

## OREGON COALITION OF COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOLS



### **HB 2954: Charter School Weighted Lottery**

Weighted lotteries benefit Oregon charter schools by helping charter schools increase the diversity of their student bodies. Historically underserved students will experience more equitable access to these rich educational opportunities and all students will experience a richer learning environment. And, according to the Century Foundation, such learning environments lead to stronger academic outcomes.

Current Oregon Charter School enrollment law only allows schools to give priority for admission to students who have enrolled siblings. **HB 2954 will allow public charter schools to:**

- Select students through a weighted lottery that provides greater access for historically underserved students
- Give enrollment preference to children participating in a publicly funded or free preschool program operated by the public charter school
- Give enrollment preference to students who are at risk for academic failure

#### **Weighted lotteries around the country.**

The United States Department of Education made it clear in 2014 that a charter school “may weight its lottery to give slightly better chances for admission to all or a subset of educationally disadvantaged students...” Furthermore, weighted lotteries cannot be used to create a school that only serves a certain population.

Oregon is not the only state where equity advocates are pursuing weighted lotteries through policy. The Century Foundation describes weighted lotteries as a “powerful tool for promoting diverse enrollment” and has researched the specific policies being implemented in charter schools in Texas, New York, Illinois, and California. Weighted lotteries, implemented by Colorado Public Charter Schools starting around 2015, have anecdotally resulted in improvements in the diversity of student bodies. One student reported that the school she attended, which implemented a weighted lottery, enabled her to get “different perspectives in all types of learning.” The Diverse Charter Schools Coalition cites that diverse charter schools improve outcomes.

States across the country are working to reduce barriers to diverse enrollment, and Oregon has an incredible opportunity to directly impact how its charter schools operate.

**HB 2954 will ensure that all students will have access to high-performing charter schools.**