



May 22, 2020

To: Members of the Legislative Committee on Education  
From: Nevada Parents for Online Education  
Re: Public Comment

---

On behalf of thousands of Nevada families attending a public virtual or blended learning charter school, Nevada Parents for Online Education, we would like to thank you for allowing us to share testimony to the Legislative Committee on Education.

As you are quite familiar, Nevada public schools are closed and parents want to know what school district officials are doing to educate students during this time of crisis.

Too many schools were unfortunately caught off guard — and remain unprepared and unable to adequately serve students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, most of the state's student population are in limbo receiving "busy work" or, in some cases, receiving no daily instruction.

Talk with parents about their child's distance learning experience and you'll hear frustrations — lots of them. It's a sad commentary witnessing school district officials unable to provide a "real" distance learning curriculum for the state's student population. Parents want to know "why" when a suitable solution exists.

Nevada already serves over two thousand full-time online students — and those schools are open. For parents, public virtual education gives them unprecedented freedom to access a school program that works best for their children, a freedom that used to be limited to families who could afford private schools. Academic standards for online schools are just as high as those at other public schools. Our teachers are state-certified and state education officials rigorously monitor student academic progress.

For many children, a traditional school setting simply is not a good fit. A child might find the classroom is not moving at the right pace, depending on whether they are gifted learners or need more one-on-one instruction. In some cases, a child might have medical reasons or other challenges that make it difficult for them to participate productively in a group environment. The one-on-one teaching builds positive relationships with teachers who encourage students to discover more and take on new challenges.

This pandemic has undoubtedly created hardships for students throughout the state. However, it presents us with a unique opportunity to adapt to this crisis and empower families at the same time. If the current reaction becomes the norm from here on out, then public virtual education will become completely essential — and will essentially need to become the norm.

We urge the Legislative Committee on Education to take a hard, honest look at how online education can seamlessly transition students during times of crisis and beyond. Let's get students back to real learning so they can advance to the next grade or graduate. We need to lift the enrollment caps for current online schools and provide parents more access to choose a public education options best suited for their students.

Let's embrace the benefits of public virtual education and ensure Nevada is prepared for the future. We owe it our children to never put their education on pause again.

Thank you.