



OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

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**Oregon Public Charter Schools
Informational Presentation to House
Education Committee
June 3, 2021**

Legislative Intent

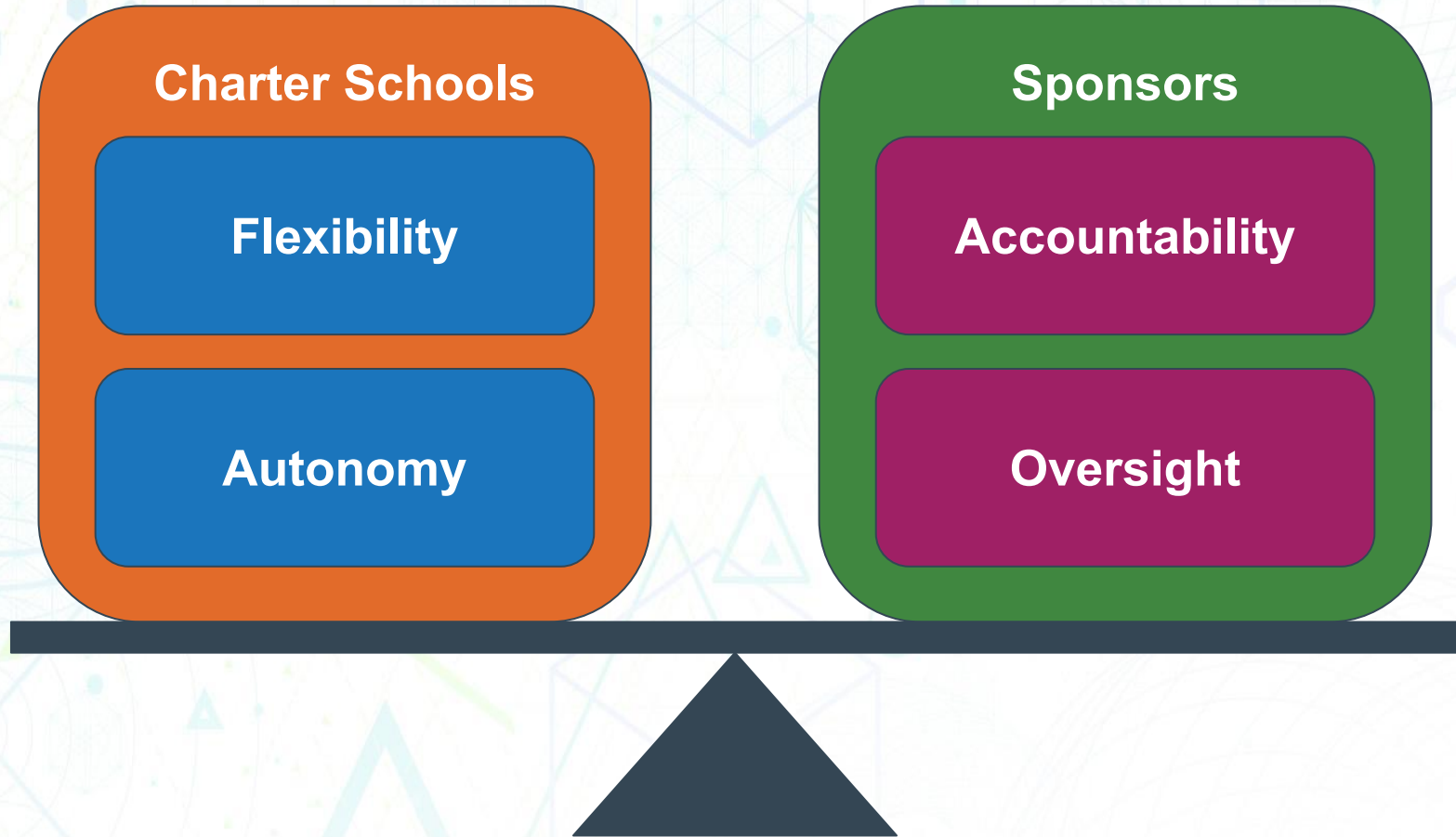
Public charter schools are created as a legitimate avenue for parents, educators and community members to take responsible risks to create new, innovative and more flexible ways of educating children within the public school system. The Legislative Assembly seeks to create an atmosphere in Oregon's public school system where research and development of new learning opportunities are actively pursued.

Oregon Revised Statute Chapter 338.015

Legislative Goals

1. Increase student learning and achievement;
2. Increase choices of learning opportunities for students;
3. Better meet individual student academic needs and interests;
4. Build stronger working relationships among educators, parents and other community members;
5. Encourage the use of different and innovative learning methods;
6. Provide opportunities in small learning environments for flexibility and innovation, which may be applied, if proven effective, to other public schools;
7. Create new professional opportunities for teachers;
8. Establish additional forms of accountability for schools; and
9. Create innovative measurement tools.

The Public Charter School Bargain



Charter School Start-up and Sponsors

Start-up:

Group of charter school developers must submit an application to the district where they intend to open the charter school. The district is required to evaluate the application and decide whether to sponsor the charter school.

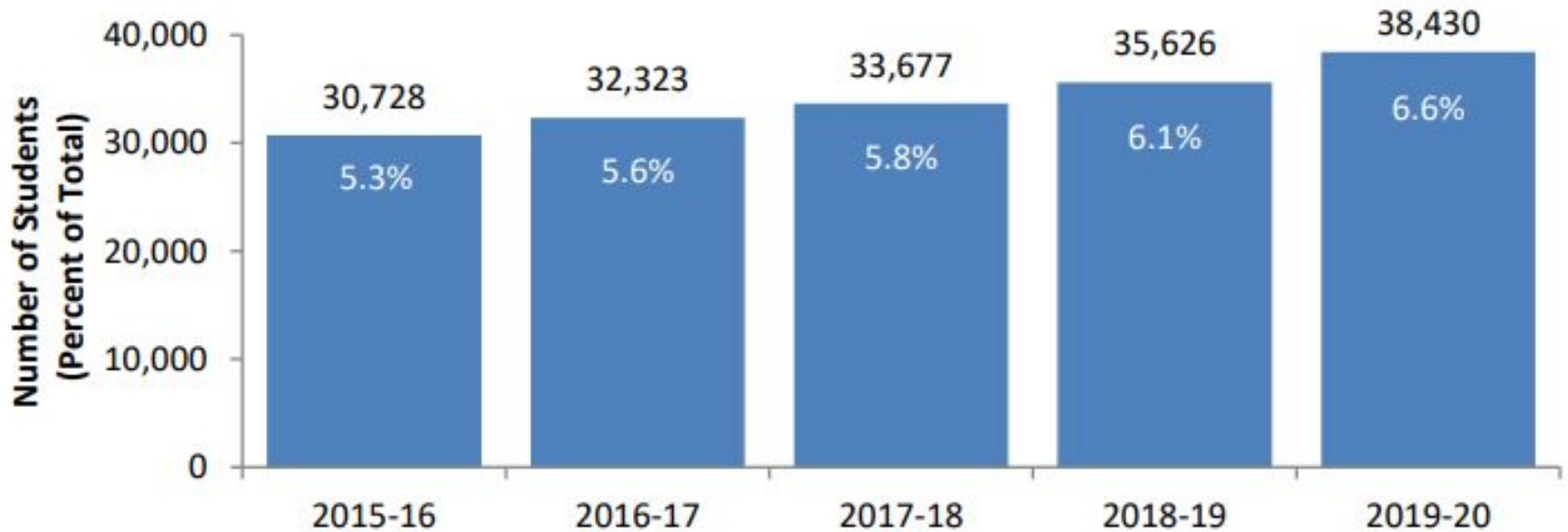
Sponsors:

In Oregon, school districts are the primary sponsors. Currently, 132 charter schools are sponsored by 82 school districts and the State Board of Education.

The State Board of Education, through an appeal process, sponsors four charter schools.

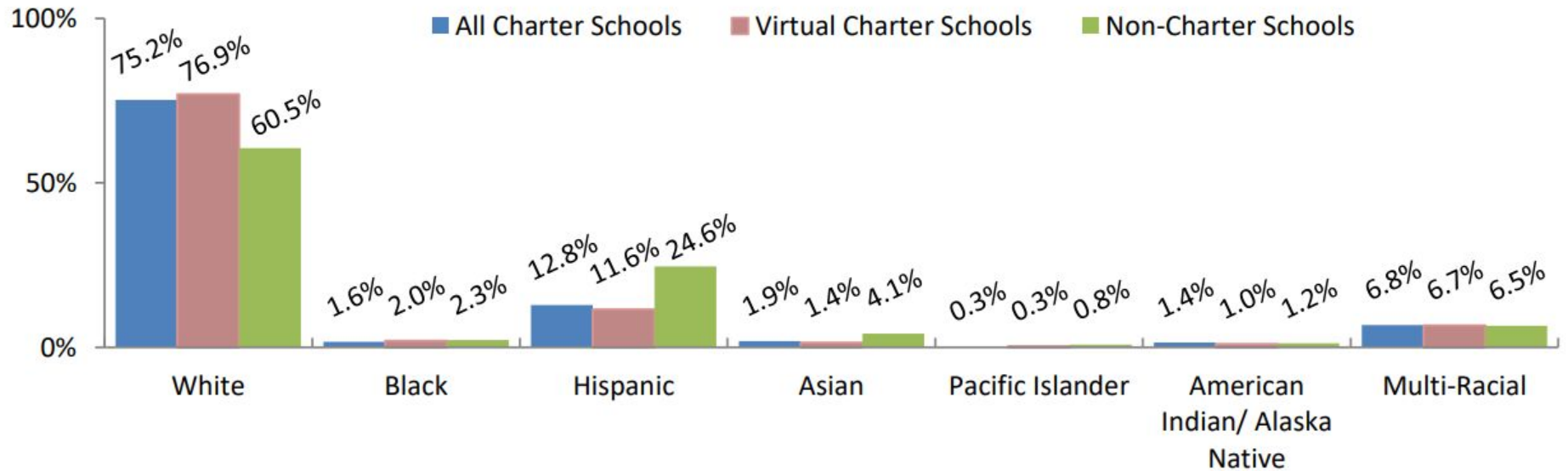
Total Enrollment Statewide

**Charter School Enrollment
Counts and Percent of Total Public School Enrollment
Fall Membership Data Collection**



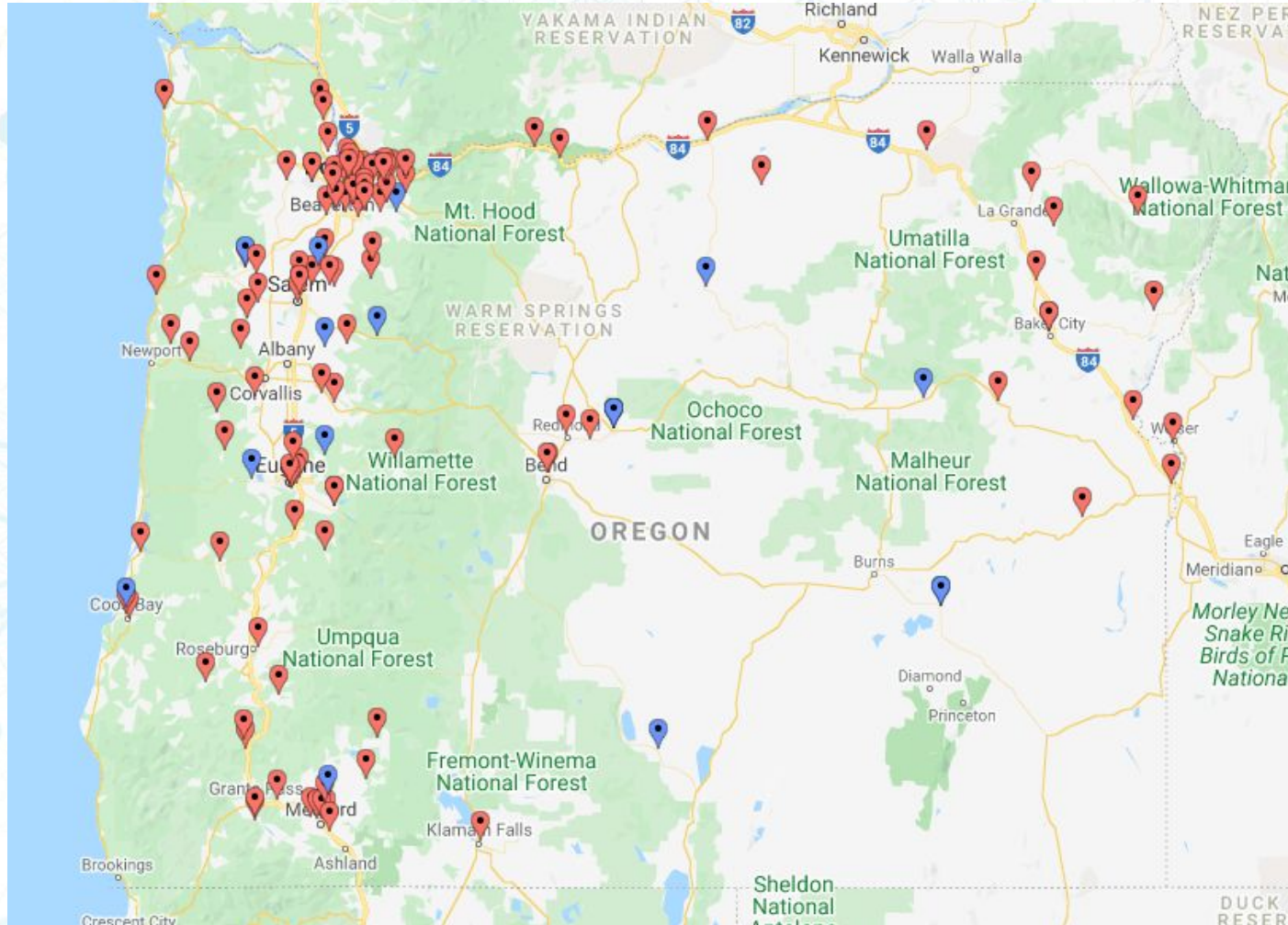
Source: [2019-20 Oregon Statewide Annual Report Card](#)

Charter School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity 2019-20



Source: [2019-20 Oregon Statewide Annual Report Card](#)

Oregon's 132 Public Charter Schools



Red = Non-virtual

Blue = Virtual

Types of Public Charter Schools

All Public Charter Schools	132
Single-School District Charter Schools	21
Virtual Public Charter Schools	20
State Board Sponsored Charter Schools	4

Single-School District Charters:

- Alsea Charter School
- Annex Charter School
- Arlington Community Charter School
- Burnt River School
- Butte Falls Charter School
- Camas Valley School
- Corbett Charter School
- Cove Charter School
- Days Creek Charter School
- Elkton Charter School
- Fossil Charter School
- Harper Charter School
- Huntington School
- Imbler Charter School
- Ione Community Charter School
- McKenzie River Community School
- North Powder Charter School
- Paisley School
- Pine Eagle Charter School
- Prospect Charter School
- Triangle Lake Charter School

Common Curricular Models:

- Classical Education
- Language Immersion
- Montessori
- Reggio Emilia
- Waldorf
- Place-Based
- Natural Resources
- Project-Based
- Early College
- Home-Based
- Community School

Charter School Governance

Public charter schools are typically governed by an **Oregon nonprofit and IRS 501c3 board** of directors that has received approval from a sponsor to operate a public school.

They are authorized by **contract or “charter”** that outlines the specific performance standards for the school.

The Charter School Governing Board adopts **policies**, approves **budgets**, and acts as an **employer** for most charter schools.

Charter schools cannot:

- be sectarian/religious
- charge tuition
- discriminate

Charter Schools and For Profit

Public charter schools in Oregon are required to be organized as a nonprofit.

The schools may contract with education service providers or education management companies.

Contracting with education management companies is more common with virtual charter schools and additional regulations and safeguards are in place within ORS 338.120.

Charter School Funding

Public charter schools are funded through the State School Fund based on ADMw and the Charter Rate.

The statute sets minimum funding requirements:

80% for K-8 Students District-Sponsored

90% for K-8 Students State-Sponsored

95% for 9-12 Students in All Charter Schools

Regular Public School Requirements That Apply to Public Charter Schools

- **PERS**
- **Federal Law**
- **Most State Laws**
- **Instructional Time**
- **Content Standards**
- **Discipline Restrictions**
- **Nondiscrimination laws**
- **Public Contracting Code**
- **Criminal Records Checks**
- **Core Teaching Standards**
- **Public Meetings/Records**
- **Minimum Graduation Requirements**
- **All Health and Safety Statutes and Rules**
- **Reporting Suspected Abuse or Sexual Conduct**

Statutes and rules that apply only to school district boards, school districts or other public schools do not apply to public charter schools. However, these are some of the requirements listed in ORS 338.115 that do apply to public charter schools.

Charter School Flexibilities

Curriculum

Instructional Materials

Calendar

Budget

Policies

Hiring

Teacher Qualifications

Compensation/Benefits

Teacher Qualifications:

- 1. Must be licensed or registered with TSPC**
- 2. May be assigned outside of license endorsements**
- 3. At least 50% of teacher and administrator FTE must be licensed**

Charter School Enrollment

Charter schools may limit the school by grades served and overall capacity.

Students must apply for enrollment.

If more students apply than space available, the charter school must conduct an equitable lottery.

Students may enroll from anywhere. Charter schools are not limited to enroll students from the district in which they are located.

Virtual Enrollment

In addition to the standard charter school enrollment requirements, any student who wants to enroll in a virtual public charter school must provide notice of their intent to enroll to their resident district

If the district has more than 3% of their total K-12 student population in virtual charter schools, the district may deny the enrollment.

Families may appeal the denial.

Authorized and renewed based on performance

A sponsor must regularly evaluate the performance of a charter school and determine whether to continue the charter or revoke the charter.

State Assessment System

Public charter schools are required to participate in Oregon State Assessment and Accountability System

Municipal Audits

All public charter schools must complete an annual financial audit and provide a copy to the sponsor, ODE, and Secretary of State.

Equity Considerations

Mission

Charter schools are mission-driven and some have been established specifically to serve students who have been underserved by the traditional public schools or have been pushed out. Oregon has a few charter schools focused on serving students through language and cultural immersion, extended-day and -year, and family integration.

Access

Many charter schools do not provide bus transportation or nutrition services which makes it difficult for some students to access the school of their choice. Enrollment lotteries and sibling preference can limit access.

Funding

Charter schools are provided access to district-level funding and initiatives inconsistently across the state and by program. In part because of regulations and also because districts pass through or include charter schools differently from district to district.

Quality

Outcomes vary dramatically across the charter school sector and it can be difficult for sponsoring boards to take action to hold charter schools accountable for performance.

Important Charter School Statutes

Oregon Revised Statute Chapter 338

- Enrollment 338.125
- Teacher Qualifications 338.135
- Virtual Public Charter Schools 338.120
- Funding 338.155
- Financial Management 338.095
- Applicability of Laws 338.115

Questions...

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