



March 31, 2025  
Senator Kunesh, Chair  
Senate Education Finance Committee Members  
75 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Blvd  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Kunesh and Members:

My name is Mark Bjornrud and I am a Director at Schoolcraft Learning Community in Bemidji MN.

As you consider SF2255, the Governor's proposed budget, I want to call your attention to the proposed deeply problematic cuts to chartered public school students. These cuts include reductions to special education funding.

Schoolcraft Learning Community is a K-8 chartered public school up here in Bemidji. We serve 200 students and their families and have done so for the last 25 years. Approximately 25% of our students are a part of our Special Education program with Individual Education Plans (IEP).

We are able to offer a unique atmosphere with our smaller class sizes and 26 acres of woods to support an emphasis on outdoor education and all of the benefits that it has on students. Our setup also allows us to run our special education program to meet the student needs while maintaining a strong connection for the students within their class and not always separated out.

In my school, reductions in special education funding and operating revenue for our students would mean significant changes to all of our programming. As a small school cuts like this can have drastic and immediate implications on our ability to serve our students. This would likely mean decreases in staffing and in a small school it is much harder to absorb even a decrease of one.

I have already had parents with students that have high needs IEPs reaching out concerned about what these budget cuts would mean for the services that their students receive. Here is a portion of one email I received on Monday.

"As fellow educators and parents of a child with special needs, we are desperate to get their [Governor and legislators regarding proposed budget] attention and seek the necessary decisions that will allow SLC students to continue to thrive. Schoolcraft has been an answer to prayer in an area of our great state where the support like he has can be so hard to come by."

We are proud to be able to provide that type of support and we hope to be able to continue to do so, but these cuts would create a significant impact on our ability to do so.

As you put forth your Education Finance Omnibus bill, we respectfully urge you to protect this critical state funding for charter school students during this challenging time. Our students need your support now more than ever.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Bjornrud', with a stylized, flowing script.

Mark Bjornrud  
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Schoolcraft Learning Community  
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