

## SF2255 – (Rochester Public Schools) – STARBASE Funding

To whom it may concern:

I have been a teacher in our public schools for over 20 years. I worked with a variety of materials, activities, lessons, and curriculums. The STARBASE kits and lessons, which I have been using to enhance my science classroom are the most engaging, powerful lessons that I teach each year, without exception.

The lessons are tied closely to science and math standards and focus on authentic, deeper learning. My students LOVE the three weeks of STARBASE lessons that I have taught for the past few years. The reason that so many teachers in Rochester use these lessons and materials is that anyone who uses them immediately shares with colleagues.

My favorite part of the lessons are the ties to careers here in Minnesota. Each lesson includes a video of a Minnesotan that has a STEM career related to that day's lesson. My students have learned about a variety of careers that they wouldn't have otherwise been exposed to. They heard from biochemists, National guardsmen, product managers, botanists, and more. Each year my students report that they are more likely to pursue STEM related careers when they are older as a result of the work they complete during this unit of study.

I urge you to reconsider cutting the funding that brings these authentic learning opportunities to over 30,000 students in our state. The value for our students is so strong. The kids deserve access to this amazing program!

Michael Olson  
Rochester Public Schools