



Date: March 10, 2025

Dear Chair Cwodzinski and the members of the Senate Education Policy Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony for SF 2067. My name is Evan Eagleson, and I am the Legislative Director for the Great Lakes Region with [ExcelinEd in Action](#), a national non-profit organization focused on student-centered policies that improve outcomes in the states. I am writing today in opposition to SF 2067.

While we appreciate the goal of increasing the number of students taking nationally recognized college entrance exams, we believe that it should not come at the expense of the state's standards-based assessment. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) is aligned to Minnesota standards and is designed to measure a student's grasp on those standards. A college entrance exam is not designed to measure this, rather it is designed to measure whether a student will be successful in college.

One example that we've seen in other states has been to switch to the ACT assessment. While 8 states currently use the ACT instead of a high school end-of-course assessment, only one has been approved to do so through peer review because ACT does not measure the depth and breadth of the state content standards or meet other technical requirements.

ACT routinely points out that their assessment is a college-readiness assessment. According to ACT, "The ACT is designed and has been empirically validated to assess student progress toward postsecondary readiness. Research by ACT and others has consistently established the validity of scores on the ACT—the most widely used college entrance examination in the United States—in predicting student success in credit-bearing first-year college coursework and a variety of college outcomes such as persistence to a second year of college at the same institution and ultimate degree attainment" (ACT, 2018).

There are challenges for states who have made the switch to college entrance assessments, and there are many things to consider when discussing this type of change. Does the assessment reflect Minnesota Academic content standards? If it does not and needs to be modified as a result, that will prevent the use by higher education institutions for admission purposes. Does the assessment measure the full range with adequate precision? College entrance assessments typically have content geared towards the higher end of the performance categories and will not cover content at the lower end of the spectrum. Finally,

it is important to ensure there is adequate notification, appropriate accessibility and accommodation is offered, and adequate timing of data and reports.

One recommendation we offer is to provide students with the opportunity to take the ACT to demonstrate college readiness but keep the state's MCA in place to determine if students are mastering grade level standards. Mississippi is a great example. The state pays for an administration of ACT for all public high school 11th graders, and have since 2016, to demonstrate college readiness. Mississippi recently considered the very change you are considering and opted to not proceed because it did not measure the state content standards.

As I mentioned earlier, we are supportive of and appreciate the goal of having more Minnesota students take assessments like the ACT, as it - without a doubt - can open doors for some students that would otherwise not have that opportunity. However, the state should also be monitoring how well their students have mastered the state standards in which they have been taught. And the best way to do that is with a state standard-based assessment.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony. I look forward to working with you all on this important issue.

Respectfully,

Evan Eagleson
Legislative Director, Great Lakes Region
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