

February 5, 2021

TO: Michigan Department of Education

FROM: Grand Rapids Chamber, Detroit Regional Chamber, Michigan Chamber, Small Business Association of Michigan, Michigan Manufacturers Association, West Michigan Policy Forum, Saginaw County Chamber, Lansing Regional Chamber, Business Leaders for Michigan

CC: Hon. Gretchen Whitmer, Governor
Hon. Phil Rosenfelt, Acting Secretary of Education
Members of the Michigan State Board of Education

RE: **Public comment: Request to waive school assessment and accountability for 2020-21 school year**

Our organizations are deeply invested in the success of our education system. We are committed to ensuring ALL Michigan students have a solid academic foundation to build on.

COVID-19 has disrupted our educational system like it has our businesses, our communities, and our families. We applaud the work done to ensure the safety of our students during this difficult time. Student safety, learning, achievement, and growth are of paramount concern to our business community. As our state and nation seek to create a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, we support the continued use of data to inform our educational efforts, particularly for our most vulnerable students.

This is why our organizations strongly oppose the waiver requesting to cancel this year's M-STEP assessment.

Data-driven information on where our students are is critical to deciding how resources and interventions need to be implemented. Rather than move away from testing, our Department should be leaning into the opportunity to gather a clear and accurate picture of the gaps that exist so we can rally around a pathway that allows for all students to recover and grow.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to continuing to be allies with the Department and our educational community to ensure the success of every student.