

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF LANE COUNTY

Platform Committee

2/16/2021

RESOLUTION 2021.8

A resolution of the Democratic Party of Lane County

Regarding HB2195 and the practices of For-Profit Charter Online Schools in the 2021 Oregon legislative session

WHEREAS, the Democratic Party of Lane County's party platform in Section VII, part 1, calls for fully funding Oregon's K-12 public schools at the Quality Education Model level;

WHEREAS, the Democratic Party of Lane County's party platform in Section VII, part 4, calls for strengthening public education by preventing corporatization of education;

WHEREAS, statewide audits indicate that for every half percentage point For-Profit Charter Schools increase their online enrollment, public education school funding loses \$59million;

WHEREAS, for-profit online charter schools efforts in the June 2020 special session to increase enrollment caps would have cost public school districts nearly \$500 million in State School Funds;

WHEREAS, research indicates that the educational quality of online for-profit charter schools is subpar; the two largest corporations operating in Oregon had a 53% and 33% graduation rate compared to the state average of 79% in the 2018 State Report Card; two virtual charter schools had graduation rates in the single digits;

WHEREAS, guidance from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) on the most successful educational practices has included a strong warning against the use of algorithm-based “machine learning”, because of its many problems¹; these problems include embedded bias, lack of transparency, compromised student privacy, low teacher-student interaction;

WHEREAS, both prior to and in this current environment, school districts have developed their own district-led online programs that are not run by for-profit companies; there is a strong difference in outcomes between district-run and for-profit charter programs: district programs have as much as a 100% graduation rate and state funding stays in public schools;

WHEREAS, much has been written in the academic research community about the failure of For-Profit online charter schools, in terms of educational quality, equity, and more.^{2,3}

WHEREAS, virtual education corporations take public money for private gain; in privatizing public education services, they put profit above the well being of Oregon’s students, families and public schools,

THEREFORE, the Democratic Party of Lane County resolves:

SECTION 1: To encourage Lane County legislators to vote in support of HB2195: Relating to Online Instruction: Prohibits student from enrolling in virtual public charter school located in school district in which student is not resident if student's resident school district or education service district offers appropriate online instruction.

¹ (<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/healthsafety/Documents/Comprehensive%20Distance%20Learning%20Guidance.pdf>)

² (<https://nepc.colorado.edu/newsletter/2012/07/understandingimprovingvirtual%20>

³ <https://nepc.colorado.edu/publicationschoolhousecommercialism-2017>

SECTION 2: To communicate our support of HB2195 to the appropriate committees and to the Members of the Oregon Senate and Oregon House of Representatives.