

LOCAL 284



**SERVICE
EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL
UNION**

Imagine...

Students in every Minnesota school having all that they need to succeed, from pre-k to career;

A community that recognizes our contribution to education by providing good working conditions and fair wages to all staff;

An economy that fairly rewards everyone's hard work and enables all families to enjoy a good quality of life through their work and retirement years;

A Union of members powerful enough to make it happen!

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February 20, 2019

Representative Tony Jurgens
351 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Re: School Lunch Shaming (HF55)

Rep. Jurgens:

SEIU Local 284 represents more than 9 thousand education workers across Minnesota. Workers include professors, clerical staff, paraeducators, nutritional services workers, building and grounds workers, early learning staff, custodians and bus drivers. Our mission is to improve the lives of working people and their families and lead the way to a more just and humane society. As part of that mission SEIU Local 284 is supportive of your bill to end school lunch shaming.

As an organization representing nutritional service workers we know that adequate nutrition is one of the most important factors influencing student growth and academic success. School nutrition programs and food service employees are critical to the school environment and student health. Children behave and learn better when they're well nourished.

Ensuring that every student can access school nutrition programs, regardless of their parents' ability to pay, is critical to ensuring student success. The changes in this bill are a positive step. Our food service members are the ones who are asked to deny students meals and our clerical members are the ones who have to inform students that they will not be allowed to walk at graduation or participate in afterschool programs because of an outstanding meal balance. All of us are grateful for your work to prohibit those practices so that students are not stigmatized and so that our members can focus on what they're good at; caring for the kids and keeping the school running.

Thank you for your work on this important bill.

Sincerely,

Kelly Gibbons
Executive Director
SEIU Local 284