

Chair Salinas and Members of the Healthcare Committee:

I have nearly thirty years experience teaching in Oregon schools. Over the years I've worked in four different school districts, and one private school as a regular teacher, and have been a consistent substitute in two different districts. I hope that you will respect my knowledge of education.

I appreciate your attempt to provide a free education to those who would be excluded from school due to this new legislation. I also value the current possibility students have to choose online school. I even completed nearly all of my work for my Master's Degree from a state university here in Oregon by taking courses online. However, online school is not for everyone.

I would like to explain to you what happened with two recent students who had attempted to do online school by choice. One child in my class had done online school the year before. When I went to look at his records, they were sparse, and he had not completed much of the work he had been expected to do. I believe there had simply not been enough accountability, without him having to show up face to face on a daily basis. In addition, this student had some social struggles, and it didn't help that he had spent the entire last year not interacting with his peers. Another student who had begun having some anxiety issues at school decided along with her mother to try online school. It seemed like it might be a good fit at the time. Approximately three months later she returned to my class and told me, "It didn't work out so well." As I taught her for the remainder of the year, it became abundantly clear to me that very little schooling had gone on during those three months. I want to remind you that these two students had chosen to do online school.

I am adamantly opposed to HB 3063 and submitted prior testimony for that. I'm adamantly opposed to the -13 amendment as well. It appears from this amendment that while a student would be able to do online school, they would not be able to attend any activities even with their own school. Do you understand how ridiculous this is? Public schools regularly have events which are open to the public. I'm a frequent substitute teacher at my local middle school, and because I know a lot of the kids, I occasionally attend events. I've been to band performances, watched plays, and attended track meets. As absurd as it would be to station someone at the door to check vaccination records for these public school events, that's what you would be expecting these online schools to do if they had an event. Field trip to a public place - sorry the unvaccinated kids can't go. Parent/teacher conferences - sorry, the unvaccinated kids can't go. Field day, or track event - sorry, the unvaccinated kids have to stand outside of the fence. Will Student ID cards be issued to these students with "UNVACCINATED" stamped across them?

There's a crisis going on in our public schools, but it's not about who has and hasn't been vaccinated. I substitute teach nearly every school day, and except for the conversation I had with a school nurse about seeing her on TV, I have not had one single conversation with anyone about vaccines. Let me say that again, in multiple schools in a very large district, no one is talking about kids potentially spreading those vaccine preventable diseases. The conversations

I'm hearing are about behavior. Behaviors I have never seen the likes of before. Excluding kids from school, even to the point of excluding children from activities with their online school will not fix any real problems. It will only make you be able to pat yourselves on the back and pretend that you are keeping our kids safe.

I am absolutely opposed to HB 3063. I am absolutely opposed to the -13 amendment.

Lois Patterson