



7800 Metro Parkway Suite 300 | Bloomington, Minnesota 55425 | 952-767-4909
mnpta@mnpta.org | www.mnpta.org

everychild.one voice.®

January 29, 2023

Re: Senate File 757 - Computer science education advancement fund establishment

Dear Chair Cwodzinski and Members of the Senate Education Policy Committee,

This year, the Minnesota PTA will celebrate our 100th Anniversary of supporting parents, students, and educators across the state. We currently have over 200 local units in Minnesota with over 4,000 members representing all forms of schools, including rural, suburban, urban, district, and charter. The Minnesota PTA is a state congress of the National PTA, the oldest and largest volunteer child advocacy organization in the nation, with over 20,000 local units in all 50 states.

Ranking 50th in the nation in access to computer science for high school students is not acceptable to Minnesota parents. MN PTA supports the provisions in Senate File 757 because Minnesota parents want their children to have the same access as children in other states to explore and develop the technical skills that are in high demand in the opportunities beyond high school graduation.

The mission of the PTA is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. Since 2016, the National PTA has provided grants and programming to support STEM initiatives in schools, and Minnesota PTA has helped schools across the state to organize STEM + Family events. These "one night only" exposures to science, technology, engineering and math ignite a student's spark of interest in these important skill areas; however, dedicated courses in computer science are needed to grow those sparks into a flame that can fuel a student's passions and prepare them for future success in many STEM areas.

Minnesota PTA members whose schools do offer computer science know the benefits to their children. Maggie Johnson, PTA member at Poplar Bridge, and mother of 3 says, "The Computer Science program at Olson Middle School has opened doors for my daughter that we didn't know existed. The hands-on experience she is getting as well as the knowledge and skills are second to none. Learning how to code and create things in our technology-heavy world is sure to open big doors!"

We want all students to have the opportunity to explore their interests and skills in computer science so more doors can be open to more successful futures. We believe the provisions of SF 757 will move us closer to that goal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Amy Nelson
President, Minnesota PTA

Cathy Nathan
Advocacy Commissioner, Minnesota PTA