

February 28, 2025

To: Chair Kunesh and members of the Senate Education Finance Committee

From: Erin Bailey, Director of Community Education, Northfield Public Schools

Chair Kunesh and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of Northfield Public Schools to express our strong support for SF 2007. This bill makes several critical policy changes that the Minnesota Full-Service Community Schools Network has identified as necessary to realize the spirit of the original bill passed by the Minnesota Legislature in 2023. Approximately 55 schools submitted applications for the most recent state-funded FSCS grant in early 2024 and 25 were awarded. Given that districts were limited to applying for only three schools, we believe there is a stronger level of interest across the state in this evidence-based student success strategy. This current bill proposes additional funding to support and sustain approximately 60 new and existing FSCS across Minnesota with the potential to support approximately 24,000 youth and their families.

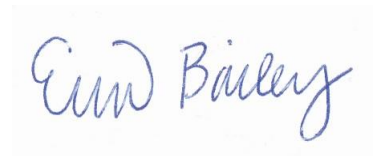
Full-Service Community Schools combine evidence driven strategies that are designed to support both student and family success. FSCS sites offer community service partnerships, family and community engagement, enriched and extended learning, and foster collaborative and community-based leadership. Effective sites serve rural, suburban, and metro areas schools across Minnesota.

Northfield Public Schools Community School sites play a vital role in fostering a thriving, inclusive, and supportive environment for the entire Northfield community. By offering quality out-of-school time education, extracurricular programs, and vital community outreach, the schools serve as a central hub for growth and connection. They not only equip students with the skills and knowledge they need for future success, but they also contribute to the local economy by creating jobs and supporting local businesses and nonprofits. Investing in Full-Service Community Schools ensures that all members of the community, from children to families, have access to opportunities that strengthen the social fabric of Northfield. Even in a difficult budget year, the legislature should prioritize funding for Full-Service Community Schools as they represent an investment in the future, offering long-term benefits that far outweigh short-term financial constraints. Ensuring robust education programs for all residents

is crucial for sustaining a strong, educated workforce and maintaining a healthy, vibrant community.

Thank you for your consideration and support for Full-Service Community Schools, we urge you to pass SF 2007.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Erin Bailey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Erin Bailey

Director of Community Education

Northfield Public Schools