

Representative Fue Lee
Chair, Minnesota House Capital Investment Committee
485 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Senator Sandra L. Pappas
Chair, Minnesota Senate Capital Investment Committee
95 University Avenue
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2113
Saint Paul, MN 55155

March 22, 2024

Dear Chair Lee & Chair Pappas:

My name is William Peel and I am the superintendent for the Barnum Public School District.

As the superintendent of Barnum Public Schools, I write you today, as requested, to formally pledge our district's support for this project and our commitment to bring information to our school board to support the Northern Lights Academy facility project by using the additional lease levy authority which was granted by the State of Minnesota in 2023 for cooperatives. If we are successful in securing the bonding funds that have been requested in House File 4282/Senate File 3933, as our district leader I am committed to working with our board to generate these matching funds to move this project forward.

As you know, our school district is one of the twelve districts served by the Northern Lights Special Education Academy through a joint-powers agreement. I am writing in support of HF 4282/SF 3933 which would provide capital investment funding for the Northern Lights Special Education Academy and the Area Special Education Cooperative. Northern Lights is a cooperative public school district operated through a joint-powers agreement between 12-member school districts in northeast Minnesota, serving students in Aitkin, Carlton, Lake, Pine, and St. Louis Counties who have the highest needs.

Northern Lights provides a Special Education Setting 4 program— special education services which intensively teach students the social, emotional and behavior skills they need for them to successfully transition back to their home districts.

Our rural cooperative students with extremely high special needs deserve the same quality educational spaces as students in the metro area of Minnesota with the same needs. We need the state's help to do this as our member districts cannot afford it on their own.

BOARD OFFICERS

Jessica Unkelhaeuser, Chair
Steph Ferrin, Vice Chair/Treasurer
Dawn Hultgren, Clerk

Bill Peel, Superintendent

Jodi Fanth, High School Principal
Samantha Birman, Elementary Principal

An Equal Opportunity Employer

BOARD DIRECTORS

Betty Anderson
Louis Bonneville
Beth Dinger
Patrick Poirier

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Chair Lee and Chair Pappas, our program changes lives. Before Northern Lights Academy, students with high behavior needs in our districts had to learn at home for safety. Due to space limitations, there are still students learning at home because there is no space to add more classrooms to serve them. All students who have significant needs should have equitable facilities across the state regardless of geography.

Your support of the bonding request from Northern Lights Academy and from the Area Special Education Cooperative can help us change lives.

Thank you again for your support. If you have any questions, please contact me or the administration for the Northern Lights Academy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William Peel".

William Peel
Superintendent

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 93
Carlton Minnesota 55718



Representative Fue Lee
Chair, Minnesota House Capital Investment Committee
485 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

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Chair, Minnesota Senate Capital Investment Committee
95 University Avenue
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2113
Saint Paul, MN 55155

March 28th, 2024

Dear Chair Lee & Chair Pappas:

My name is Donita Stepan and I am the superintendent for the Carlton School District. As the superintendent of Carlton Schools, I write you today, as requested, to formally pledge our district's support for this project and our commitment to bring information to our school board to support the Northern Lights Academy facility project by using the additional lease levy authority which was granted by the State of Minnesota in 2023 for cooperatives. If we are successful in securing the bonding funds that have been requested in House File 4282/Senate File 3933, as our district leader, I am committed to working with our board to generate these matching funds to move this project forward.

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Chair Lee and Chair Pappas, our program changes lives. Before Northern Lights Academy, students with high behavior needs in our districts had to learn at home for safety. Due to space limitations, there are still students learning at home

District Offices
PO Box 310
405 School Ave
Carlton MN 55718
(218) 384-4225 Option 1
(218) 384-3543 Fax

South Terrace Elementary School
PO Box 620
530 Stine Drive
Carlton MN 55718
(218) 384-4225 Option 3
(218) 384-4039 Fax

Carlton High School
PO Box 310
405 School Ave
Carlton MN 55718
(218) 384-4225 Option 2
(218) 384-3607 Fax

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 93
Carlton Minnesota 55718



because there is no space to add more classrooms to serve them. All students who have significant needs should have equitable facilities across the state regardless of geography.

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Thank you again for your support. If you have any questions, please contact me or the administration for the Northern Lights Academy.

Sincerely,

Donita Stepan

Donita Stepan
Superintendent of Carlton Schools #93
dstepan@carlton.k12.mn.us
218-384-4225

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PO Box 310
405 School Ave
Carlton MN 55718
(218) 384-4225 Option 1
(218) 384-3543 Fax

South Terrace Elementary School
PO Box 620
530 Stine Drive
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(218) 384-4039 Fax

Carlton High School
PO Box 310
405 School Ave
Carlton MN 55718
(218) 384-4225 Option 2
(218) 384-3607 Fax



Independent School District No. 94
Cloquet, Minnesota 55720

Central Administration
302 14th Street • 218-879-6721 • FAX-879-6724
Cloquet Senior High School
1000 18th Street • 218-879-3393 • FAX-879-6494
Cloquet Middle School
2001 Washington Avenue • 218-879-3328 • FAX-879-4175
Churchill Elementary School
515 Granite Street • 218-879-3308 • FAX-879-7034
Washington Elementary School
801 12th Street • 218-879-3369 • FAX-879-3360
Community Education
2001 Washington Avenue • 218-879-1261 • FAX-878-3013
Cloquet Area Alternative Education Programs
302 14th Street • 218-879-0115 • FAX -879-6941
www.isd94.org

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March 22, 2024

Dear Chair Lee & Chair Pappas:

My name is Dr. Michael Cary and I am the superintendent for the Cloquet School District.

As the superintendent of Cloquet Schools, I write you today, as requested, to formally pledge our district's support for this project and our commitment to bring information to our school board to support the Northern Lights Academy facility project by using the additional lease levy authority which was granted by the State of Minnesota in 2023 for cooperatives. If we are successful in securing the bonding funds that have been requested in House File 4282/Senate File 3933, as our district leader I am committed to working with our board to generate these matching funds to move this project forward.

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Linking school and community to provide life-long learning and success for all.

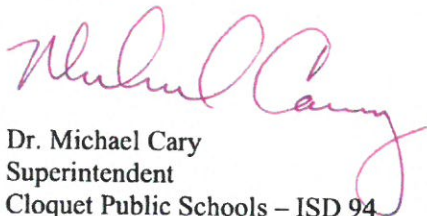
they get secondhand options for school despite the efforts of the staff to make it their own. They have no green space or playground of their own and know they are learning inequitable facilities.

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Thank you again for your support. If you have any questions, please contact me or the administration for the Northern Lights Academy.

Sincerely,



Dr. Michael Cary
Superintendent
Cloquet Public Schools – ISD 94
218-879-6721

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485 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Senator Sandra L. Pappas
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95 University Avenue
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Saint Paul, MN 55155

March 25, 2024

Dear Chair Lee & Chair Pappas:

My name is Aaron Fischer and I am the superintendent for the Esko School District.

As the superintendent of Esko, I write you today, as requested, to formally pledge our district's support for this project and our commitment to bring information to our school board to support the Northern Lights Academy facility project by using the additional lease levy authority which was granted by the State of Minnesota in 2023 for cooperatives. If we are successful in securing the bonding funds that have been requested in House File 4282/Senate File 3933, as our district leader I am committed to working with our board to generate these matching funds to move this project forward.

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Thank you again for your support. If you have any questions, please contact me or the administration for the Northern Lights Academy.

Sincerely,

Aaron Fischer



HERMANTOWN

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Representative Fue Lee
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485 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

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Chair, Minnesota Senate Capital Investment Committee
95 University Avenue
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Saint Paul, MN 55155

March 22, 2024

Dear Chair Lee & Chair Pappas:

My name is Wayne Whitwam and I am the superintendent for the Hermantown Community School District.

As the superintendent of Hermantown, I write you today, as requested, to formally pledge our district's support for this project and our commitment to bring information to our school board to support the Northern Lights Academy facility project by using the additional lease levy authority which was granted by the State of Minnesota in 2023 for cooperatives. If we are successful in securing the bonding funds that have been requested in House File 4282/Senate File 3933, as our district leader I am committed to working with our board to generate these matching funds to move this project forward.

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"All will learn well and succeed"

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Thank you again for your support. If you have any questions, please contact me or the administration for the Northern Lights Academy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wayne Whitwam', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Wayne Whitwam
Hermantown Superintendent



District Office
1640 Highway 2
Two Harbors, MN 55616
Ph.: 218-834-8201
www.isd381.org
Superintendent, Mr. Jay Belcastro

Representative Fue Lee
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Saint Paul, MN 55155

April 1, 2024

Dear Chair Lee & Chair Pappas:

My name is Jay Belcastro and I am the superintendent for the Lake Superior School District. As the superintendent of Lake Superior School District, I write you today, as requested, to formally pledge our district's support for this project and our commitment to bring information to our school board to support the Northern Lights Academy facility project by using the additional lease levy authority which was granted by the State of Minnesota in 2023 for cooperatives. If we are successful in securing the bonding funds that have been requested in House File 4282/Senate File 3933, as our district leader I am committed to working with our board to generate these matching funds to move this project forward.

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Thank you again for your support. If you have any questions, please contact me or the administration for the Northern Lights Academy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JB', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Jay Belcastro
Superintendent

Lake Superior School District



McGregor ISD 4

P.O. Box 160

148 South 2nd Street McGregor, MN 55760

Home of the Mercuries

www.mcgregor.k12.mn.us PH: (218) 768-2111 FAX: (218) 768-3901



Representative Fue Lee
Chair, Minnesota House Capital Investment Committee
485 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Senator Sandra L. Pappas
Chair, Minnesota Senate Capital Investment Committee
95 University Avenue
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2113
Saint Paul, MN 55155

March 28, 2024

Dear Chair Lee & Chair Pappas:

My name is Brad Johnson and I am the superintendent for the McGregor School District.

As the superintendent of McGregor, I write you today, as requested, to formally pledge our district's support for this project and our commitment to bring information to our school board to support the Northern Lights Academy facility project by using the additional lease levy authority which was granted by the State of Minnesota in 2023 for cooperatives. If we are successful in securing the bonding funds that have been requested in House File 4282/Senate File 3933, as our district leader I am committed to working with our board to generate these matching funds to move this project forward.

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BRAD JOHNSON
SUPERINTENDENT/PRINCIPAL
MANAGER

Ext. 5126

5123

bjohnson@isd4.org

ROBERT STASKA
HS PRINCIPAL/AD

Ext. 5135

rstaska@isd4.org

SHAUNA DALCHOW
BUSINESS

Ext.

sdalchow@isd4.org

McGregor ISD 4

P.O. Box 160

148 South 2nd Street McGregor, MN 55760

Home of the Mercuries

www.mcgregor.k12.mn.us PH: (218) 768-2111 FAX: (218) 768-3901



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Thank you again for your support. If you have any questions, please contact me or the administration for the Northern Lights Academy.

Sincerely,

Brad Johnson
Superintendent of McGregor Schools

BRAD JOHNSON
SUPERINTENDENT/PRINCIPAL
MANAGER

Ext. 5126

5123

bjohnson@isd4.org

ROBERT STASKA
HS PRINCIPAL/AD

Ext. 5135

rstaska@isd4.org

SHAUNA DALCHOW
BUSINESS

Ext.

sdalchow@isd4.org



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Saint Paul, MN 55155

Senator Sandra L. Pappas
Chair, Minnesota Senate Capital Investment Committee
95 University Avenue
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2113
Saint Paul, MN 55155

March 21, 2024

Dear Chair Lee & Chair Pappas:

My name is Billie Jo Steen and I am the superintendent for the Moose Lake School District. As the superintendent of Moose Lake, I write you today, as requested, to formally pledge our district's support for this project and our commitment to bring information to our school board to support the Northern Lights Academy facility project by using the additional lease levy authority which was granted by the State of Minnesota in 2023 for cooperatives. If we are successful in securing the bonding funds that have been requested in House File 4282/Senate File 3933, as our district leader I am committed to working with our board to generate these matching funds to move this project forward.

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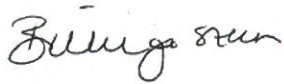
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Thank you again for your support. If you have any questions, please contact me or the administration for the Northern Lights Academy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Billie Jo Steen".

Billie Jo Steen
Superintendent
Independent School District #97, Moose Lake
C: 218-485-1087
billiejo.steen@isd97.org



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Chair, Minnesota House Capital Investment Committee
485 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

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Chair, Minnesota Senate Capital Investment Committee
95 University Avenue
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March 22, 2024

Dear Chair Lee & Chair Pappas:

My name is Kerry Juntunen and I am the superintendent for the Proctor Public School District.

As the superintendent of Proctor Public Schools, I write you today, as requested, to formally pledge our district's support for this project and our commitment to bring information to our school board to support the Northern Lights Academy facility project by using the additional lease levy authority which was granted by the State of Minnesota in 2023 for cooperatives. If we are successful in securing the bonding funds that have been requested in House File 4282/Senate File 3933, as our district leader I am committed to working with our board to generate these matching funds to move this project forward.

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Thank you again for your support. If you have any questions, please contact me or the administration for the Northern Lights Academy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kerry Juntunen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Kerry Juntunen



Wrenshall Public Schools

Superintendent- Jeff Pesta
Principal- Michelle Blanchard

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485 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

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March 21, 2024

Dear Chair Lee and Chair Pappas:

My name is Jeff Pesta and I am the superintendent of the Wrenshall School District. As the superintendent of Wrenshall, I write you today, as requested, to formally pledge our district's support for this project and our commitment to bring information to our school board to support the Northern Lights Academy facility project by using the additional lease levy authority which was granted by the State of Minnesota in 2023 for cooperatives. If we are successful in securing the bonding funds that have been requested in House File 4282/Senate File 3933, as our district leader I am committed to working with our board to generate these matching funds to move this project forward.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Pesta", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jeff Pesta, Ed.D.

Interim Superintendent



8142 Pine Street
Willow River, MN 55795
218-372-3131
www.isd577.org
@willowriver577
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Our Students * Our Community * Our Future

Representative Fue Lee
Chair, Minnesota House Capital Investment Committee
485 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Senator Sandra L. Pappas
Chair, Minnesota Senate Capital Investment Committee
95 University Avenue
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 2113
Saint Paul, MN 55155

March 22, 2024

Dear Chair Lee & Chair Pappas:

My name is William Peel and I am the superintendent for the Willow River Public School District.

As the superintendent of Willow River Public School District, I write you today, as requested, to formally pledge our district's support for this project and our commitment to bring information to our school board to support the Northern Lights Academy facility project by using the additional lease levy authority which was granted by the State of Minnesota in 2023 for cooperatives. If we are successful in securing the bonding funds that have been requested in House File 4282/Senate File 3933, as our district leader I am committed to working with our board to generate these matching funds to move this project forward.

As you know, our school district is one of the twelve districts served by the Northern Lights Special Education Academy through a joint-powers agreement. I am writing in support of HF 4282/SF 3933 which would provide capital

investment funding for the Northern Lights Special Education Academy and the Area Special Education Cooperative. Northern Lights is a cooperative public school district operated through a joint-powers agreement between 12-member school districts in northeast Minnesota, serving students in Aitkin, Carlton, Lake, Pine, and St. Louis Counties who have the highest needs.

Board Officers

Dave Prachar, Chair
Connie Mikrot, Vice Chair
Bruce Bohaty, Clerk

Bill Peel, Superintendent
Melissa Johnson, High School Principal
Paul Riihiluoma, Elementary Principal

Board Directors

Susan Grill
Crystal Davis
Sonja Roach

Northern Lights provides a Special Education Setting 4 program— special education services which intensively teach students the social, emotional and behavior skills they need for them to successfully transition back to their home districts.

Our rural cooperative students with extremely high special needs deserve the same quality educational spaces as students in the metro area of Minnesota with the same needs. We need the state's help to do this as our member districts cannot afford it on their own.

Right now, space is leased in two buildings 5 miles apart which is inefficient and does not have enough classroom and breakout space to serve all the students needing this level of support. The students know they get secondhand options for school despite the efforts of the staff to make it their own. They have no green space or playground of their own and know they are learning inequitable facilities.

Chair Lee and Chair Pappas, our program changes lives. Before Northern Lights Academy, students with high behavior needs in our districts had to learn at home for safety. Due to space limitations, there are still students learning at home because there is no space to add more classrooms to serve them. All students who have significant needs should have equitable facilities across the state regardless of geography.

Your support of the bonding request from Northern Lights Academy and from the Area Special Education Cooperative can help us change lives.

Thank you again for your support. If you have any questions, please contact me or the administration for the Northern Lights Academy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'William Peel', written in black ink.

William Peel
Superintendent