



Senate Meeting Testimony

NAME: Melissa Burlingame

AGENDA: Support for SB 819

Chair Roblan, and members of the committee, I'm Melissa Burlingame and a parent at Hope Chinese Charter School (HCCS aka Hope) in the Beaverton School District and I am here to demonstrate my support for SB 819.

Hope Chinese Charter School is a Mandarin immersion charter school. Since 2012, my son Matthew, currently a 2nd grader, has been attending HCCS and next year my other son Samuel will be entering into kindergarten there as well. Children attending HCCS have an opportunity to learn a foreign language and receive a high quality education.

I support the bill SB 819, because it will ensure funding to help charter schools continue to serve the needs of the community and will allow equality between public charter schools and traditional public schools. According to a recent study, students in Oregon public charter schools in 2012-2013 school year received 42% less public funding than students in the district-run schools. Students at Hope Chinese Charter School have experienced the impact of lack of funding.

SB 819 would close the disparity without requiring any new revenue and enable public funds to follow public school students. It would shift less than 1% of the state K-12 budget. This would be a great significance in value to our children in our public charter schools.

Currently, parents and administration have the responsibility to make the school budget balance every year, because as a charter school, it is only partially funded through public funds. Throughout the year we are continuously searching for grants and organizing fundraisers to close the financial gap for basic school operations. The bill SB 819 will help cover the costs for basic school operations and ensure more equal funding for all public students.

Charter schools were created by the State of Oregon to provide alternatives and choices in meeting the needs of all children in Oregon. Help make this happen by supporting SB 819.

Regards,

Melissa Burlingame

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