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SENATOR DENNIS LINTHICUM
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Contact: Dru Draper

dru.draper@oregonlegislature.gov

**Sen. Linthicum Observes School Choice Week By Introducing
Legislation to Expand Educational Opportunity**

SALEM, Ore. – Today marks the beginning of National School Choice Week. The week is dedicated to the stories of students and families who have found the best school for them. Research [shows](#) that students in states with more educational opportunities perform better on key educational attainment metrics.

The abysmal state of public education in Oregon is well documented. Just last week, The Department of Education [revealed](#) that graduation rates slid backward compared to the previous year. Last year, Democrats [voted](#) to abolish graduation standards that required students to demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing, and math because Oregon students do [worse](#) on reading and writing tests than students in 43 other states. Oregon was among the last 2 states in the nation to reopen schools, harming Oregon students, their mental health and their opportunity for a real education.

Yet, last week, Secretary of State Shemia Fagan unilaterally [denied](#) voters a voice on a constitutional amendment to grant educational opportunities for their children.

“Democrats have made it clear that they are in the business of protecting the teachers’ unions’ monopoly on education because union bosses fund their campaigns,” said Senator Dennis Linthicum (R-Klamath Falls). “Their ideas of ‘reform’ are throwing more money at a failing system while lowering any traditional performance standards. They are protecting a system that allows wealthy families to have a choice, while low-income and our most vulnerable are trapped in failing schools.”

Oregon has some of the most restrictive education laws in the country. Despite the limited options available to students and families outside of government-run schools, Oregonians are making it clear they are desperate for alternatives. During the pandemic, Oregon [saw](#) the 4th largest increase in charter school enrollment in the nation. A recent survey [shows](#) that more than half of American families are looking for a new school. Support for educational opportunities [soared](#) during the pandemic.

In the upcoming legislative session, Senator Linthicum will reintroduce [Senate Bill 657](#), legislation to increase the cap on virtual charter school enrollment. This bill will allow more children to choose an education that best fits their needs and will be assigned Senate Bill number 1552 during the 2022 short session.

“This bill is just the beginning of the work that needs to be done to empower parents and students,” said Linthicum. “The artificial cap on virtual charter school enrollment caps children's futures. It's outdated, and needs to change. The money that funds education in this state doesn't belong to schools. It belongs to Oregonians. The money should follow students and fund their educational needs, not prop up the dismal state of our current system.”

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