

SF 507
Written Testimony
Katie Sandsmark
Multilingual Learner Teacher in Minnesota Public Schools

Dear Education Policy Chairs and Committee Members,

My name is Katie Sandsmark and I am a multilingual learner (MLL) teacher in a twin cities public high school. In this position I strongly believe that we need to do more to engage with and reach out to our multilingual families, which is why I am writing to you today in support of SF 507.

Family engagement in schools is critical for student success so that our learners receive support both in school and at home. As such, it is imperative that families who don't have English as their first language are included in all aspects of their student's education, including IEP meetings and documentation.

The school system is difficult to navigate for several families and to have English as a second language adds a layer of complexity, which can deter multilingual families from engaging in the ways they want to with their students' education. IEP documents and meetings are some of the most important and most complex documents that we have in our schools and it is crucial that families are provided with interpreters for IEP meetings as well as translated versions of these legal documents.

The accommodations listed in SF 507 are important and necessary for all of our families to be able to effectively and fully engage with their students' education. We must prioritize families' abilities to understand their students' IEPs and give them full and equitable access to the accommodations their students need. This will give opportunities for families to ask questions, to give more authentic input, as well as give families more autonomy regarding their students' needs.

I strongly believe in the importance of SF 507 and strongly stand behind the bill. I encourage committee members to pass this bill through as all families should have the right to be fully informed about their students' education.

Thank you for your consideration,

Katie Sandsmark
MLL teacher