

To Members of the House Education Policy Committee,

We, the Minnesota Collective for Educational Equity (MnCEE), would like to formally offer our support for [HF950](#). The crisis of academic, social-emotional, and disciplinary inequity that continues to plague Minnesota schools is a systemic problem that requires a systemic solution. Thus, we are calling upon our state leaders to support HF950 in pursuit of the implementation of a Minnesota MTSS (MnMTSS) framework along with its numerous meaningful updates toward promoting inclusive environments, promoting the use of evidence-based instruction, and increasing the number of BIPOC educators in Minnesota.

Of utmost importance to MnCEE is the inclusion of the MnMTSS definition, as we have continuously promoted [Equity-Centered MTSS](#) as a foundation for meaningful progress in Minnesota's schools. MnMTSS is an evidence-based framework that is designed to effectively allocate resources within our schools. Extensive research has demonstrated support for MTSS as an innovation that can meaningfully reduce disparities in education. Much of the initial research that informed the development of MTSS was born in Minnesota in the 1970s; however, Minnesota students have been denied the opportunities it provides as our state leaders have historically failed to support implementation of this approach. Meanwhile, Minnesota educators have watched as our neighboring states (e.g., Wisconsin) have implemented a statewide MTSS model and demonstrated its effectiveness in reducing disparities in the areas of academic achievement and the use of exclusionary discipline practices. It is time for Minnesota leaders to embrace Equity-Centered MTSS through HF950.

Other updates that we support include its definition of school mental health systems, in-school suspension, and nonexclusionary discipline practices; the prohibition on the use of exclusionary practices to address attendance and truancy issues; its numerous policies toward reducing restrictive procedures and restraints with students; the prohibition of American Indian mascots; and its goals and guidance for an increased proportion of teachers of color and American Indian teachers. These policies would offer a meaningful step toward addressing racial and other disparities that are pervasive throughout our current education system.

Minnesota is presently faced with the opportunity to do what is right. For years, MN educators and students have watched state leaders vow to close the opportunity gap in Minnesota with no comprehensive statewide implementation support for evidence-based methods. HF950 provides us with an opportunity to support *every* student, educator, family, and community.

Respectfully,
Minnesota Collective for Educational Equity