

To whom it may concern,

I wanted to first thank you for your service to our community. I would like to ask for your support in the need to write an addendum in to the century code, giving parents' permission to choose for their students to attend schools such as Yellowstone Virtual Academy/Tech Trep Academy. I am fortunate that the School District of Grand Forks allowed my son to attend Yellowstone Virtual Academy however, other school districts have denied parents the rights by not signing the cost share agreement with this tuition free public education. I am strongly in favor of allowing open enrollment for a child to be able to attend a virtual school.

I am a mother of four, a military spouse, and a pharmacist. I have one child attending 5th grade at Twining Elementary, however have my 3rd grade, 8- year-old attending Yellowstone Virtual/ Tech Trep. The educational resources of the Tech Trep program have allowed me to tailor to my 3rd grader's needs. I have known since kindergarten he has needed help in reading/writing. I know I did not go to school to be an educator, but using a virtual school, Tech Trep, has given me the confidence and resources to tailor his education to his needs and help him grow to be successful.

We were stationed in California where resources were not readily available along with COVID shutting down so much it made it impossible to get help for him. I chose to have them attend a charter school, similarly to Tech Trep, I was primarily the teacher at home. I feel this was monumental for my 3rd grader's development. He hasn't been diagnosed with any learning disabilities, but has more difficult time with writing. I attribute all his growth and abilities to being able to attend an at home charter school and tailor his education to him. We have made huge strides this year in school because we have been able to seek occupational therapy and focus on eye training along with his 3rd grade curriculum all while maintaining confidence in his school work. He hasn't been able to be pulled from class to attend his appointments. His growth, which we predicted to take 1.5 years he met and exceeded

within 3 months. I don't feel those strides would have been made if he would have been in the traditional setting. He is completing grade level language arts curriculum, and he is completing and above grade level math.

I feel confident teaching him because Tech Trep has a teacher who is guiding me when needed. I want that for every family. I have currently not been working, and have worked part-time in past to support my children and their educations. The ability to choose my child's school, and educational resources has been essential for his to growth and development.

I do not feel my son would be learning, and or succeeding like he is in a traditional school classroom. His abilities and the way they test in many classrooms wouldn't gauge his understanding at the moment. I know there are programs in school to help but as a mother I know he is best at home and is worth my time and attention. One day I do hope to send him to school, I know he would love being with his peers. I would like if the virtual academy would have open enrollment because it would give me the confidence to put him in traditional school setting, I could always re-enroll for the support and resources given for his personalized education if that was needed for his success. I understand this may be difficult with finances.

My fifth grader currently enrolled in traditional school setting enjoy school. He works very well with peer pressure, it motivates him where my 3rd grader doesn't like the competition. My 5th grader has done very well with his STAR testing, which reiterates that the last 3 years I have actually taught him something. Some days while being the primary teacher for your children you question, " Am I doing enough?" I feel I am but I would not be where I am or understand what I do about educating my children without the help of my resources/teachers at the Virtual Academy.

I have been wrestling with the thought of sending my child to Twining elementary this coming year. I would love to be able to decide in June if he would be able to be confident in a traditional

classroom. When signing my child up this year, I was explained that open enrollment/ interdistrict transfers needed to get done before March, or to have moved. I was fortunate to have moved here this summer. I had fellow friends in different areas of North Dakota denied the opportunity to have the resources Tech Trep has given me. I was somewhat discussed that we would have to make the choice by March, so much can change between March and August. Family and children's needs change immensely. In the military we could be told we are moving to a whole new country, have to sell and home and move with in that time period. I feel bound and great pressure to make the best decision for my child 5 months ahead.

I ask to please allow the open enrollment to the Virtual Academy to be a rolling enrollment. Families change, needs change, and allowing parents to choose what is best for their child is what is most important. As a parent, I love that I am held accountable in what is needed to be taught, hours, and that I have a professional teacher there every day to assist me as needed. I have been blessed to have been able to partake in this first year of Tech Trep in North Dakota. Thank you for your time and consideration. I was not able to attend the hearing this week, but am available if there are any questions I could answer in regards to my experience with Virtual learning. I would love this opportunity to be available to us parents who may not have everything altogether 5 months ahead of time. I most importantly ask that you give us parent's the choice for our children.

Thank you,

Christine Zenzen Pharm D.

Czenzen1@gmail.com