

Written Testimony HF2497
In Support
Section 26. Section 121A.425
K-3 Suspension Ban

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For 5 years I worked as a substitute teacher in the Saint Paul Public School district, and every day I saw the same issues. Students that needed support, but were continually pushed out of classes, or not treated with respect by their teachers. Not because our educators didn't want to help, but because we have set up a system of punishment for our children that does not accommodate their needs.

Suspensions remove children from the classroom when we know having a child in attendance can be the difference between a passing grade, and a failing one. Keeping children out of their schools for subjective reasons like "disruptive behavior" or "distractions" affects mostly our children of color, and students with disabilities. We need to look at the way we've always used suspensions, and change it. It does not work, and it further pushes the gaps in achievement in this state. I am asking that YOU support the removal of suspensions for K-3 in our schools. We need our children to be in the classroom, and to learn. We cannot allow these gaps to form greater divides. I learned a lot seeing how different schools work with students around discipline, and we need change. We need it now.