



Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Zach Eckert, and I am the Regional Legislative Director for ExcelinEd in Action.

Our organization rises in support of House Bill 2068. Simply put, this bill gives more students in Kansas the ability to receive the education they choose. Students and parents, especially those most vulnerable, deserve this opportunity. Neither income, nor the performance of a child's school district, should determine the options a student has to receive a quality education.

Limiting the program to students in the 100 lowest performing schools can result in uncertainty and instability in a student's education. A student could be eligible for the program one year, and then ineligible the next year simply because the student's school district improved from 100<sup>th</sup> worst to 101<sup>st</sup> worst. Students and families need to know that this program will continue to be available to them regardless of how their local school district is performing.

A new national survey from Democratic pollster Beck Research finds support for school choice policies remaining remarkably high. Sixty-five percent of K-12 parents back school choice, including 66 percent of public-school parents. School choice also continues to enjoy bipartisan support with approval from Republicans, Independents and Democrats. Now is the time for the Kansas Legislature to recognize this support, and to empower families to make the educational choice that is best for them.

By allowing more students to qualify for this scholarship, the legislature is recognizing that educational opportunity is a priority and each family deserves the ability to customize schooling as it sees fit.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer any questions.

Thank you for your leadership,

Zach Eckert  
Regional Legislative Director  
ExcelinEd in Action