

House Committee On Education  
Oregon State Senate  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and members of the Committee:

As a parent of an Oregon public charter school student, I am writing today in support of House Bill 3444. HB 3444 will fix a deep disparity currently happening in Oregon schools: that Oregon public charter school students are essentially funded at 48 cents on the dollar compared to district students. Public charter school students are public school students, and it's past time to fund their education fairly.

Almost every public charter school parent has a story as to why a public charter school became the right fit for their child. Many started out in traditional public schools, but couldn't receive the education they deserved, often due to learning challenges that required specialized attention beyond what a public school classroom could provide, or physical, developmental, or mental health challenges that public schools simply couldn't, or wouldn't, accommodate for.

As a parent, one of the most important decisions I've made is choosing the right school for my child. Like many families, we wanted a school that would challenge and inspire our student while also providing a supportive and nurturing environment. After exploring different options, we found that a public charter school was the perfect fit.

What stood out to us most was the flexibility and innovation that the charter model offers. Unlike traditional public schools, our charter school has the ability to design a curriculum that meets the unique needs of its students. For our child, this meant smaller class sizes, hands-on learning experiences, and an emphasis on creativity and critical thinking—things we knew would keep them engaged and excited about learning.

Beyond academics, we were drawn to the strong sense of community within the school. The teachers and staff are deeply committed to each student's success, and we feel like true partners in our child's education. Our student is thriving, not just in their studies but also socially and emotionally, and we couldn't be more grateful for the opportunities this school has provided.

Choosing a public charter school wasn't just about academics—it was about finding a place where our child could grow, explore, and reach their full potential. It has been one of the best

decisions we've made, and we are so thankful for the dedicated educators and the unique opportunities that have shaped our student's journey.

Unfortunately, because of Oregon's current school funding model, public charter schools are significantly underfunded. Many buildings are old and in need of upgrades, students can't access transportation services, food security programs are limited, and schools lack essential school supplies and mental health resources. By passing HB 3444, you can fix this ongoing disparity and provide fair funding for public charter school students who deeply need it.

Please vote yes on HB 3444.

Thank you,  
Darci Hansford  
Parent for Springwater Environmental School