



Senate Education Committee
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St., NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony in support of SB240

Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Thomsen, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of SB240, to raise the enrollment cap on full-time virtual public charter schools.

My name is Tricia Powell. I'm from Roseburg and I'm the parent of two full-time virtual public school students and the President of the Oregon Virtual Public Schools Alliance, a coalition of parents who have joined together to advocate for our education choice.

Our family has been enrolled in virtual public school since 2012, when my daughter was a kindergartner. Because my husband traveled for work, the flexibility of virtual school was great for our family life. During the 2017-18 school year, job schedules necessitated enrolling my children in our local brick and mortar public school. Because virtual schools utilize state-certified teachers and curriculum, my children transferred schools without any gaps in their learning or grades. For middle school, my daughter chose to return to virtual school. For the last two years, she's had time for extracurricular activities like piano lessons and city league volleyball. My 5th grade son chose to return to virtual school again because he has more time to train for his Taekwondo black belt after finishing school assignments each day. My children appreciate the opportunity to learn at their own pace and they have thrived in a virtual public school. While virtual public school doesn't work for everyone, I appreciate the opportunity to choose the education option that works best for my children's needs.

Unfortunately, many Oregon parents have been denied the opportunity to enroll their children in the school of their choice due to the 3% enrollment cap on full-time virtual public schools. I feel for these parents who are merely trying to make the best education choice for their children. It's unfair that school districts and the ODE are determining where students should go to school. Parents know what's best for their children. You and your legislative colleagues need to put the education choice back in the hands of parents.

While I realize that this is an informational hearing and no further action will be taken on SB240, the committee and the legislature need to take action this legislative session. Raise the enrollment cap on full-time online schools so that more families can utilize this important education option. Oregon families are counting on you.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Tricia F. Powell
President
Oregon Virtual Public Schools Alliance

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