

**SB 915 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Senate Committee On Education**

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**Meeting Dates:** 4/11

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Modifies funding amounts school districts must pay to non-virtual public charter schools. Requires school districts to transfer federal, state and local funds to public charter schools on the same basis funds are distributed to district schools. Allows public charter schools to receive the same reimbursement for transportation costs as school districts. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2017.

**REVENUE:** May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

**FISCAL:** May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

**EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

**BACKGROUND:**

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) defines public charter schools as public schools operated by a group of parents, teachers and/or community members as a semi-autonomous school of choice within a school district. Public charter schools are given the authority to operate under a contract or "charter" between the members of the charter school community and the local board of education (sponsor). Under Oregon law, a charter school is a separate legal entity operating under a binding agreement with a sponsor. A public charter school is subject to certain laws pertaining to school district public schools, is released from others and must operate consistent with the charter agreement. During the 2015-2016 school year, 126 public charter schools operated in Oregon.

Current law places responsibility for providing transportation to charter school students on the charter school itself, and allows charter schools to negotiate transportation arrangements with school districts. State law requires school districts to provide transportation for charter students in the same manner as students attending non-chartered public schools, but does not require districts to add or extend existing bus routes. Senate Bill 915 allows charter schools that incur transportation costs to be reimbursed for those costs at the same rate as school districts.