

Senate File #2255 – Benjamin Maurer – Testimony in Opposition to SF2255

March 31, 2025

Dear Members of the Senate Education Finance Committee,

My name is Benjamin Maurer, and I am writing to strongly urge the committee to reject the Governor's education finance proposal to eliminate sources of revenue and reimbursements to charter schools as it relates to Senate File 2255. I am the Board Chair of Agamim Classical Academy, a K-8 charter school in Edina, Minnesota, and a parent of three students currently attending our school.

Agamim Classical Academy proudly serves a richly diverse community. We are a majority-minority school, welcoming students from a variety of cultural backgrounds, including many first-generation Americans. Despite the unique challenges many of our students face, our school has consistently demonstrated remarkable academic achievement, surpassing state averages in key areas like math proficiency. Our success reflects the strength of our committed educators and our targeted educational supports, many of which rely heavily on special education reimbursements.

SF2255 proposes drastic reductions in special education funding for charter schools—reductions of 50% or more—which will directly and negatively impact our students. Charter schools like Agamim already receive approximately 30% less funding per student compared to traditional district schools, despite often serving higher percentages of at-risk students who require greater support. The proposed funding cuts outlined in SF2255 will further strain our resources, significantly impairing our ability to effectively serve students with disabilities and special educational needs.

Charter schools have become increasingly popular among Minnesota families seeking quality educational alternatives, with approximately 70,000 students attending 173 charter schools statewide. These schools offer unique educational approaches tailored to community needs. However, cuts proposed in SF2255 threaten these valuable educational options, disproportionately affecting families who rely on charter schools to provide specialized support and innovative learning environments.

I respectfully ask the committee not to balance the state's budget at the expense of Minnesota's students and families who have chosen charter schools like Agamim Classical Academy as their path to educational success and personal growth.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Maurer
Board Chair, Agamim Classical Academy
Edina, MN