



Dear Senate Education Committee:

My name is Zach Eckert, Regional Legislative Director for ExcelinEd in Action. ExcelinEd in Action is the 501(c)(4) sister organization to the Foundation for Excellence in Education. ExcelinEd in Action works with state lawmakers and partner organizations to pass legislation that empowers families with educational choice, prepares students for college and career, prioritizes early literacy, expands innovation and strengthens school performance.

I write to you today to urge your support of [SF 628](#), which would require administering state assessments this spring. Amid the public health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, knowing the impact on student learning will enable leaders to respond effectively. The rigorous expectations and administration of the state assessment are imperative to keep the promise of equity and to make sure every student counts.

Another academic year cannot pass without objective, comparable information about student achievement derived from a state assessment. **We cannot solve a problem we cannot see.** Summative assessments also provide parents and teachers with honest, objective information on how their child is doing.

We measure because we care about student learning, and what gets measured gets done. State tests serve a purpose: to ensure students are meeting education standards that prepare them for success in life. Understanding student academic achievement is the first step to ensuring state resources and supports are appropriately provided to students, educators, schools and districts.

Without question, administering MCA exams this year will present unique conditions and challenges to provide equitable access whether in a remote or in-person environment, however it is possible to administer them safely and smartly. MDE has a history of creating flexibilities and accommodations for schools and students, ranging from a long testing window to supports and resources for students with special needs. We understand that MDE has put in place additional efforts to ensure successful remote testing. We applaud these efforts as they can provide educators and families with confidence in reliable MCA administration.

Sincerely,

Zach Eckert
Legislative Affairs Director, ExcelinEd in Action
Zach@ExcelinEd.org
(812)631-4858

