



SPONSOR: Rep. K. Williams & Rep. Ramone & Sen. Sturgeon
Reps. Baumbach, Briggs King, Lynn, Osienski; Sen.
Hoffner

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
152nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 16

DIRECTING THE DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ISSUE A REPORT ANALYZING THE
BENEFITS OF VIRTUAL LEARNING IN A POST-COVID LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.

1 WHEREAS, the Covid-19 pandemic forced school districts and charter schools to close their classrooms and
2 provide virtual learning options; and

3 WHEREAS, virtual learning was needed to mitigate the loss of in-person instruction during the height of the
4 pandemic, it also caused students to fall behind academically; and

5 WHEREAS, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) found that in comparing 2022 scores with
6 2019 scores, the year prior to the pandemic, most state scores declined in fourth and eighth grade reading and mathematics;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, in fourth grade reading and math, Delaware was one of only 8 states where the NAEP score decline
9 was larger than that of the nation; and

10 WHEREAS, in eighth grade math, Delaware was one of only 3 states whose decline was greater than that of the
11 nation, while in eighth grade reading, Delaware was one of 6 states whose decline was greater than that of the nation; and

12 WHEREAS, an American Educational Research Association (AERA) study found that nationally, \$700 billion
13 will be needed to offset Covid-19 learning losses; and

14 WHEREAS, a U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) analysis found that 60% of virtual teachers reported
15 that students had more difficulty understanding lessons than in a typical year, compared to 37% of in-person teachers who
16 reported students had more difficulty understanding lessons than in a typical year; and

17 WHEREAS, the GAO found that 61% of kindergarten through grade 12 teachers reported they had more students
18 who experienced emotional distress than in typical years; and

19 WHEREAS, the Pew Research Center found that 65% of teens favor in-person learning in contrast to 9% that
20 favor virtual learning environments; and

21 WHEREAS, a Virtual Programming Survey by Delaware Department of Education that surveyed 15 districts and
22 13 charter schools found that 734 students participated in virtual learning programs in the 2022-2023 school year; and

23 WHEREAS, very few school districts and charter schools specified a reason why virtual learning programs are
24 necessary; and

25 WHEREAS, § 2702(a)(2) of Title 14 states that, “Every person who has legal custody, guardianship of the person,
26 or legal control of a student... who is enrolled in a public school of this State shall send the student to the school each day
27 of the minimum school term and to any academic improvement activities required by § 153 of this title”; and

28 WHEREAS, § 506 of Title 14 prohibits charter schools from being “home based”; and

29 WHEREAS, there is a need to evaluate teacher licensure and certification requirements in current virtual schooling
30 options.

31 NOW, THEREFORE:

32 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring therein, of the 152nd General
33 Assembly of the State of Delaware, that the Delaware Department of Education issue a report examining the advantages
34 and disadvantages of virtual learning options for kindergarten through grade 12 students in a post-COVID learning
35 environment.

36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report shall analyze how virtual school during the pandemic affected
37 students’ academic progress, social and emotional development, service accessibility, and welfare.

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report shall identify all districts and schools, including charter schools,
39 that currently offer virtual learning options in the State. The report shall assess the quality and accessibility of each virtual
40 learning option as compared to in-person schools, the licensure requirements for each virtual option, and teacher licensure
41 and certification requirements for each virtual option.

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report shall assess and recommend any regulatory or legislative changes
43 to ensure that all State virtual learning options conform to Delaware laws and educational standards.

44 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report shall define terms relating to virtual learning environments,
45 including virtual school, virtual schooling, virtual learning, and virtual programming.

46 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report be provided to the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives,
47 Secretary of the Senate, Members of the General Assembly, Director of the Division of Research, and Division of
48 Research’s legislative librarian by May 15, 2024.

SYNOPSIS

This Concurrent Resolution directs the Department of Education to issue a report assessing the advantages and disadvantages of virtual learning for kindergarten through grade 12 students in a post-COVID learning environment, to include a review of all current virtual learning options in the State.