



## Talking to Your Legislator

Talking to an elected official about why your virtual public school is important to you can be daunting, but it can be very effective if you think ahead about the ideas you want to convey and make sure to stay on-point. The following tips and guidelines are designed to support you in talking to your legislator about the things that matter to you about online education.

### Tips

- **Stay Confident:** Remember that you are your legislator's constituent and your legislator wants to hear from you. They are your representative, so do not be afraid to share your opinions. Your opinions matter! Also, legislators are generally nice and courteous so there's no reason to feel intimidated.
- **Keep it Personal:** Nothing tells the story of why your virtual school is an important and essential choice in public education better than *your* story.
- **Pick a Topic, and Stay with it:** Staying on topic will make your point clear and more memorable. It's also important to note that legislators keep a busy schedule, so please keep your message within a respectable timeframe. Don't feel the need to rush your story, but also be respectful of your legislator's time.

**Important Points:** These messages drive home the most important ideas that the general public, as well as the legislature, may not understand about your virtual school:

- **Virtual Schools are Public Schools:** There are many reasons parents select public virtual schools for their child's education, each unique and personal. However, all virtual school parents support public education by choosing a public school option that is tailored to meet the learning needs of their child.
- **Virtual Schools are State Regulated:** Public virtual schools ensure that the education students receive is on par with every other public school in the state by being held to the same accountability, financial and academic standards.
- **Virtual Education is Not Home Schooling:** Online public education is vastly different from what is referred to as "homeschool education." Curriculum standards along with academic, attendance and accountability requirements ensure that both the school and the students provide the necessary transparency and responsibility to ensure a top-rate education.
- **Virtual Students Have Their Own Teacher:** Every virtual school student is assigned a state certified teacher who meets the requirements of No Child Left Behind. Their teacher is responsible for overseeing and closely managing their learning as well as ensuring that every student is meeting all academic, accountability and attendance requirements.
- **Parents Partnering in Education:** Virtual education parents act as Learning Coaches, which allows them to build strong partnerships with teachers, actively engage in their child's education and communicate their child's unique learning needs.
- **Virtual Students are Socialized:** Public virtual schools provide opportunities for students, parents and teachers to come together to build relationships within the school community, enriching the socialization and healthy adjustment of students.
- **Virtual Education is a Unique, Personal Choice:** School choice is a personal decision that is different for everyone; the decision to choose a public virtual school is extremely important and appropriate for many families.