



**JOINT RELEASE  
REPRESENTATIVE JULIE PARRISH  
REPRESENTATIVE MIKE NEARMAN  
OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**OREGON HOUSE EXTENDS POPULAR “OPEN ENROLLMENT” PROGRAM**  
*Reps. Julie Parrish And Mike Nearman Lead Passage Of School Choice Bill Benefitting Oregon Families*

**Salem, Oregon** – Representative Julie Parrish (R-West Linn) and Representative Mike Nearman (R-Independence) today helped lead passage of SB 1566, a bill to extend open enrollment between school districts. Reps. Parrish and Nearman had introduced HB 4119 this session to address the open enrollment sunset, but became chief-sponsors of SB 1566 after an agreement was made that SB 1566 would be the vehicle to continue allowing children to attend school in a neighboring school district if the district opened up seats for transfer students.

SB 1566 adds three more school years to the popular school choice option and grants lawmakers additional time to bring subsequent legislation in a future session that will make open enrollment a permanent option in the future for Oregon’s school children and families.

“I’m relieved the Legislature advanced this important school choice option for three more years,” said Rep. Parrish, who sponsored open enrollment legislation in 2011. “We know that thousands of school children across Oregon are making the choice to attend a school in a district that is outside of the zip code in which they otherwise would have to attend schools. By matching the right school to the needs of a child, we create a learning environment where a child can succeed and be inspired to graduate from high school.”

Rep. Nearman, who is finishing his freshman term, agreed to use a priority bill to draft HB 4119 and chief-sponsor SB 1566 because of conversations he had with families in his community, as well as his concerns for Oregon’s graduation rate.

“Oregon continues to struggle to achieve high graduation rates, and we know that there are many kids fall well below the 74% average graduation rate. If we let families choose the education setting that works best for their child, then a child will get the education they need which will lead them into a prosperous future,” Rep. Nearman explained.

The bill now moves back to the Senate for a concurrence on a House amendment, and then onto Governor Brown for a signature. HB 4119 also included a provision that would have lifted the sunset on a 2011 law that allows Oregon’s public colleges and universities to sponsor a charter school. That sunset is July 1, 2017. Rep. Parrish says she will bring back legislation in 2017 to lift that sunset, but that open enrollment needed an extension in 2016 to keep the choice program alive. Both HB 4119 and SB 1566 were priority legislation for Building Excellent Schools Together, an Oregon education non-profit that supports universal school choice, including strong public school options for children.

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