



April 8, 2025

Senator Mary K. Kunesh, Chair  
3412 Minnesota Senate Bldg.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Jason Rarick, Republican Lead  
3209 Minnesota Senate Bldg.  
St Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Kunesh and Senator Rarick,

My name is Dan Beckering, and I am the Head of School at Southwest Christian High School in Chaska. We currently serve 545 students from 41 communities and 88 churches. I also represent the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) as the Minnesota State Representative. ACSI includes 33 schools across Minnesota, educating more than 8,000 students in both metropolitan and rural areas.

On behalf of Minnesota's ACSI school communities, I am writing in strong opposition to the portion of Governor Walz's proposed budget that would eliminate nonpublic pupil aid. This aid provides essential support to students in private schools, covering services such as testing, textbooks, counseling, nursing, and transportation. Cutting this funding actually defunds the students of tax-paying families and disproportionately harms families who already make significant financial sacrifices to access a faith-based school.

Leaders of private schools across Minnesota work tirelessly to keep tuition affordable. Our faculty and staff accept lower salaries and benefits than their public school peers out of dedication to their students and their school's mission. Many families rely on need-based financial scholarships to make enrollment possible. Removing this critical state support would require tuition increases and reduce access in private schools to important services all Minnesota students need, regardless of the school they attend. For some middle and lower-income families, the increased cost would make private education unaffordable.

This proposal is not just a financial issue—it's a matter of equity. Minnesota Statute 123B.40, enacted in 1975 by Governor Wendell Anderson, affirms the state's intent to "assure all Minnesota pupils and their parents freedom of choice in education." Stripping away support for these students contradicts that promise.

On behalf of Minnesota's 33 ACSI schools, I strongly encourage you to continue supporting nonpublic pupil aid. For nearly 50 years, our state has demonstrated a strong, bipartisan commitment to honoring the rights of families to choose the educational path that is best for their children. Please uphold this commitment and ensure that all Minnesota students have access to the resources they need to thrive.

Thank you for your service to our state, students, and families.

Sincerely,

**Dan Beckering**

Head of School, Southwest Christian High School  
Minnesota State Representative, Association of Christian Schools International

CC: Members of the Senate Education Finance Committee