



SF2255 – North Star Elementary – Letter of Opposition

April 7, 2025

To: Members of the Minnesota Senate Education Finance Committee

Attn: Emma Zellmer

Email: emma.zellmer@mnsenate.gov

Dear Members of the Senate Education Finance Committee,

As Principal of North Star Elementary in Rock Ridge Public Schools on the Iron Range, I am writing to express my strong opposition to the deletion of funding for the STARBASE program in the Delete All Amendment to SF2255.

STARBASE is more than a program—it is a vital opportunity for students in Greater Minnesota to access high-quality, hands-on STEM education. The proposed cut would disproportionately impact schools like ours, where access to advanced STEM materials and programming is already limited due to geographic and financial barriers. For Iron Range students—many of whom come from underserved or rural communities—STARBASE offers a rare window into the world of science, technology, engineering, and math.

The STARBASE STEM kits alone reach over 35,000 students and 438 schools across the state, giving teachers tools to bring STEM to life in classrooms that might not otherwise have the resources. The loss of these kits would create a significant equity gap, particularly in rural areas. Additionally, reducing onsite programming eliminates critical hands-on learning experiences that spark student interest and inspire future careers in STEM fields.

Now more than ever, we must protect and invest in programs that provide all Minnesota students with the opportunity to imagine, innovate, and thrive—regardless of their ZIP code. I urge you to reconsider the deletion of STARBASE funding from SF2255 and ensure students across Minnesota, including those on the Iron Range, continue to benefit from this proven and impactful initiative.

Thank you for your time and your service to Minnesota's students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Manni", enclosed in a light gray rectangular box.

Scott Manni
Principal, North Star Elementary
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218-410-3134

