



May 9, 2022

Via E-Mail Delivery

Representative Jim Davnie, Chair
House Education Finance Committee
443 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Senator Roger Chamberlain, Chair
Senate Education Committee
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3225
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Davnie and Chair Chamberlain:

On behalf of Nonpublic Education Partners (NPEP), we are sharing with you our strong support for two provisions included in the House Education Finance Supplemental Budget bill. These two provisions were originally introduced as separate bills -- HF3506 (Erickson)/SF925 (Eichorn) and HF3937 (Bennett)/SF3745 (Duckworth).

As you may know, NPEP is a coalition of several organizations who support students enrolled in nonpublic schools including MINNDEPENDENT, Minnesota Catholic Conference and the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC). Currently, there are nearly 70,000 students enrolled in nonpublic schools across Minnesota.

HF3506 included in the House Education Supplemental Budget bill expands access to guidance counseling and mental health services for nonpublic students enrolled in grades K-6. Under the current law, nonpublic students may only receive these services for grades 7-12. NPEP supports extending services to students in grades K-6. As the recent report from the U.S. Surgeon General makes clear, mental health issues among young people are growing exponentially, and we know that counseling and mental health services are needed to students in all grades, not just grades 7-12.

HF3937 included in the House Education Supplemental Budget bill provides flexibility between nonpublic schools and school districts regarding transportation services. This legislation gives nonpublic schools and school districts the opportunity for greater flexibility when transporting nonpublic students. Under this legislation, by mutual agreement, school districts and nonpublic schools may agree to an alternative transportation arrangement for transporting nonpublic school students.

This mutually beneficial flexibility was utilized when the Safe Learning Plan was in effect during the Peacetime Emergency Order during the 2020-21 school year. Once the Peacetime

Emergency Order was lifted in July 2021, the Safe Learning Plan was no longer in effect and it is unclear if this flexibility is available to school districts and nonpublic schools.

Thank you for your consideration of these important initiatives in support of students enrolled in nonpublic schools in Minnesota.

Please feel free to contact our organization's government relations Melissa Reed at melissa@parkstreetpublic.com or Chas Anderson at chas@parkstreetpublic.com if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Tim Benz
President
MINNDEPENDENT

Jason Adkins
Executive Director
Minnesota Catholic Conference

C: Representative Ruth Richardson
Representative Julie Sandstede
Representative Hodan Hassan
Representative Sondra Erickson
Senator Julia Coleman
Senator Zach Duckworth
Senator Justin Eichorn
Senator Chuck Wiger
Sarah Burt, Committee Administrator
Greg Marcus, Committee Administrator