

Date: May 6, 2021

To: Members of the Conference Committee on HF1065
From: Education Minnesota Lobbying Team

Although the vast majority of Minnesota students are back to in-person learning, we know some families and students will still need virtual learning options into next school year.

We must use lessons learned from last year and improve distance learning experiences. That includes prohibiting the simultaneous instruction of students in person and online at the same time and giving any educator teaching both online and in person an additional 30 minutes of preparation time daily to meet this increased work requirement and ensure students get equitable learning experiences.

Simultaneous teaching has been, for the most part, an empirical failure. Teachers are exhausted and many will testify that it is not possible to give students an equitable learning experience. It involves much more than just simply turning on video during class – not if the expectation is that distance learning students have an authentic learning experience. Engagement in dual models takes work, time and planning.

It is crucial that teachers have additional, dedicated time to effectively plan lessons for two learning models. They also need that preparation time to ensure they are interacting with distance learning students outside of class time and connecting with parents.

This year has been challenging enough for students, parents and educators. Prohibiting simultaneous learning and giving teachers additional prep time is the least lawmakers can do to make their jobs a bit easier and give students a better learning experience. Please accept the House language on distance learning.

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