



Hello, Chairman Thomas and members of the House Education Committee:

My name is Jordan Zakery. I am speaking on behalf of ExcelinEd in Action, a national, bipartisan education policy think tank founded by Governor Jeb Bush. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on behalf of HB 2048.

Currently, Kansas offers the Tax Credit for Low Income Students Scholarship Program, an educational choice program, that serves more than 1300 students statewide. This program has allowed students, regardless of their means, to access an educational environment of their choice.

HB 2048 offers the following key improvements to the program:

- An increase in the credit value from 70 percent to 100 percent to encourage donations.
- It increases eligibility allowing students in households making under 250 percent of the federal poverty level to participate. More simply put, just under \$70,000 a year for a family of four.
- Eligibility is extended to foster kids, military kids, and children of first responders.
- Current high school students can gain access to a scholarship account.
- The program cap can escalate from \$10,000,000 to \$20,000,000 if there is enough demand met, enabling even more students and families to benefit.

Together these improvements equate to more students from at-need populations gaining additional access to a school of their choice.

In fact, a late 2022 survey released by the Kansas Policy Institute and EdChoice, found that nearly 4 in 5 parents with students participating in the program were satisfied with their student's experience in the program.

Additionally, in the same report, only 7 percent of participants responded they would be able to have their child attend their current private school if not for the program. It is clear this program has empowered many families with the needed resources and financial means to put their children in a school that works best for their individual needs.

HB 2048 is a keep-doing-what-you're-doing bill. It supports a program that empowers students and families with educational options. It tells a parent that the legislature supports them in finding a school that works best for their kid.

For these reasons, ExcelinEd in Action urges your support of HB 2048.

Sincerely,
Jordan Zakery