



## Testimony Presented to the Senate Education Committee

January 12, 2022

Chair Dembrow and members of the Committee, I am Marshall Cobra representing Stride, Inc. Stride is the nation's leading technology-based education company, providing curriculum and management to online public schools in districts and states across the country.

Thank you for this timely opportunity to discuss virtual learning in Oregon. Daily headlines are showing a great disgruntlement and unrest with the public's interaction with online learning. I am pleased to report those are not our families, and not our students. While thousands of students and their parents are dreading returning to online classes offered by local districts who stood up emergency online curriculum taught by reluctant teachers to reluctant students, we find ourselves in a very different situation. Our schools have waiting lists and eager families who wish to avail themselves of professional curriculum, seamless interoperability, and highly trained online teachers.

We, like each of you, support access and equity for all students in Oregon. We also know that Oregon has significant problems in reaching these aspirational goals. We look forward to being the asset to this committee, this legislative body, the Governor, and the State Board of Education that we could be if embraced and given the opportunity to meet our potential which, in turn, would help Oregon reach its potential.

A significant barrier continuing to block Oregon from reaching out educational potential is the eleven-year-old 3% threshold on virtual charter school attendance. This 3% law stifles access and equity and continues to suffocate opportunity for many students to attend a high-quality online option.

A bill will be introduced to amend the 3% law in upcoming legislative session. We strongly support the legislature either raising or eliminating the 3% cap in the short session. The interim work group on virtual schools that Chair Dembrow will convene can then focus on other issues that may need further study. While we don't suggest that a virtual charter school is appropriate for all students, this simple change to the 3% barrier will help students immediately upon passage and take a major step in reaching our goal of access and equity.

I'd now like turn to our panel of speakers who are leaders in the daily operation of virtual charter schools in Oregon.

Thank you Chair Dembrow for allowing this panel at this moment, in this committee, on this subject, at this fascinating time in history.