparts. Our teachers and children deserve the same funding and opportunities that are provided to all district teachers and children, even if that means migrating to an alternative charter environment which allows them to thrive. I ask that you please pass SB 819 and SB 820. I very much appreciate your careful consideration of these issues. Sincerely,

~ Christina Cartwright