



March 16, 2021

Chair Richardson
463 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Special Education Recovery Services and Support Plan HF965

Dear Chair Richardson and members of the committee,

When schools closed in spring 2020, all students—particularly those historically underserved—were impacted. Gaps in internet and device access, varying levels of student participation, worries about mental health and social-emotional learning have left students and families concerned about the long-term implications. This is particularly true for students with disabilities. EdAllies analyzed 91 distance learning plans that defined what learning would look like for more than 500,000 Minnesota students. Of the plans we reviewed, only 40% explained how they would meet the needs of students with disabilities.

EdAllies supports HF965 because it would provide needed support and long-term planning for students with disabilities. In particular, we support:

- District short and long-term recovery planning for students with disabilities;
- Collaborating with parents to create an individualized recovery plan, including specific planning to address learning loss;
- The Commissioner of Education issuing guidance to districts and charter schools about the services and supports that may be provided to students with disabilities; and
- State investment to help districts and charter schools provide support to students with disabilities.

To make sure we are not leaving our most vulnerable students behind, it's important to do intentional and individualized planning to make sure that our students with disabilities are getting the support they need moving forward to ensure they are not adversely affected by COVID-19's impact on learning. HF965 does this.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Shaver".

Matt Shaver
Policy Director