

To my Oregon Legislatures,

Thank you for taking the time to address this crucial issue of removing the limitation of online students in our State. I was homeschooled for all of my schooling up until college and I am very happy to say that I have been doing online school with my children from 2019 onward. Allowing more parents to choose to enroll their children in whichever school they see fit is the right decision. Removing the percentage cap of students in school districts will help children who don't fit into the public school uniformity and offer them the many benefits of online schooling. Some of these benefits include-

Flexibility- Students can learn at their ability- either quickly from subject to subject or go back through the material and instructions as many times as necessary. In an article on Edutopia.org, written by Nora Fleming, 2020, some teachers have noticed that the "flexibility to make their own hours is also giving students a chance to exercise, take breaks, or even be bored, all of which research shows is beneficial."

Overextension- As a parent I am concerned that my child can become unnecessarily exhausted with the long hours in a classroom, pressure to hang out with friends, be in sports, and other activities as well. Both Online schooling and homeschooling can alleviate that because students work at their own pace and often are done sooner than an in-person school day leaving more time to rest before extracurriculars.

Reduction in Bullying- obviously, online bullying should be taken seriously, however, there is less chance of a student being singled out in an online class than in a physical school, since interactions are more closely monitored and even saved via technology.

Getting recommended amounts of sleep- online schools are more flexible with class times and do not require a commute to school allowing children and teens to get the doctor-recommended amount of sleep.

Teaches self-discipline and responsibility- This is my favorite reason. Homeschooling or online schooling the way our kids' school, Frontier Charter Academy is run, helps kids learn the incredible skills of self-discipline and responsibility. The teachers are not physically there to force your child to do the assignments. Kids must choose to be disciplined to turn their work in on time. Holding the kids responsible for their own actions, or lack of, regarding assignments sets our children up to be more responsible adults which is what schools should aim to do.

Of course, this is not to say that online learning works for every child or family, but it should remain a choice by eliminating the percentage cap. Many children benefit from the social aspect of an in-person school, especially those who do not receive the very necessary play time from neighbors or sports. Others thrive in a smaller community without the peer pressure to fit in or keep up. As I said, online learning is not doable or beneficial to every child and I do believe it is essential for a parent to be at home with the children to supervise their learning. I also understand that that is not possible for every family. It is also imperative that online classrooms be extremely small in comparison to in-person schools. This means that schools would need to hire multiple teachers for each grade if they reached a certain number of students, but that should be doable by our educators. Choosing schools, whether online or in person, and their curriculums, should always be the prerogative of the parents whose taxes fund the schools their children and others' attend. I ask that you eliminate the percentage cap and allow parents to choose the schooling style that is best for their children.

Sincerely,

Jessica Lueken, Hillsboro