



Date: February 19, 2025

Dear Chairman Cwodzinski and members of the Senate Education Policy Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony for SF 360. My name is Evan Eagleson, and I am the Legislative Director for the Great Lakes Region with [ExcelinEd in Action](#), a national non-profit organization focused on student-centered policies that improve outcomes in the states. I write today in opposition to SF 360, which would erode the rigorous standards Minnesota has had in place

Success in math plays a huge role in a student's life both in the classroom and beyond, and the skills gained are used in almost every aspect of our lives going forward. I was once one of those kids who used to think, "Why am I learning this equation? I'll never use it in my life after school." However, the skills I developed by learning how to do math, even though it was a struggle for me, are things I use every day—skills like critical thinking, managing finances and problem-solving. We can all agree that the next generation must develop these skills to succeed in life.

Not only is mathematics helpful in developing skills, success in these courses also puts students on a path to prosperity. A [study](#) published by the College & Career Readiness & Success Center at the American Institutes for Research showed that successful completion of Algebra 1 in middle school is correlated to a student's secondary success and postsecondary readiness. Another [report](#) from the Urban Institute found that math scores have a significant predictive impact on earnings into adulthood.

Currently, Minnesota sets high math standards by requiring students to complete Algebra 1 in middle school and Algebra 2 as a high school graduation requirement. Minnesota also ranks in the top 10 states when it comes to math proficiency on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), ranking eighth for fourth grade math and fourth in the nation for eighth grade math. Now is not the time to take your foot off the gas pedal.

SF 360 would lower the bar for students at a time when we need to make sure standards remain high. We urge you to stand strong and focus your efforts on policies that help improve student outcomes even more.

Among our math policy recommendations: ensuring teachers and teachers in training programs have the evidence-based math skills and knowledge necessary to develop math proficiency in grades K-8. This would set students up for success in both Algebra 1 and 2 and make teachers more confident when it comes to teaching mathematics in Minnesota.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony. We are firm believers that every student can succeed in math if given the proper tools and I look forward to working with you all to ensure we keep the bar high for all of Minnesota's students.

Respectfully,

Evan Eagleson

Legislative Director, Great Lakes Region

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