



St. Louis County Schools, I.S.D. 2142  
South Ridge Campus  
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Dear State Education Finance Committee,

I'm writing to respectfully express my strong opposition to the Senate Delete All Amendment to SF2255, which removed all funding for the STARBASE program. This program typically receives around \$500,000 annually, and the decision to eliminate that funding will have significant negative consequences for thousands of students and educators across our state.

As someone who values STEM education and the future of our young learners, I am deeply concerned about the impact this decision will have. The majority of the funding supports STEM kits that are distributed to 438 schools and reach approximately 35,000 students each year. These kits are not just educational tools—they are gateways to curiosity, innovation, and real-world learning. Additionally, the remaining portion of the funds supports onsite programming that provides students with hands-on experiences they simply can't get in a traditional classroom setting.

Without this funding, those STEM kits will no longer be available, and onsite programming will be reduced significantly. That's a direct loss to our students, especially those in under-resourced communities who rely on programs like STARBASE to ignite their interest in science, technology, engineering, and math.

I urge you to reconsider the removal of STARBASE funding and work to reinstate these crucial dollars. The future workforce of our state depends on a strong foundation in STEM, and programs like STARBASE play a key role in providing that foundation.

Thank you for your time and your service. I appreciate your consideration of this issue and hope you will act in the best interest of our students and schools.

Sincerely,



Michael S. Johnson

South Ridge School Principal

*"Small Schools with Big Opportunities – Where Everybody is Somebody"*