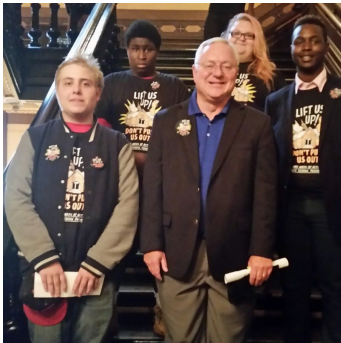




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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Students Organize “Capitol Commencement” in support of  
HB 5618-5621 & 5693-5695**



LANSING - Fourteen students and six adult allies from Ypsilanti and Jackson organized a “Capitol Commencement” Tuesday, Oct. 18 to show their support for the Rethink Discipline Bill Packages HB 5618-5621 and 5693-5695. Before the session started, cupcakes and postcards were distributed for each Senator. During the session, students presented graduation caps to Senators, along with a “diploma” of startling facts regarding harsh school discipline.

Participating students are part of Student Advocacy Center’s Youth Action Michigan, a program that gives high school students skills and support to impact school pushout. Student Advocacy Center has been around since 1975 helping out-of-school and struggling youth find a learning path.

“We want to get bills passed, for a better education,” said DaQuann Harrison, a student in Ypsilanti.

SAC’s “Capitol Commencement” event is part of the national Week of Action, organized by the national Dignity In Schools Campaign. During this year’s DSC Week of Action, more than 100 organizations in more than 40 cities across the country will hold rallies, marches, forums and workshops to raise awareness to end school pushout. This year’s theme is: Lift Us Up! Don’t Push Us Out.

Nationally, the groups are calling on their governments, districts and schools to:

- Shift funding from school police to counselors, peace builders, and positive discipline.
- Fund and use transformative and restorative justice, mediation, and positive interventions.
- Stop arresting and pushing out student of color, LGBTQ youth, students that are homeless, and students with disabilities at higher rates. (Black students are pushed out at the highest rates nationally.)
- Make sure states and districts focus on school climate under the new federal law- the Every Student Succeeds Act.
- End paddling and physical punishment in all schools.

