

My name is Erika Rost, and I am writing in support of SB 240 and raising the 3 percent enrollment cap on virtual schools. We (my husband and I) would like to share why we think it is so important to give parents a choice in schools. We do not support the 3 percent cap on enrollment. We do support keeping class sizes at around 15-20 kids per class. If Oregon Charter Academy is willing to hire more teachers to take on the more than the 3 percent cap, we think that is fantastic! Why was it so crucial for us to have a choice? The Molalla River SD was not ready or set up to create a productive learning environment through the distance learning challenge. They were re-teaching already learned material. Our fifth grader was doing multiplication! Her teacher even told me when, I asked, "why are the kiddos not learning fractions like they would have been in the classroom?" She informed me, "It is too difficult to teach fractions over the Zoom meetings." I knew right then and there that we had to go to an institution that had been doing this for longer than, well, never. We found ORCA and trusted that the more than 15 years they had been working with students online would fit our needs. And so far, they have been exceeding them! We also understand that this was sudden, and not the fault of teachers or learning institutions. In hard times though, as parents, we want to know that we have the choice to enroll our children where we think they will thrive and do their very best. During "normal times" we, as parents, should have the right to enroll our children where we think they will thrive and do their best! We would have never considered online schooling the past. I made the tough decision to quit my job due to Covid and having the children home, so I have seen and worked with my kids and their teachers. The sky is the limit (and beyond with all the wonderful NASA field trips the kids have been on!). Now that we see them fully enriched, meeting new kids and learning so much, we do not plan on returning to Molalla River SD. We are incredibly thankful that the choice is there to attend Oregon Charter Academy. Thank you for your time and consideration.