

STRONGLY OPPOSE

This bill requires private school registration with the Oregon Department of Education by preventing their participation in interscholastic sports or activities with public schools unless registered. Attacking private schools is an attack against school choice.

The Supreme Court has upheld parents' First and Fourteenth Amendment rights as they relate to education. Over 50,000 Oregon schoolchildren choose private schools. Teachers' unions have been very defensive of the gains made by alternative education during COVID-19 shutdowns.

Currently, ODE policy states that non-public education is recognized as a vital part of Oregon's educational system. Private schools do not have to register with the State of Oregon, unless they are contracting with public school district for services. SB 223 would change this and would require private schools to register with ODE annually just so their students can compete.

If private schools are required to have ODE approval for all plans and procedures, they will become de facto public schools. This is a grave threat to the future of private schools, religious freedom, parental rights and school choice. SB 223 would undermine the broad educational goals of private education as well as essentially eliminate private schools' jurisdiction over their own schools.