

# INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOLS

**AUGUST 27, 2018**

# OUR COALITION



The National Coalition for Public School Options is a parent-led organization that supports and defends parents' rights to access the best educational option for their children, including virtual charter schools.

**President Tillie Elvrum** has worked to promote school choice and education reform as a parent advocate since 2004.

She is currently a Director of the Board of Colorado Coalition of Cyberschool Families and previously served on the board for the Ohio Coalition of E-School Families.



Colorado Coalition of  
Cyberschool Families



# WHY DO PARENTS CHOOSE VIRTUAL SCHOOLS?

“Parents are drawn to virtual charter schools due partly to **negative experiences in prior educational settings** and partly to the **unique opportunities available via virtual education.**”

**Bullying or threats from classmates**  
(41%)

**Overcrowding or limited resources**  
(34%)

**Opportunity for increased parental environment**  
(31%)

**Opportunity for acceleration or remediation**  
(31%)

# WHY DO PARENTS CHOOSE VIRTUAL SCHOOLS?



**77%**

Respondents who believe virtual education offers a **safer learning environment** than traditional public schools.

**68%**

Respondents who said **student engagement had increased** since enrolling in a virtual charter school.

# STATES MAKING POLICY PROGRESS



In Colorado, multiple-district virtual schools **promote innovation and competition** for students.



In Iowa, law passed in 2015 measures **student progress toward graduation** for virtual schools.



In Ohio, **mandatory onboarding** requires thorough orientation process and increased opportunities for parent engagement.



In Indiana, engagement law has prompted **earlier intervention for non-participatory students** and more school-initiated withdrawals.

# CHALLENGES FOR VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOLS

“It has become clear that a single system **does not accurately measure all schools.**”

*School Accountability in the  
Digital Age*

Jason Watson & Larry Pape,  
Evergreen Education Group



Authorizer Pressures



High Mobility Rates



Test Scores



Accountability

# INDIANA VOTER OPINION ON TEST SCORES



8%

of voters viewed state test scores as an indicator of school quality.

80%

of voters prefer a system that measures individual student achievement.

85%

of voters oppose closing a school based on standardized test scores.

# INDIANA VOTER OPINION ON TEST SCORES



91%

Indiana voters who believe the best approach to take with underperforming public schools is to **keep them open and help them improve.**



# POLICIES TO IMPROVE VIRTUAL SCHOOLS



## STUDENT-CENTERED ACCOUNTABILITY

Framework that recognizes the unique challenges of student population and gives more weight to course completion and credits earned toward graduation since enrollment.

# POLICIES TO IMPROVE VIRTUAL SCHOOLS



## **STRONGER ONBOARDING**

Require schools to provide essential information to parents along with detailed and thorough orientations so parents can make informed decisions about full-time virtual education.

# POLICIES TO IMPROVE VIRTUAL SCHOOLS



## INCENTIVIZE RETENTION

Provide a weighted mobility grade for students who have been enrolled at least two years; provide a grace period where first-year students do not count toward state accountability metrics.

| CONTACT |

**TILLIE@PUBLICSCHOOLOPTIONS.ORG**

| ADDITIONAL INFORMATION |

**WWW.PUBLICSCHOOLOPTIONS.ORG**