



February 26, 2019

Education Policy Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
100 Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Oppose House File 1026

Dear Members,

Minnesota Family Council is an organization representing tens of thousands of families in our state. **We urge you to oppose HF 1026.**

No child should ever be bullied. Although the School Safety Technical Assistance Council (SSTAC) had the opportunity to truly serve Minnesotans by protecting the privacy, safety, and dignity of all students, the SSTAC instead has continually devoted its resources to advancing a progressive social agenda, at odds with the views of many parents. It is time for the SSTAC to sunset, as was originally intended by its governing statute.

Just one example of the overreach of the SSTAC is the 2017 creation and distribution of a statewide toolkit to “ensure safe and supportive schools for transgender and gender non-conforming students” (“Toolkit”). The Toolkit’s recommendations, when enacted by school districts, seriously endanger students’ privacy and safety, undermine parental authority, discriminate against female athletes, violate religious students’ free exercise rights, and severely impair an environment conducive to learning.

The Toolkit was developed in a highly irresponsible manner and was the product of a workgroup, whose identities were not made public. Guidance for distribution to all public schools on such an unsettled topic should be the result of extended, proven research among medical professionals, educational experts, therapists, and extensive parental input and perspective. Additionally, the content should be available to the tax-paying public long before being integrated into school’s best practices, school protocol, guidance, and teaching training.

Our concerns about the content of the Toolkit were shared by hundreds of members of the public who contacted the SSTAC, the Minnesota School Board Association which expressed its concerns, and 67 state legislators who submitted a letter to MDE Commissioner Cassilius urging MDE to focus on improving student learning instead of “promoting a social agenda that stands in conflict with views of many parents whose tax dollars fund our schools...”¹ Rather than using the occasion as an opportunity to welcome more stakeholders to the discussion, the SSTAC chose to disregard parent, professional, and legislator concern.

Surely, there are better uses for state monies than continuing funding the SSTAC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Meredith Campbell".

Meredith Campbell, Esq.
Director of Public Policy

¹ Letter to Commissioner Brenda Casselius dated May 10, 2017, signed by members of the Minnesota House of Representatives and Senate.