

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**House Committee On Education****Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued**Revenue:** No Revenue Impact**Action Date:** 04/17/15**Action:** Do Pass As Amended, Be Printed Engrossed, And Bill Be Referred To Ways And Means.**Meeting Dates:** 03/06, 04/15, 04/17**Vote:**

Yeas: 8 - Doherty, Frederick, Hack, McLain, Piluso, Reardon, Sprenger, Wilson

Nays: 1 - Barreto

Prepared By: Richard Donovan, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes Task Force on Virtual Public Charter Schools. Directs task force to examine specific issues related to sponsorship of virtual public charter schools. Requires task force to report to Legislative Assembly no later than September 15, 2016. Sunsets task force December 31, 2016. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Concerns that some virtual charter schools are, effectively, statewide schools
- Challenges of oversight in very large schools
- Possibility that the bill, if enacted, would enable schools to have a cap on enrollment and could plan accordingly
- Concern for schools that have reached large enrollment as a result, in part, of strong relationship with current charter district; concern that existing relationship would be terminated
- Virtual charters service a segment of the population of students that has not been well served by existing system
- Virtual charter schools as laboratories for change, innovation

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

In Oregon, a charter school is a comprehensive public school operated by a group of parents, teachers, and/or community members as a semi-autonomous school of choice. The charter school operates under a performance contract or “charter” between the members of the charter school community and the sponsoring board of education. Charter schools may be sponsored by school districts, public institutions of higher education, and the State Board of Education. Charter schools must offer a comprehensive education that includes curriculum covering all Oregon academic content standards and courses necessary to allow students to meet high school diploma requirements. This program is often implemented through education models, platforms, and schedules that are distinct from, and alternative to, the traditional public school model.

Senate Bill 100 (1999) allowed charter schools to operate in Oregon. For the 2013-14 school year, 124 charter schools were in operation, with charter school enrollment totaling 27,070 students in 2012-13. In the 2012-13 school year, 76.6 percent of charter school students met or exceeded reading standards and 55.2 percent of charter school students met or exceeded math standards.

House Bill 3151-A establishes the Task Force on Virtual Public Charter Schools, and directs the task force to examine specific issues related to sponsorship of virtual public charter schools.