

Dear Chair Richardson and Committee Members,

My name is Delia Thomas and I live in Roseau, MN.

I am writing to you to request your support for House File 965/Senate File 1210 in support of recovery education for students who have disabilities.

Our school district did not provide enough and/or appropriate educational services for students with special needs and claim this is due to lack of staff on Fridays (Not following IEP as it is written - services for 5 days). They are only providing in person services for general education students who are falling behind on Fridays and not for Special Education.

They do not provide speech and language (teletherapy from speech partners) visual/data which they use to determine and to support the goals and cutting back on therapy services. Lack of communication.

He is in 11th grade and I have no idea as to what he is actually learning. There is no homework to carry over skill.

We are going on on our third meeting and are still trying to resolve issues. 1. Is he getting enough appropriate education services 2. Speech data 3. Baseline /list of words he's able to express and falling behind 4. ESY Awaiting for proposal .. he's in 11th grade"

Last spring for 3 months .. Google meet with his previous speech and language pathologist and daily packet sent home to carry over skills. Not doing to well with new (speech partner therapist from North Carolina) but another therapist took over and doing better.

During last spring, he only had one day of speech therapy with speech therapist when IEP reads 5 days. As far as educational , they provided paper homework and google classroom but only contact with sped teacher once a week for 20 minutes to play bingo. There's Epic reading and the math app they provided was not working for him (too childish). And bad connection with McBook.

I did contact the MN Department of Education and did not get straight answers but they did provide a form how to file a complaint. I asked if school district can deny to provide data measured by staff or speech visual data and stated they are tools but not part of education record.

Next I contacted Pacer (advocate). They have not filed a complaint and told me to do so only it is necessary. Regardless of their level of skill or whether they possess a disability, people cannot be productive if they are unable to function in the society .

We need more autism awareness and train special education staff and district in charge of funds on understanding when to provide enough education appropriate services and stop using excuses as to not able to provide because it's inconvenient or lack of staff. We live in a rural area with very little resources and they need more educational training to understand their disability and provide appropriate education services!

Sincerely,  
Delia Thomas