



Petitions Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP

Chair

Education Committee

House of Commons

London

16 June 2020

Dear Robert

I am writing to refer a petition to your Committee.

This petition, which has received over 100,000 signatures in less than a fortnight, calls on the Government to reduce curriculum content for year 10 and 12 students who will sit exams in 2021. The full petition is attached to this letter.

Normally we would schedule a debate in Westminster Hall on any petition that receives over 100,000 signatures. These debates enable Members of the Committee to present the concerns of petitioners directly to Ministers for response. However, as sittings in Westminster Hall have been suspended, we are currently unable to schedule debates on petitions receiving over 100,000 signatures.

We have picked up issues raised by many petitions in a series of evidence sessions—including sessions looking at the impact of coronavirus on university students, one of which we were pleased to be joined at by one of the members of your own Committee—and in correspondence with Ministers, but it is not possible for us to investigate the issues raised by every petition that secures 100,000 signatures.

I know that your Committee is conducting an inquiry into the impact of COVID-19 on education and children's services, and understand that the issue raised by this petition has come up in your evidence, so felt the most effective way to represent the concerns shared by the 100,000 people who have signed this petition would be to refer it to your Committee.

I am therefore asking that, as you take your inquiry forward, you consider the concerns expressed and request made by this petition. Your Committee can help give a voice to the tens of thousands of people who have signed this petition, and want to see action taken by the Government to ensure students due to sit exams next year are not unfairly disadvantaged by the coronavirus outbreak.

I also wanted to request that, if you are planning to hold any evidence sessions where this issue is likely to be discussed, your Committee consider inviting a member of my Committee to attend, so that we are able to represent the views of petitioners directly.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Catherine McKinnell MP
Chair of the Petitions Committee

e-petition 320771

Reduce curriculum content for year 10 & 12 students who will sit exams in 2021

A significant number of students will sit their final 2021 examinations. The outcome of which undoubtedly will be their passport, for many of their future life chances and successes. In order for this to be done fairly, it is imperative that the amount of content they are tested on is reduced.

As an educator myself, I understand the huge benefits of face to face teaching and the positive impact this has on a child's educational success. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing unprecedented situation, classroom based learning has not been possible. A significant amount of teaching and learning time has been lost (ongoing). This cannot effectively be compensated for by provided remote learning activities. By reducing the content, students will have the opportunity to sit their exams equitably.