

Submitter: Stephanie Hamilton
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3444

To the Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard today. I am testifying in support of HB3444, which would modify the percentage of funding that school districts must allocate to public charter schools from the State School Fund and require districts to share federal and transportation funds.

My children attend Alliance Charter Academy, where they have flourished in a learning environment that meets their specific educational needs while providing meaningful peer interactions. The Academy offers a family-centered approach to education that has been transformative for my children.

However, I am concerned about the significant funding disparity that exists between charter and traditional public schools. In Oregon, charter school students receive approximately 48 cents on the dollar compared to students in traditional district schools. This funding gap directly impacts the educational resources available to my children and their peers.

While charter schools like Alliance provide valuable educational alternatives, they currently operate without equitable access to federal funds and transportation dollars that traditional schools receive. This creates an uneven playing field where charter school students effectively receive less public investment in their education despite being public school students themselves.

I understand there are complex considerations in educational funding, including concerns about diverting resources from traditional public schools. However, I believe HB3444 represents a step toward greater equity for all public school students, regardless of which public school model they attend.

Currently, charter schools must stretch their limited resources further, often relying heavily on parent involvement and fundraising to fill gaps. This creates an unsustainable model that potentially limits access to charter schools for families with fewer resources to contribute.

I urge you to support HB3444 to ensure that all public school students, including those who attend charter schools, receive more equitable funding. This bill would help ensure that educational choice doesn't come at the cost of educational resources.

Thank you for your consideration.

Stephanie Hamilton