



MINNESOTA SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS ASSOCIATION

May 6, 2020

Representative Cheryl Youakim
591 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Youakim:

I am writing as President of the Minnesota School Psychologists Association to thank you for including two provisions in HF 163—the House omnibus education policy bill being considered in the House Education Committee today—that are of great importance to the school psychology community. Both of these provisions relate to special education and would provide meaningful relief and reform to Minnesota’s system of special education. This letter reinforces the testimony provided by our legislative liaison Brad Lundell to the House Education Committee last Friday.

The first provision—Article 4, Section 1—would allow school districts to conduct a functional behavioral assessment of a student as a stand-alone procedure instead of requiring that it be included in a comprehensive evaluation of the student. This proposal was part of a set of reforms suggested by the work of the New Ulm school district that seek to reduce special education paperwork.

The second provision—Article 4 Section 2—would expand eligibility of Minnesota’s Alternative Delivery of Specialized Instructional Services (ADSIS) program to include students who are receiving special education services for a disability category not related to the tutoring services they would receive through the ADSIS program. The goal of the ADSIS program is to keep student achievement at a level that will prevent students from needing formal special education services. While this language would expand eligibility to participate in the program to include students already receiving special education services, it may well prevent them from being identified in an additional disability category, which will reduce district costs and staff paperwork.

In closing, I realize the challenges the Legislature faces as it works toward the conclusion of the session during these unprecedented times. I hope that you find this input helpful as you seek to continue to meet the needs of Minnesota citizens. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Julene D. Nolan, PsyD., LP

Dr. Julene Nolan
President, Minnesota School Psychologists Association