



Baker Charter Schools  
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March 6, 2017

Re: SB 208/536

Dear Senate Education Committee Members,

Chair Arnie Roblain  
Vice-Chair Dennis Linthicum  
Member Sara Gelsner  
Member Mark Hass  
Member Jeff Kruse

I speak today as the Director of Baker Charter Schools and the President of Oregon Digital Leaders Coalition.

Last year during this time I spoke with several other virtual school leaders who began noticing that more and more school districts were denying students the ability to participate in extra-curricular activities in their resident districts. This fall the issue was highlighted in Medford, Ontario, and La Grande areas where the issue played out in local school board meetings and social media. As the reports came in of students being denied, we built up our coalition to make some changes.

We began a yearlong quest to work on changing this practice. Our first attempt was to work with the Oregon School Activities Association to change the current rule on activities participation. Our request was denied at the fall meeting. Therefore we had no other choice than to pursue a legislative fix.

Our goal in this legislation is not to provide any extra opportunities for our students, but to give them equal access to extra-curricular activities. In the process of building this legislation we have collaborated with OSAA, COSA, OSBA, and district superintendents. The current amendments represent a compromise that will work with schools to provide access to charter school students. This is common sense legislation that will increase access and work for all parties.

Thank you for hearing my testimony today.

Sincerely,

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