



CLERMONT COUNTY JUVENILE COURT

JUDGE JAMES A. SHRIVER

COMMUNITY CONTROL DEPARTMENT

2339 CLERMONT CENTER DRIVE

BATAVIA, OHIO 45103

Phone: (513) 732-8001

Fax: (513) 732-7622

Senator Andy Brenner

RE: DOPR funding

Dear Senator Andy Brenner:

I am writing you asking for your support in passing the proposed funding change for the DOPR e-schools. As supervisor of the Clermont County Juvenile Court Diversion/Probation and Mediation/Truancy Intervention Department, I see children and teens on a daily basis that struggle in traditional school settings. Often, students who become truant simply do not function well in the typical school setting. When these children and their parents enter the court's truancy program, we like to try a diversion program to see if we can get these children back on a solid educational track. DOPR schools, such as the Greater Ohio Virtual School (GOVS) serve the purpose of providing a solid educational program while allowing the student to work in an environment more comfortable for them. Often, a student will come to us because they have fallen behind for various reasons and cannot catch up, so they give up. DOPR schools allow the opportunity to catch up and go back to public school on track. Other students come to us because they feel they have been a victim of bullying and they cannot emotionally bear the stress of going to school. DOPR allows these students to do all of their education on-line and feel safe doing so. There are other reasons we see students in our program, from personality conflicts to legal and mental health issues that keep students from being successful in a typical classroom setting. We have juveniles that are transient and are living from place to place on a daily basis. We provide a hub known as the Virtual Lab and DOPR e-schools provides the curriculum and support for these students to succeed.

My department members go the extra mile for each of our students, trying to find the right help and the right settings for the children who come to us. Many times, just being able to offer the credit recovery or online educational opportunity removes a huge stressor, not only for the child involved, but for the parents and the entire family. GOVS, our DOPR go to school, provides a solid education, a safe place for the students, and an opportunity to gain confidence and become successful. The individualized approach provided by the Staff and programming at Greater Ohio Virtual is truly the catalyst that affects the change in the student's confidence and attitude toward their ability to learn and achieve. These are opportunities that are not afforded to this population in the typical brick and mortar classroom setting.

I have witnessed firsthand the transformation that has taken place for the at-risk juveniles that have participated in DOPR e-schools and particularly e-schools that take the approach that every child can succeed if we are addressing the whole child and are compassionate to their individual needs.

I am thoroughly convinced that without the collaborative efforts of DOPR e-schools, courts and outside agency support many of the juveniles I have worked with would not have experienced the overwhelming sense of accomplishment of having received a much deserved high school diploma.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully Submitted

Kathy Rountree, Diversion / Probation Supervisor

Truancy Intervention / Mediation