

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.

Over the past year, I have had to teach a dual classroom. I have had students in front of me and students on the computer at home. It is truly an absolute nightmare to do this at the same time. Students suffer, teachers suffer. There is absolutely no conceivable way that this is manageable as a method of course once we have the vaccine underway. Please stop the bills regarding virtual learning in their tracks.

1. Students should not be on screens at home all day. Instead of engaging in a classroom with real live children, they are essentially watching a TV where learning occurs. They are left out. My students hate it. My own two 12 year old children absolutely hate it.

2. It is an incredible burden to supply materials to the students at home and in class. Teachers redesign lessons the night before. They might be actual physical handouts, they might be actual tangible items. You cannot get that to the students at home in a timely fashion, and certainly not each day. Think about art. Think about engineering. Think about science labs. What are the students doing at home? Just watching other students paint? Use clay? Dissect an animal?

3. Students stuck at home are falling apart. They are depressed and some are turning to substance abuse. They need the social connection that in person learning provides. They need to learn to interact with others.

4. Even allowing temporary learning from home is a bad idea. The disruption caused by changing a learning model for a few students every few days makes learning virtually impossible.

5. Students cheat. Students are asking us to temporarily stay at home on test days so they can look up the answers. That is not learning.

If you are considering to extend the inefficient and just plain ludicrous idea of virtual learning, then please, for the love of God, ask some teachers to share their experiences. This is a horrible idea.