

Written Testimony of

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Before the Education Committee

SB 977 AN ACT CONCERNING VIRTUAL LEARNING.

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Good afternoon, Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez, and members of the Education Committee. My name is Andrea Rowland and I am a World Language Teacher at Joel Barlow High School.

Virtual Teaching/Learning makes sense during a pandemic (or possibly for a snow day) but it is a poor substitute for "real" (in-person teaching and learning). I honestly can't believe that the legislature is considering making it a permanent option. Not only are students less attentive, but there is no way for teachers to control the cheating, no matter how strategic they are with their assessments. Distance Learning may work for some types of courses in higher education, but not with the high school curriculum. Even if students have their cameras on, teachers do not know what other windows are open on their device, or what materials are visible to them in their workspace. If Distance Learning is allowed to continue, students will pay less attention to their learning and many will try to cheat their way through their exams, thus learning very little. If Connecticut is committed to excellence in education, then the legislature needs to encourage all students to return to the classroom once the pandemic is no longer a threat. Students learn better in the classroom, and teachers can teach more effectively when they are not having to multi-task by teaching through two formats simultaneously.