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Sen. Roger Chamberlain
3225 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Chamberlain and Members of the Senate Education Finance and Policy Committee:

I am writing today in support of SF2872 to appropriate money for Language Essentials for Teacher of Reading and Spelling grants.

As a former teacher, school leader, and a current parent and literacy advocate, I strongly believe that every student deserves grade-appropriate curriculum and teachers that are equipped to deliver strong instruction. When students have access to these crucial resources, they can rise to any challenge.

A literacy needs assessment¹ administered to 17 schools in 2021 in the Twin Cities revealed that while teachers receive professional development on literacy curricula, they are not receiving training on effective literacy practices and research (Great MN Schools, 2021, p.10). Teachers also expressed the need and desire for more learning on how kids learn to read and write.

Making quality training such as LETRS available to more Minnesota teachers provides them with in-depth knowledge based on the most current research of both foundational and higher-level literacy skills. Through LETRS training, teachers learn how to deliver effective instruction beneficial to all students. Also important to note: LETRS training is particularly vital for students with learning differences.

In my daily work with school leaders and teachers, I am constantly looking for ways to support them. Unsurprisingly, the most common sentiment right now is one of feeling overwhelmed and concerned for their students who are falling farther and farther behind as the repercussions of the pandemic continue.

While teachers are exhausted, they indicate that they are willing to do what it takes to accelerate instructional recovery. With so much on their plates right now – navigating shifts to-and-from virtual learning, staffing shortages, and ensuring the safety of students – teachers and leaders have not had the time to research the various trainings. **We owe it to our educators to value their time and provide them with what we already know are proven high-quality, effective learning opportunities to help them better serve their students. We must make LETRS training available to more teachers across our state.**

Thank you for your time and continued dedication to our youngest generation of Minnesotans.

Sincerely,



Melissa Long

¹ Great MN Schools. 2021. **On literacy, we are learning together: a review of literacy practices in Twin Cities schools and recommendations for school and system leaders.**

<https://greatmnschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/GMS-Literacy-Needs-Assessment-detailed-report-August-2021.pdf>