

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.

My son has thrived at Gresham Arthur Academy. He previously attended a public school where he was bullied every day and could barely read after completing first grade. Thankfully, he was accepted at Gresham Arthur Academy and did placement testing that confirmed his below average reading skills. It was determined that he would do best in a combined class that allowed him to catch up on his language skills without falling behind in math. Currently, my child is getting A's and B's in all subjects and has the confidence to excel.

Growing up in a disadvantaged area with below average schools has made me realize the importance of a quality education. I am blessed that my child has the opportunity to attend a charter school that cares about his education and advancement in general. Please consider additional funding so he can continue on this path of success.

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,
Antionette Hollier