

Submitter: Christopher Young
On Behalf Of: Portland Arthur Academy
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3444

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

As a parent of an Oregon public charter school student, I urge you to support House Bill 3444. This bill addresses a long-standing inequity: Oregon public charter school students receive just 48 cents for every dollar allocated to district school students. Charter school students are public school students, and it's time to fund them fairly.

My 7-year-old son attends Portland Arthur Academy, a charter school within Portland Public Schools, where he is thriving academically and socially. As one of the oldest in his class—born in September — the school has been able to tailor his program to keep him challenged and engaged. Portland Arthur Academy's structured, phonics-based curriculum has given him a strong foundation in reading, writing, and math, while the school's small class sizes and individualized attention ensure that he continues to be motivated and excited to learn. The staff's dedication to academic excellence and personalized instruction has made a tremendous difference in his education, and I have seen firsthand how additional funding could benefit not only his school but charter schools across Oregon.

Next year, our identical twin boys will begin their education at Portland Arthur Academy. The small class sizes have helped us build a strong relationship with the staff, whose enthusiasm for welcoming our younger sons speaks to the sense of community the school fosters. Knowing that they will be in an environment where teachers recognize and support each student's individual strengths gives us confidence in their future education.

Right now, charter schools face severe funding challenges. Aging buildings need repairs, transportation services are limited, food security programs fall short, and schools struggle to provide basic supplies and mental health resources. Passing HB 3444 would begin to correct these disparities and ensure that public charter school students receive the support they deserve.

Please vote yes on HB 3444.