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## QuickPoint! – Time to Decentralize Oregon’s Education Reform Efforts

By Kathryn Hickok and Steve Buckstein

Three years ago, Oregon state government killed off what should have been the last of three big education reform efforts since 1991. Each promised to solve the unsolvable: how a one-size-fits-all public K-12 school system could educate all Oregon students and launch them onto a lifelong path of educational and career success. The fatal flaw in these reform efforts was that they relied on centralizing control over education policy.

Now, the Oregon legislature is embarking on what may turn into a fourth “[impossible mission](#)” to achieve student success in our public school system. Members of the [Joint Committee on Student Success](#) will travel around the state asking everyone they meet what constitutes success in their communities. They then will return to the State Capitol and recommend that every school do “what works” somewhere—most likely at a higher cost to taxpayers than they are paying today.

But rather than wait years to judge this latest reform effort a failure, why not try another path: [the school choice path](#)? School choice allows students and their families to choose where and how to get the educational opportunities that are right for *them*. School choice recognizes that children learn in different ways and at different paces and puts parents, not bureaucrats, in the driver’s seat of their kids’ education. That truly would be a revolutionary movement in the direction of student success.

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