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March 18, 2022

House Education Policy Committee
403 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St Paul, MN 55155

RE: Supporting the Student Data Privacy Act (HF 341)

Dear Chair Richardson and Members of the Committee,

I write to express Youthprise's support for HF 341, the Student Data Privacy Act.

Youthprise is a statewide organization focused on helping young people ages 14 – 25 thrive within three impact areas: Learning & Leadership, Economic Opportunity, and Health & Safety. In today's world, some of the most significant threats to young people's health and safety exist in the digital realm. As a state, we should be doing everything we can to make sure the devices our young people use, especially those issued by schools, do not put their privacy at risk.

The Student Data Privacy Act addresses these concerns in several ways:

- Prohibiting technology providers from selling student educational data or using it for any commercial purposes.
- Notifying parents and students of contracts with technology providers and offering the opportunity to opt-out.
- Prohibiting the accessing or monitoring of school-issued devices except in limited circumstances, including responding to an imminent threat to life or safety or complying with a judicial process.

We've found that many students are unaware of the extent to which their data is monitored and monetized using these devices and are especially alarmed by the intrusiveness of some of the tracking methods, including the ability to remotely access and turn on a device's camera at any time. Once the young people involved in shaping our advocacy work learned of this information, they felt strongly that the Legislature should prioritize protecting them from these intrusions into their privacy.

As technology evolves, our laws must as well. In our current educational environment where the use of school devices is now ubiquitous, it is time to make important updates to Minnesota's data privacy laws to protect the health and safety of Minnesota youth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marcus Pope". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marcus" and the last name "Pope" clearly legible.

Marcus Pope
President