



Oregon

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Colt Gill

Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction

HB 3236 -1 Amemdent Task Force on Education Pathways

House Education Committee

March 9, 2021

Chair Alonso Leon, Vice-Chair Weber, Vice-Chair Neron and members of the committee, I am Jessica Ventura, Government Relations Director for the Oregon Department Education (ODE). Thank you for the opportunity to make comments on HB 3236. ODE has no position on this bill.

Background:

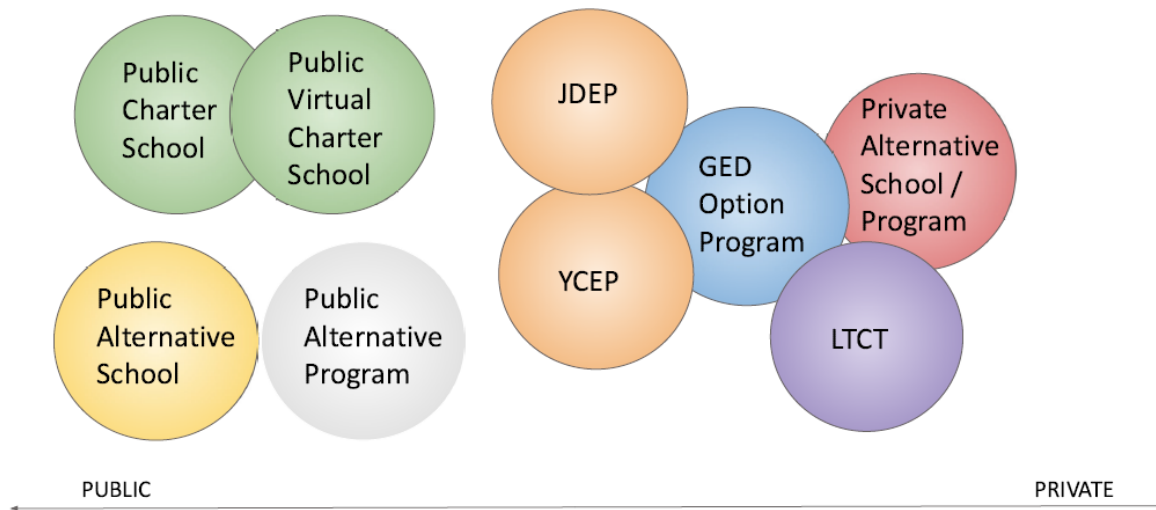
Alternative pathways to education, broadly defined as public charter schools, alternative schools and programs, juvenile detention and youth correctional programs, and GED programs are currently held to the same standards for evaluation as traditional comprehensive programs, or not at all. Many of Oregon's most vulnerable, system-affected, and historically underserved students find themselves attending alternative pathways either by choice or by circumstance.

Roughly half of the students who attend Alternative Education programs and schools identify as students of color, over 40% have an IEP or 504 plan, and at least 40% are flagged as economically disadvantaged. Any changes to alternative education programs/schools, therefore, will have an impact on these students, and clear implications for equity

The system can seem complicated, as there are a variety of alternative pathways currently in existence. To illustrate this, we will provide a little more information on the kinds of public alternative education programs in operation:

1. Public Alternative Schools
 - a. These are district-sponsored schools (ex: Alliance HS in Portland, Success HS in Woodburn)
 - b. Placements may be short or long term
2. Public Alternative Programs
 - a. These are district-sponsored programs
 - b. These programs offer short-term placements, or GED
3. GED Option Programs
 - a. These programs may be sponsored by school districts, ESDs, community colleges, public alternatives, private alternatives
 - b. These students are pursuing their diploma and GED simultaneously

Education Options Ecosystem



As demonstrated in the above graphic, there are a number of options in our educational ecosystem. Currently, there are not appropriate measures to assess the effectiveness of alternative pathways to education.

House Bill 3236:

HB 2817 would establish the Task Force on Education Pathways. The Task Force is directed to review the adequacy and effectiveness of alternative education pathways, including evaluating funding, staffing, program quality, commitment to equity goals, amongst other requirements. The Task Force is then asked to deliver a report to the Legislative Assembly. The bill would sunset on December 31, 2022.

Amendment -1:

The amendment changes the number of Task Force members from eight to four. It also removes career and technical education (CTE) programs as one of the stated education programs to review.

The Task Force's recommendations could have a significant impact on equity, as they are directed to study the program's adherence to Oregon's equity, diversity and inclusion goals.

We appreciate the attention to examining the many pathways that currently exist in our state; ODE is committed to being your partner as the Legislature seeks to better serve all of our students across Oregon.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments, and we welcome any questions you may have.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Ventura

Government Relations Director