

February 21, 2022

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Kiana Shirley and I am an 11th grader at Pearson Online Academy (POA). Over the course of my education, I have been to a public school, private school, charter school, and now a virtual school and I strongly believe that virtual school at Pearson Online Academy has been the best option. The opportunities they provide and the structure of the school has allowed me to thrive in the path I want for myself. I have been given the opportunity to partake in dual credit at Pearson Accelerated Pathways. This has given me the chance to gain college credit while continuing my education as an 11th grader, which will help me save time and money when I move on to college.

The structure of the school enables increase responsibility, independence, as well as helping with flexibility because it is up to the student to complete all of the tasks set in the planner by the end date. I see the planner as a guideline for the completion of my lessons. For example, clicking on the “My Courses” tab and looking at the information below “Last Lesson” gives you the date that you might be done with your course. That is the flexible part. For instance, let’s say a student had an upcoming event that was unavoidable during a school day. The student could work ahead for that day they would be absent so they would not have to catch up on missed lessons plus the lessons stated on the planner for when they come back. If said student was in a brick and mortar school, they would have catch up on the notes from lessons, homework, and maybe assessments they missed on top of the current work they had to do when they got back.

Another benefit of attending POA is that the teachers spend quality one-on-one time with students. For example, if you are having a hard time with a subject, you can go to LiveTutor, which is a virtual meet with teachers who specialize in the subject you are having a difficult time understanding. You can also webmail your teachers if you are confused on a subject or instructions pertaining to an assessment. LiveLessons are similar to in-class teaching at brick and mortar schools, however, everyone has the same view of the lesson and if you have a question or comment, you can directly ask the teacher either by typing or on a microphone. You do not have to wait as you raise your hand to be called on like you would while attending a physical school.

I am in favor of HB 0805 because I believe that it will give more students a chance to obtain a quality education regardless of their financial position, gaining more independence and responsibility which are skills that can help them in college.

Sincerely,

Kiana Shirley