

April 21, 2021

To Whom it May Concern-

I am writing today to say that our state needs to be raising the cap for virtual schools.

My personal experience gives me a unique perspective, as a teacher, a foster parent and a mother I have seen many aspects of our society and know that children and families have a huge variety of educational needs. My youngest child is on an IEP and the options we have now are not a good fit for her.

I taught in brick and mortar school from 2001-2019. That system does work for a majority of students, but it is not 97% and all virtual schools are not created equally.

Virtual schools allow students a safe place to learn if bullying or anxiety is an issue, they also allow all students to work at their own pace. Many of the virtual schools like Fossil and Baker also allow for a variety of choices in curriculum. This way students can slow down or speed up, and have a curriculum that truly fits their needs.

In Roseburg, at this time, our choices for our struggling daughter are to overwhelm her. One way I can overwhelm her is with a rigorous virtual program that the district purchased, that program allows for very little flexibility in content and minimal human involvement for her IEP needs. The other way I can overwhelm her is with the traditional 30 hours of school a week. We did true homeschool for 4th grade and then 5th grade the virtual option through Roseburg schools. Something in between the two is what we know will work for our daughter. Neither of the options offered by Roseburg schools will fit her needs.

We were just denied that "something in between" option when we applied for Baker due to the 3% cap.

We as a family have a lot of experience and knowledge and really hope that our testimony helps to allow for more families to find what really works for their kids. With the pandemic true flexibility needs to be an option. We were taking our time exploring the best fit for our daughter and the pandemic took that choice away from us. Many families are also finding that this model works better for them. Please allow flexibility and choice for more families.

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