

February 25, 2020

The Honorable Pam Hornberger  
Chair, House Education Committee  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 30014  
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Representative Hornberger,

We, the undersigned, are writing to thank you for your timely consideration of SB 171 and to urge you and the committee to move promptly to pass this bill.

This bill would retain valuable flexibility in the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) by allowing students in the class of 2025 and beyond to have the same curricular choices regarding world language study that have been enjoyed by students since 2016. By allowing students a choice between a second credit of world language; additional visual, performing, and applied arts coursework; or career and technical education programming, this provision enables students to pursue the course pathway that is most individually rigorous and relevant.

We also want to underscore the importance of acting quickly to move this legislation forward. The loss of flexibility impacts our today's eighth graders – who are currently in the process of reflecting on post-secondary goals and mapping out a rough course schedule for all four years of high school as part of updating their educational development plans (EDP). In addition, many students are making actual course selections for their freshman year of high school, in which many will be required to take their second World Language credit in their freshman year. This requirement effectively limits students from the desired flexibility described above, now and in future years.

Educators and students will make many decisions in the coming month. In addition to students scheduling classes for next year, schools will be working to finalize their master schedule, which will dictate things like course offerings, course load, and staffing decisions. All of these decisions require lead time for schools to make adjustments. The sooner the House Education Committee acts, the sooner schools can make decisions with certainty. Passing this bill before the scheduling process is complete will maximize its impact and be most beneficial to students and schools. A delay of even a few weeks will diminish that impact significantly.

Thank you again for taking up SB 171 in such a timely fashion, and we ask for your support.

Sincerely,

Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators  
Michigan Association of School Boards  
Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals  
Middle Cities Education Association  
Northern Michigan School Legislative Association  
School Equity Caucus  
West Michigan Talent Triangle  
ESA Legislative Group