

Minnesota House of Representatives
Education Policy Committee
Chair – Rep. Richardson
March 18, 2022

Re: HF 951 – dismissal of students from kindergarten to 3rd grade prohibited

Dear Madam Chair and Members,

My name is Idil Abdull, and I am a Somali Autism Mom & Advocate.

Many thanks for the opportunity to testify again for this important legislation. As I thought about what I would say today, I have decided to do it differently. I am not going to tell you what happened to my son in Bloomington Public School district because you already know it. I am not going to give you facts, data, and research because you know 2+2 is four.

Today, I want to appeal to your bottom line, to your wallet and to your purses. I know you are thinking – what now? What the heck does this have to do with student dismissal. Let me line it up for you.

Imagine if you invested in Amazon, Google, Tesla, or Facebook when they first went public. If you knew back then what you know today, you all would have bought shares in these stocks. And you would be all reaping their benefits today. Investing in children today is tomorrow's Amazon and Google.

If we keep children in school and educate them, they will pay the Medicare and social security benefits we will need tomorrow. Investing in kids today will only help and support you tomorrow when you need it.

Now, let me play you what the other side will say – what if a first grader brings a weapon? If that is the case, then – Houston we have a problem bigger than discipline which this bill addresses if there is a serious safety threat to the student or others.

Some may say – well this is unfunded mandate. Actually, school districts are funded to teach and educate children. In other words, keeping kids in school is funded and mandated. Please do not get distracted and focus on what is important. Keeping small children in the classroom is the biggest investment we can make today. Let us do it this year and carry it to the finish line.

I thank you as always

Idil Abdull – Somali Autism Mom & Advocate