

I'm writing you today to implore you to support SB 240 that would remove the limitation of percentage of children attending a virtual public charter school.

We enrolled our two boys (middle- & high school-age) in a public online charter school in March 2020. We have found it to be one of the best decisions we've made regarding their formal education. There are many things I appreciate about our online charter. I'd like to share a few of the most important reasons here:

1. The charter school has complete transparency for parents/guardians, including curriculum, grades and teacher instruction. I especially love seeing my kids' grades in real time online. Many assignments are graded immediately, so I know where my boys stand with their grades at pretty much any time, which means I can course-correct sooner if needed. Our online school can't hide curriculum, outside speakers, political agendas they want to push, etc - it's easy to be part of everything our kids are seeing, hearing & learning in school, at home. Whereas (I'll give one good example here), in Beaverton School District, the leadership brought in a new controversial sexuality education (without first allowing for feedback from parents/guardians) and made it ridiculously difficult for parents/guardians to view the lessons, then didn't have good systems in place for kids who were opted-out (there were kids literally sitting outside the classroom, listening to the instruction anyway).

2. The charter school listens to feedback from ALL parents/guardians. I've attended (and spoken at) Beaverton School Board meetings, Student Success Act meetings, parent/teacher/administrator meetings, etc, and it's obvious the current Beaverton School District leadership doesn't care what we have to say. It always seems they've already decided what they're going to do, they have an agenda to push through, and they simply have to "check the box" that says they allowed feedback from the public. When asked to attend the charter's parent/guardian/admin meeting, I felt heard and they followed through with suggestions. They seem to want to work with parents/guardians. I believe it's because they understand the need to PARTNER with us, that to be a successful education institution the trust and communication must go both ways.

3. The charter school focuses on REAL education (math, science, reading, writing, etc). My boys had been in the online charter school for only one month (April 2020) and my ADHD, on an IEP, high-schooler told me (without being prompted!) that he was learning way more at his new school. I was shocked when he said this, and very grateful for the opportunity to get our kids into an online charter.

Every family should have the option to determine which school is best for their individual kids. There shouldn't be a limitation at all for online charter schools. Maybe this would give public brick and mortar schools the motivation to truly research their biggest problems (why people are leaving them en masse) and focus their efforts on fixing those issues. Instead of pushing away most parents/guardians, maybe they could find a way for us to come together and work cohesively.

Thank you.