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Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of all of the students and families, not only in MVCA, but on behalf of all 6,094 who have applied to be a part of our school.

You have heard from many of our opponents and I would like to be sure that you are armed with the most factual information as you make this most critical decision. The key factors are quality standards, student achievement, and parent choice.

Regarding MEAP, I believe what you heard from a previous presenter may have been a bit misleading. The presenter used Michigan Virtual Charter Academy's 2010-2011 scores and referenced the new cut scores which apply to the 2011-2012 school year. Actually, MVCA pulled students from 146 school districts across the state. We outscored all districts from where our students reside by an average of 3%. Our MEAP scores for 2011 are not yet public, but in 2010 79.4% of our students were proficient in English/Language Arts/Reading and 79.8% were proficient in mathematics.

While it is true that we did not make AYP in our first year, the reason was not because our students did not participate in the test. We actually had 95.7% of all of our students participate in testing. It was due to a paperwork error that we did not make AYP. Some, 21 to be exact, of our students inadvertently bubbled the "Home Schooled" bubble on their test booklet and it was not caught by us. Another 8 were automatically defaulted by the Measurement Inc. system into the "homeschooled" bucket. Those students were enrolled with us, counted by us in the fall count, and the MSDS designated them as our students. Measurement Inc. had no answer as to why the system would have defaulted them and unfortunately we could not change the situation. We did not make AYP in 2010-2011, but it wasn't for lack of participation. This year we ran 18 testing sites throughout the state and have initial participation rates of 97% in math and 96% in English/Language Arts/Reading. It is interesting that opponents criticize MVCA's AYP scores while simultaneously applauding Superintendent Flanagan for applying for an NCLB waiver. It seems hypocritical.

The state of Michigan has applied for a waiver for NCLB believing that a growth measure is more applicable than a one-time annual measure. Michigan Virtual Charter Academy out did its goals on growth and outdid the expectations in growth of its authorizer. The Scantron Performance Series exam is a nationally norm referenced exam used by many schools and districts throughout the country as well as all K12 managed schools. It measures student gains from the beginning of the year, or from when the student entered our school to the end of the year. MVCA had student gains that were above the Scantron national norm group in both math and reading with the exception of 6th grade math. When students enter our school we look at their MEAP, Scantron, DIBELS, and MME scores as well as any other indicators that would tell us that the student is at-risk academically. This year 57% of our students are new to MVCA. Currently we have 42.6% of them who are academically at-risk based on their data.

You have also heard our opponents talk about the fact that we did not have any dually enrolled students or students taking AP courses. We offer both of these programs to our students but last year we started our high school with 2 students who had dropped out, both of whom were 17 years old and who had 3 credits. Neither of them were in a place to take part in either academic option. We have students this year who are enrolled in AP courses and we are working with students who are interested in dual

enrollment in the near future. Currently we have 115 of our 207 high school students who have previously dropped out of high school. Based on the open enrollment policy, we accept every student who wants to enroll. This means that we have a majority of students who are severely credit-deficient and very close to aging out. We are using many strategies with these students including blended learning, credit recovery courses, A+ curriculum, and K12 curriculum. We truly have a sense of urgency to ensure these students are successful and that they graduate college and career ready!

Our opponents also say that there are no quality standards by which virtual schools operate. We are accountable to the state through high stakes testing, our Annual Education Report, School Improvement, and Accreditation just to name a few. Our authorizer, Grand Valley State University also requires that we meet contract standards. **Contract Standard 1:** On the average of all MEAP tests administered, MVCA will meet or exceed the performance of its select peer district. Our peer district is the entire state of Michigan because we are a statewide school. **Contract Standard 2:** On the average of all MEAP tests administered, MVCA will meet or exceed the performance of its compositional peer district. The comparison scores for the compositional peer district are populated by the weighted total of MEAP scores from those districts in which MVCA students physically reside. Last year, MVCA enrolled students from 146 school districts in the state. **Contract Standard 3:** Michigan Virtual Charter Academy will not average more than one-half standard deviation below Grand Valley State University's MEAP/Free and Reduced Lunch regression model for all grades and subjects included in MEAP. GVSU requires that our school be within $\frac{1}{2}$ standard deviation of our statistically predicted performance. **Contract Standard 4:** The overall growth rate of MVCA on a nationally recognized norm-referenced test will fall at 50% or greater across all grades and subjects for which the test is designed. The truth is that we are held to even greater accountability standards than most schools. If we do not perform, we will lose our charter and will cease to operate. How many traditional schools have closed due to lack of performance?

The arguments that our opponents provide to you are truly not about students and families and choice. They are about misrepresenting the facts so that families have no choices. All students regardless of their situation- be it economic, cultural, or physical-deserve to have access to a world class education.