

Submitter: Kendra Lwebuga
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1552

As I am writing this letter in support of SB1552, I am also assisting my twin 6th graders with their math coursework. Both students attend Willamette Connections Academy, and this is their second year attending a virtual charter. This is an education solution that has worked exceedingly well for our family.

Fortunately, we were never locked out from attending a virtual charter due to the 3% cap - for that, we feel lucky. But we shouldn't have to feel lucky to have enrolled early enough to be within the 3% cap rule! This option should be available to every Oregon student.

Virtual school works better for us because our local public school was challenged to support one of my twin's physical needs at school - he has a Section 504 plan, but that plan was not always followed at our local public school. The elementary school building they attended does not meet ADA standards, which poses a number of physical barriers for wheelchair users.

Since starting school at Willamette Connections Academy, my twins' emotional health has improved and they have reported a relief in "doing school without having to wait for other kids to be quiet and listen." One of my twins has advanced two years ahead in math since starting virtual school. He was already excelling in math at our local school, but the teachers were always too busy working with the kids who were falling behind to pay attention to the students who were advancing. Now, he has a curriculum that supports the level that he is at, and me to provide one-on-one in-person tutoring.

I hope SB1552 passes so that every Oregon student can attend a virtual charter if they so choose.