

Monday, March 31, 2025

**Chair Kunesh, Vice-Chair Gustafson, Ranking Minority Member Rarick, and Members of the Education Finance Committee,**

I write in strong opposition to **SF2255** which will cut more than \$240 million in spending in the 2026-27 biennium and another \$445 million in the 2028-29 biennium. At a time when our K-12 schools have **no remaining room to cut budgets**—and when student needs have never been greater—this bill would push districts deeper into crisis.

At a time when schools are already stretching every dollar to meet basic needs, this bill would force **rural and small-town districts—already underfunded compared to their metro counterparts—into even deeper shortfalls**, leaving students unprepared for the workforce and vulnerable to cyber threats.

For **40 years**, I've worked in K-12 technology across Minnesota, from metro areas to Greater Minnesota. In that time, schools have trimmed every possible cost, but after years of cuts, they're left with **no responsible way to balance budgets without harming students**. In technology, here's what that looks like on the ground:

- **Computers labeled “Ready for Windows 8”**—a system Microsoft no longer supports—while schools lack funds to upgrade to computers capable of running Windows 11.
- **Monitors so old they appeared on *Friday Night Lights*** (a show that ended in 2011) still being used in district offices today.
- **Server rooms patched together with donated 50-foot Ethernet cables** because schools can't afford 1-foot replacements, turning simple troubleshooting into hours of tracing cable runs.
- **Teachers rationing projector use** because a burnt-out bulb means no more lessons on the big screen.
- **Decades-old CD-ROM software** forcing schools to maintain obsolete computers just to run basic programs.
- **Paying for antivirus software once—but not the annual renewal**—leaving schools vulnerable to cyberattacks that could cripple networks for weeks.

**SF2255 moves us in the wrong direction.** Schools already face **impossible choices**: art teachers or functioning computers, counselors or cybersecurity updates. **Cutting hundreds of millions in funding will only deepen these inequities, leaving students further behind.**

I urge you to **reject SF2255** and instead focus on solutions that give schools—and students—the tools they need to succeed.

**Thank you for your time and consideration.**

Respectfully,  
**/s/ Andrew C. Charrier**

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*The views expressed here are my own.*