February 28, 2025

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

From: Lisa Becker, Community School Facilitator, Riverside Central Elementary, Rochester Public Schools

Chair Kunesh and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of Riverside Central Elementary in Rochester, MN 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.

This bill is important now more than ever. Riverside families are facing hardships with finding employment, housing, and healthcare. They utilize our Full-Service Community School because we are a trusted place where they feel comfortable asking for help. We need more Community Schools to help families with basic needs, which ultimately supports student success.

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

Sincerely,

Lisa Becker
Community School Facilitator
Riverside Central Elementary, Rochester Public Schools