

Representative Jim Davnie
Chair, House Education Finance Committee
443 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Ruth Richardson
Chair, House Education Policy Committee
403 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Roger Chamberlain
Chair, Senate Education Finance and Policy Committee
95 University Ave W
St. Paul, MN 55155

SENT VIA E-MAIL

April 26, 2022

Dear Chair Davnie, Chair Richardson, and Chair Chamberlain:

We write you today to share our concerns about legislation advancing in the House and Senate - the Student Data Privacy Act. These provisions are included in HF1404, the Omnibus Data Practices bill, and SF2307, a bill that has advanced separately in the Senate. These bills propose new student privacy requirements for technology providers and for schools utilizing school-issued technological devices.

We all agree that the privacy of student data is of the utmost importance and agree that a partnership with the State Legislature can provide better outcomes. Minnesota Statutes 2020, Section 13.32 Subdivision 13 (a) through (g) relates to the responsibilities that technology providers must adhere to. We agree with the restrictions posed for technology vendors and appreciate language that would help our efforts with vendors to keep student data secure.

School district staff work every day to secure the privacy and data of our students, staff, and families. Although we support the provisions holding technology vendors accountable to high standards for ensuring privacy and data security, some provisions in these bills will impact how we use technology in our schools and classrooms.

Our primary concern is that the language allows parents to opt-out of instructional platforms which could limit opportunities for students. Many districts deliver instruction via a technology device, rather than traditional textbooks, so allowing an opt-out will require teachers to develop and deliver alternative lesson plans and content. This will result in additional staff time and take away from needed instructional time with students.

As stated earlier, we support the provisions holding technology vendors accountable. However, we ask that our concerns be addressed should the bill advance.

Respectfully,

John Magas, Superintendent
ISD#709 – Duluth

Rae Villebrun, Superintendent
ISD#319 - Nashwauk/Keewatin

Reggie Engebritson, Superintendent
ISD#2142 – St. Louis County Schools
ISD#712 – Mountain Iron – Buhl Schools

Michael Cary, Superintendent
ISD#94 – Cloquet

Kevin Grover, Superintendent
ISD#361 – International Falls

Jeff Burgess, Superintendent
ISD#2711 – Mesabi East

Mike McNulty, Superintendent
ISD#91 – Barnum

Nathan Libbon, Superintendent
ISD#95 – Cromwell-Wright

Dan Stifter, Superintendent
ISD#1 - Aitkin

Aaron Fischer, Superintendent
ISD#99 - Esko

Bill Peel, Superintendent
ISD#577 – Willow River

Matt Grose, Superintendent
ISD#318 – Grand Rapids

Wayne Whitwam, Superintendent
ISD#700 - Hermantown

David Pace, Superintendent
ISD#316 - Greenway

Chris Lindholm, Superintendent
ISD#166 – Cook County

Brad Johnson, Superintendent
ISD#4 - McGregor

John Engstrom, Superintendent
ISD#93 - Carlton

Adrian Norman, Superintendent
ISD#316 – Chisholm

Jamie Wendt, Superintendent
ISD#362 – Little Fork/Big Falls