



State of Connecticut
HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE
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Testimony on Raised House Bill 6880
Education Committee
March 15, 2023

Chairmen McCorry and Currey, and Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, the House Republican Caucus appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of sections 1 and 5 of Raised **House Bill 6880** *An Act Concerning Assorted Revisions to the Education Statutes*. Section 1 requires a school curriculum to be made available online for parents to review and requires boards of education to allow for public comment on its school curriculum at each regular and special meeting. This section is intended to empower parents so they can be involved in their children's education and reinforce or supplement their children's education.

As useful as technology is, parents sometimes lack adequate understanding to navigate online portals. By posting the curriculum online, parents will be better equipped to make informed decisions on how best to help and educate their children. They can be better prepared to help with homework and school projects, and make decisions on when to excuse a child from certain studies that may be unsuitable or not age appropriate for their children to participate in. While some school districts provide their school curriculum online, there are some that do a poor job of providing useful information, if any at all. We believe parents have every right to know what their children are being taught and this proposal supports that effort.

Parents should have an opportunity to be involved in their children's education and their wishes should be considered when boards of education are developing and approving curriculum. The materials being taught in a classroom should be made available and parents should be allowed to express their support or opposition if they wish to do so.

Section 5 modifies the requirement under current law that the State Department of Education (SDE) submit a plan for remote learning so that it includes students who reside in Connecticut but are unable to attend school in person due to their medical condition or vaccination status. This plan is required to be submitted to the General Assembly by January 1, 2024. This language is especially important because a large number of children are out of compliance with immunization requirements as a result of the controversial bill passed two years ago, PA 21-6. The state has an obligation to provide education to our children and providing an alternative path would meet that commitment.

We understand that the SDE submitted their virtual school report to the committee along with a project cost of a virtual program, but the cost seems over inflated. We urge the committee to review Massachusetts' TECCA Connections Academy program as a model. Action needs to be taken soon so that all Connecticut students have the right to an education, including those that are unable to attend school in-person. Virtual schooling makes this possible and provides learning opportunities for many more children.

The House Republican Caucus appreciates having its proposals to expand curriculum transparency and remote learning opportunities included in HB 6880 and we urge the committee to support this bill provide the full General Assembly the opportunity to vote on its merits.