



From the Office of Representative Tawna Sanchez

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Press Contact:

Office of Rep. Sanchez, rep.tawnasanchez@oregonlegislature.gov

Oregon Legislature Passes Bill to Strengthen Tribal Educational Sovereignty

SALEM, Ore. – Today, the House passed [HB3953](#) aimed to create a direct pathway for federally recognized Indian Tribes in Oregon to apply directly to the State Board of Education for sponsorship of a charter school.

“The history of Oregon’s failure to serve Native American students in the public school system is deeply rooted in educational policies that have negatively impacted Tribal populations,” said **Representative Tawna Sanchez (D-Portland)**.

Native students in Oregon experience some of the lowest graduation rates and highest discipline rates in the state. Oregon’s public education system often perpetuate the erasure and policies that fail to adequately track or respond to the disparities that Native students face in public schools. While recent policy shifts such as [SB 13](#) represent some progress, much work remains. This bill will support the Tribes ability to do some of that very important work.

“Providing for the education of our native youth is one of our greatest responsibilities as elected tribal leaders and HB 3953 is a step in the right direction for educational sovereignty for Tribal Nations,” said Denise Harvey, **elected official of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde**.

The new legislation will:

- Empower tribal sovereignty by supporting the Tribes ability to create schools that integrate Indigenous languages, cultural values and tribal history,
- Improve educational outcomes by addressing educational disparities by providing students access to responsive, community-based learning environments.

The bill now heads to the Senate for consideration.

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