

March 26, 2024

TO: Minnesota Senate Education Finance Committee

RE: Letter of Support for SF 4259

Dear Chair Kunesh and Members of the Senate Education Finance Committee,

My name is Cassie Scharber. As someone who has been working within Minnesota on computer science education for many years, I write this letter **in support of SF 4259**, the Minnesota Computer Science Education Advancement Act.

Please note that this letter does *not* formally represent support from any of the organizations I work at or am involved in. It represents my personal opinions. My involvement in computer science education has been, and continues to be, long-term and multi-faceted. As an Associate Professor at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, I teach classes and advise graduate students' research in this area. I conduct nationally sponsored research specific to computer science education. I work in partnership with local school districts on developing K12 computer science pathways. In addition, I am a CSforAll-MN steering committee member as well as a member of the Computer Science Working Group that was charged with developing a state strategic plan for computer science education.

My efforts in these roles are driven by my understanding of computing to be a **foundational literacy practice**. Computer science literacy extends beyond access to classes and careers. Technology is embedded into our daily lives, and it often replicates and reinforces systemic inequities and injustices. Technology is not neutral. Computer science literacy is directly connected to creating a more equitable and just world.

Funding to support computer science education in Minnesota is critical. SF 4259 provides much-needed funding to support the development of a high-quality computer science education ecosystem for students, teachers, and teacher educators. I urge the committee to invest in SF 4259.

Thank you for your consideration and support.



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