



Hennepin Schools

2123 Clinton Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55404
OFFICE: (612) 843-5050 ★ FAX: (612) 871-2406
EMAIL: info@hennepinschools.org
www.hennepinschools.org

Board of Directors
Charlayne Myers, Board Chair
Miguel Mendez
Christina Lacina
John Slavik
Ruqia Abdi
Alawi Munye

3/18/2022

Rep. Todd Lippert
523 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Farm to School & Early Care bill, HF4120

Dear Representative Lippert and all members of the House Agricultural Committee,

I am the Food Manager for Hennepin Schools and recently wrote our application for a First Bite Mini Grant. We are grateful to have been awarded \$5,000 to purchase local produce for next school year. Moving into a new campus with a full-service kitchen, it will be the first time we will have fresh food prepared onsite. Students will no longer have to eat catered food, which is often bland, cold and unappealing. The unfortunate reality is that students currently throw away most of their catered lunches.

We are confident that with the money received through the Farm to School grant, students will be more likely to consume “homecooked” meal options, as well as salads they can create from a salad bar. Our hope is that after successful implementation of meal service in the 2022-23 school year, backed by the First Bite grant, we can then apply for a Full Tray grant. Knowing that there is a proposal of additional funding for the Farm to School program, I would like to personally extend my support. Passing of the bill increases the likelihood that our school, as well as many others, will be future recipients of this fantastic program. It not only benefits our Minnesota farmers, but more importantly, it affects the nutritious intake of healthier foods for our children in school.

With much appreciation,

Amatullah “AJ” Bantley
Office Manager & Food Manager