



Advancing Evidence.  
Improving Lives.

January 30, 2023

Representative Cheryl Youakim,  
Chair Education Finance Committee  
443 State Office Building  
Saint Paul, MN, 55155

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AIR.ORG

Dear Chair Youakim and Education Finance Committee Members,

On behalf of the American Institutes for Research (AIR), I am writing to provide important background information in support of your consideration of **HF806/SF494**, your bill to provide the Building Assets, Reducing Risks (BARR) system to more students and schools in Minnesota.

For the past eight years my organization has been the independent evaluator of the BARR model in two large-scale U.S. Department of Education Investing in Innovation (i3) grants. We used random assignment (the most rigorous way to evaluate programs like these) to assess BARR's effectiveness in 78 schools, some of which were in Minnesota. As the Principal Investigator for these evaluations, I found that BARR was beneficial for students and teachers, was sustainable and scalable, and was cost-effective. Its impacts on students were greatest for those at risk of course failure and other academic challenges. As a result, the BARR model successfully reduced long-standing opportunity gaps between different groups of students.

We found evidence that BARR improved teacher well-being and strengthened the relationships and collaboration among teachers and school administrators. BARR teachers felt more positive about their colleagues and reported receiving better support from their school administrators. This in turn benefitted their relationships with students, which then helped students do better academically. Because these relationships are foundational to the successful operation of schools and classrooms, the BARR model results in more lasting and sustainable change than other investments and interventions I have studied in high schools.

Please let me know if you would like more information about our evaluations of the BARR model. You can find our latest evaluation reports at <https://www.air.org/resource/report/building-assets-and-reducing-risks-barr-i3-scale-evaluation>

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Bos", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

Johannes M. Bos, Ph.D.  
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American Institutes for Research  
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