



Honorable Members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Alice Neira, and I am the Senior Legislative Affairs Associate for ExcelinEd in Action.

ExcelinEd in Action is the 501(c)(4) sister organization to the Foundation for Excellence in Education, founded by Governor Jeb Bush. 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 come before you today to express our support of House Bill 1369. This legislation creates the Education Empowerment Account program, which would give families with K-5 students access to support services for qualified educational programs as well as the option to enroll in a non-public school that works best for them. In short, this bill recognizes that educational opportunity is a priority and empowers families to customize schooling as they see fit.

We appreciate that public schools work well for many children, but every student deserves access to a quality education, and each student is unique. School choice does not hurt public education, and in fact strengthens it by refocusing on what ultimately matters: Students.

Programs like this are the future of school choice and are already working for students in Arizona, Florida, Mississippi, North Carolina and Tennessee. Regional competitors like Minnesota, Iowa and Missouri are considering similar legislation as well.

Lastly, education scholarship accounts are not only good policy, they are also popular with voters. A new national survey from Democratic pollster Beck Research finds support for school choice policies remains 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 from Republicans, Independents and Democrats.

Today marks the kick-off of the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual National School Choice Week, where thousands of families across the nation, including North Dakota, are both celebrating existing school choice programs and shining light on the need for more options. On this notable day, I urge you to support House Bill 1369 and give North Dakotan families the educational opportunities they need— and deserve.

Thank you for your leadership,

Alice Neira  
Senior Legislative Affairs Associate  
ExcelinEd in Action