



MINNESOTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION

Serving Elementary and Middle-Level Principals

1970 Oakcrest Avenue, Suite 204
Roseville, MN 55113 • www.mespa.net
952.297.8670 • mespa@mespa.net

March 7, 2023

Senator Steve Cwodzinski, Chair
Education Policy Committee
3207 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Julia Coleman
Ranking Minority Member
Education Policy Committee
2302 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN, 55155

Re: Concerns on SF1311 and HF1269

Dear Chair Cwodzinski and Minority Ranking Member Coleman:

Minnesota's elementary principals have the responsibility for the education and safety of our students. We are deeply concerned that multiple provisions in SF1311 may have unintended consequences toward the completion of those goals.

The current language in the bill prohibits all suspensions in grades K-3. For reasons that are unclear to us, the bill only authorizes expulsions and exclusions. Districts rarely use expulsion or exclusion. Suspension, however, is a different matter. Often students need to be out of school for a day or more for safety reasons, both for the involved student and for other students. The language in the bill would prohibit suspending a student in any circumstances. While MESPA supports limiting suspensions to those cases where a student poses a safety threat, we cannot support the language in the bill resulting in a total prohibition of suspensions.

These issues are important to all of our communities. We hope in the weeks ahead the result can benefit all students and all of our school communities.

Jon Millerhagen, Executive Director
Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association
1970 Oakcrest Avenue, Suite 204
Roseville, MN 55113
952-297-8673 Office
612-816-5400 Cell

Jason Luksik, President
Lincoln Elementary
1617 5th Street NE
Bemidji, MN 56601
218-333-3250 Office