

Minnesota Chapter

INCORPORATED IN MINNESOTA

American Academy of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®

Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

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January 25, 2023

Education Policy Committee
State Office Building
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St Paul, MN 55155

Members of the Education Policy Committee,

On behalf of the nearly 1,000 members of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MNAAP), I am writing in support of HF 362.

Available mental health services for children in school are essential for the overall health, well-being, and development of our youth. These services can help identify mental health conditions early on in life. These conditions, such as anxiety and depression, can have a significant impact on a child's health and well-being if left untreated, and has a severe impact on a student's academic performance. Early identification and intervention can help to mitigate the impact of these conditions.

Additionally, mental health services help children develop better social skills. These services provide children with the knowledge and confidence to communicate effectively with others, how to build and maintain positive relationships, and how to navigate the social dynamics of school and other settings.

Lastly, mental health services in school can help to promote a culture recognizing the importance of mental wellness and decrease stigma surrounding mental health. Providing education and resources for parents, teachers, and other staff on how to support the mental well-being of children can also have a lasting impact on a child's development.

MNAAP appreciates this committee prioritizing mental health services for children in school. These services have a profound positive impact and can help children to develop the skills and resilience they need to cope with the challenges of school and life, and to achieve their full potential. Investing in mental health services for children in school is an investment in the future. MNAAP urges you to support HF 362.

Sincerely,

Eileen Crespo

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eileen Crespo".

Eileen Crespo, MD, FAAP

President, Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics