



March 26, 2025

Chair Cwodzinski and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

Thank you for the effort and time you and your committee put into the Senate omnibus education bill, SF 1740. We have greatly appreciated your willingness to engage with our organization and the general public throughout the session. We applaud the committee for advancing several provisions that will build a stronger K-12 education system for Minnesota students.

Below, we highlight some of the proposals we believe will have the most significant positive impact, as well as the few we believe can be modified to strengthen the bill.

We support:

The inclusion of policies aimed at improving the state's collective response to our chronic absenteeism crisis: clearer definitions and improved reporting will get us better data and help break down silos between families, schools, districts, counties and the state ultimately making interventions more targeted and effective.

- Expansion of district employees who can intake excused attendance (Article 1, Section 1)
- Counting a student as in attendance when they are with a district employee (Article 1, Section 2)
- Earlier reporting to counties for unenrolled students (Article 1, Section 3)
- Empowering MDE to coordinate reenrollment supports for dropped students (Article 1, Section 4)
- Including attendance data with MCA score reports sent to families (Article 1, Section 8)

Increasing accountability and transparency for charter schools: all students deserve access to high quality school options that fit their needs. These proposals will ensure more effective governance, add additional tools for authorizers to hold schools accountable, as well as help improve outcomes for students who attend charter schools.

- Requiring a finance committee and allowing authorizers to require the hiring of a finance expert for schools in corrective action (Article 3, Section 9)
- Recording and posting school board meetings to make them accessible to the school community and the public (Article 3, Section 10)
- Requiring a school publish its annual performance report on its website (Article 3, Section 15)
- Charters, upon the request of the authorizers required to communicate with its school community interventions and corrective actions (Article 3, Section 16)

Ongoing refinement of the Read Act: there continues to be a need for responsive and thoughtful tweaks to this landmark legislation. Proposals in this bill will further ensure that students statewide have access to teachers trained in the science of reading, using high quality curriculum. Article 4 includes commendable proposals that will set up teachers taking alternative routes to the classroom have the training they need in foundational literacy to teach students to read. This article also outlines a sensible and predictable curriculum review process that will push publishers to meet high expectations for alignment with the Read Act.

Finally, there are some specific provisions that we urge the committee to modify before the bill advances:

#### Algebra II Repeal

Minnesota has some of the highest math standards in the country, and those expectations are paying off: in the most recent NAEP assessments, our 8th graders were 4th in the country. **Now is not the time to lower standards and we urge the legislature not to advance this proposal (Article 1, Sections 6-7).** Repealing the Algebra II requirement will lead to tracking of low-income students, students with disabilities, and students of color into lower level math coursework making the climb to and through college significantly higher. College entrance requirements in Minnesota include Algebra II and eliminating the requirement in high school will lead to more students having to take developmental education courses for zero credit which wastes time and money.

#### Tier 1 Licensure Modifications

While it is commendable to get rid of a testing requirement that didn't even require a teacher to pass, just take the assessment (Article 2, Section 17), the changes to Tiered Licensure in 2023 still will leave too many Tier 1 teachers stuck, with limited and expensive options to move up the Tiers. **We recommended the legislature add a pathway for Tier 1 teachers to earn a Tier 2 license through years of teaching experience at the Tier 1 level, coupled with evidence of high-quality professional development, mentorship, and positive evaluations.**

Thank you for your consideration of our feedback and for the effort you put into crafting this bill.

Sincerely,  
Matt Shaver  
Senior Policy Director  
EdAllies  
mshaver@edalliesmn.org