

As a mother of an eighth-grade graduate from Charm City Virtual and a current fifth-grader at Baltimore Revolutionary Academy for Virtual Education, I have experienced firsthand how virtual synchronous learning can be a lifeline for students who need an alternative to traditional in-person schooling. For many families, including mine, virtual education is not just a preference; it is a necessity. Whether due to health concerns, learning differences, social-emotional needs, or simply the need for a more personalized and flexible approach to education, virtual synchronous learning provides opportunities that brick-and-mortar schools often cannot.

The structured, interactive nature of synchronous virtual learning ensures that students receive real-time instruction while benefiting from meaningful engagement with teachers and peers. This model fosters accountability, builds essential digital literacy skills, and creates a learning environment where students can thrive without the distractions or challenges that some may face in physical classrooms. My children have been able to learn at a pace that works for them while still meeting rigorous academic standards. They are developing independence, self-discipline, and the confidence to advocate for their own learning needs; skills that will serve them well beyond their school years.

However, the opportunity for virtual synchronous learning should not be limited to select students or grade levels; it must be accessible to all K-12 students across Maryland. The traditional education system does not fit every child, and restricting access to virtual learning means denying students and families an equitable choice in how they receive their education. Virtual education has proven to be an effective, innovative, and necessary component of modern learning, and it must be protected and expanded to ensure that all students; regardless of their background, learning style, or personal circumstances, have the tools they need to succeed.

I urge decision-makers to recognize the critical role virtual synchronous learning plays in educational equity and to ensure that it remains an accessible option for all K-12 students in Maryland. Our children deserve a future where education meets them where they are, providing the flexibility, engagement, and support necessary for their success.