



March 14, 2024

Representative Laurie Pryor
Chair, House Education Policy Committee
571 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Steve Cwodzinski
Chair, Senate Education Policy Committee
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3207
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Peggy Bennett
Republican Lead, House Education Policy
Committee
307 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Julia Coleman
Ranking Minority Member, Senate Education
Policy Committee
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2303
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chairs Pryor and Cwodzinski and Leads Bennett and Coleman,

As you and your fellow legislators begin the work of assembling your respective omnibus policy bills, our school boards and administrators respectfully request that you resist including new mandates in this year’s bill.

As you know, last year’s omnibus education bill included historic new programs and expectations for our schools. School boards, administrators, teachers, and other staff are working very hard to implement the new requirements and they need time to ensure the new programs are implemented successfully. These programs and expectations were accompanied by a significant number of new mandates.

We understand state policymakers have a balance between respecting local control and ensuring the “general and uniform system of public schools” required by the State Constitution. At the same time, we ask that your keep in mind that new mandates have a financial and workforce impacts on our schools in a variety of ways:

Budget Impact: Implementing new mandates come with a cost and our school districts continue to face budget challenges in the face of historic inflationary cost pressures.

Workforce: New mandates typically require staff training as well as resources for enforcement, compliance, monitoring, and reporting. In some cases, new staff must be hired.

Local Control: Statewide education mandates can undermine local control and decision-making. This can lead to frustration among staff and community members. In addition, statewide mandates do not account for the unique needs and circumstances of different school districts and communities.

Stifling Innovation: Specific approaches or strategies may not be the most effective or appropriate for all students and schools. Flexibility at the local level can encourage innovation and continuous improvement in education outcomes.

Thank you for considering our request and for working with us this session. We appreciate where authors have asked us to work with them on bills and we have had significant input and do support those pieces of legislation. We welcome the opportunity to have meaningful conversations to share our experiences and those of our school boards and administrators to inform and help with your decision-making.

We appreciate your commitment to public education and your support of our students, staff, and communities.

Respectfully,

Minnesota School Boards Association
Minnesota Association of School Administrators
Association of Metropolitan School Districts
Minnesota Association of School Business Officials
Minnesota Rural Education Association
Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association
Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals