

Patricia A. Mathews  
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Regarding: HF #348

To the Honorable Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee:

My name is Patti Mathews and I facilitated Parents Forever, an education curriculum for families in transition, in Martin County for over 6 years. Parents Forever classes were offered through the Fairmont Community Education and Recreation program for over 20 years, and hundreds of parents attended the quarterly-offered classes during that time. We had two different Judges during that time, and both of them supported the class. The current Judge continues to order parents with juvenile children birth to age 18 to take the online class.

I believe that every time I taught the class that I had at least one parent, if not more, come up to me and tell me how they wished they had taken the class earlier in the divorce process. It taught them so much about getting along with the other parent. In fact, one of the aspects that sets the Parents Forever curriculum apart from others is that it is based on research about the impact of divorce and separation on parents and children. Research shows that when parents can successfully co-parent their children, those children are more successful and healthier in the long run.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony. The Parents Forever curriculum is based on “real life” experience, has a rich history, and is continually being improved to reflect new research. The more we can get this curriculum into the hands of parents of Minnesota’s children, the more we can help to build new lives of those affected by divorce and separation.

Sincerely,

*Patricia A. Mathews*  
*February 7, 2021*