



March 8, 2021

Dear Chair Richardson and Committee Members,

We are writing today in support of Senate File 1210/HF 965 which provides recovery education for students with disabilities who were unable to benefit from distance learning during the pandemic. We are grateful to Representative Edelson for bringing this bill forward.

Over the past year we have heard stories from hundreds of families of children with disabilities that have struggled with distance learning. In many cases, despite the best efforts of teachers and staff, students with disabilities simply have not been able to benefit from distance learning. We have heard from families that have struggled to access technology, students for whom working from a screen is simply untenable, families of multiple children with parents simply don't have the bandwidth to support their children's need, and many cases where parents have cut back on hours or dropped out of the workforce all together to support their children's needs.

This bill to provide a mechanism for recovery education is critically important for several reasons:

- 1) It provides a proactive mechanism to make up for what was lost available to all students with IEPs.
- 2) It is a more equitable and less adversarial solution than the existing compensatory education system, which requires families to file a formal complaint, go through a hearing, and find fault on the part of the school.
- 3) It avoids the time, expense, and paperwork demands of the formal complaint process.
- 4) It provides a funding mechanism to ensure that districts are reimbursed for additional services.

We have been reminded many times throughout the pandemic that while the virus does not discriminate, it does not affect all individuals equally. This bill would take one step towards recovering what was lost by students with disabilities.

Thank you, Representative Edelson, for bringing this bill forward. And thank you committee members for supporting it.

Sincerely,

Fatima Molas, Chairperson
Abyan Ali, Board Member
Maren Christenson Hofer, Board Member

Delia Samuel, Vice Chair
Rufo Jiru, Board Member