

March 24, 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 Sheri Levasseur. As someone who has been working within rural/greater Minnesota Schools as a licensed library media specialist for many years, I write this letter in support of SF 4259, the Minnesota Computer Science Education Advancement Act. It is my goal to bring computer science and information literacy, including digital citizenship, to *every* student (and staff who support them) in Minnesota.

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 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. Access to foundational classes for all students is paramount to integrating into the world in which we live. This isn't happening now in many of the Districts and Charters in my Region of Central to West and Northwest Minnesota.

I served on the Computer Science Education Working Group Team which was charged with developing a state strategic plan for long-term and sustained growth of computer science education in all kindergarten through grade 12 school districts and charter schools. I filled the position within this group as School Library Media Specialist and also as an educator representing my Region, where access to CS education for all students, training for our teachers, and even attention to the need for it is not foundational, in fact in many cases it is non-existent.

SF 4259 provides much-needed funding to support the development of a high-quality computer science education ecosystem for all students, teachers, and teacher educators. I urge the committee to invest in SF 4259 to support in making foundational computer science literacy accessible to all.

Thank you for your consideration and support.



Sheri Levasseur

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Member of Minnesota Computer Science Working Group

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