

March 10, 2021

To: House Education Policy Committee

Re: Education Policy Omnibus Bill

Dear committee members:

I am writing to share my concerns over the proposed change to reporting requirements for Minnesota homeschooling families in the Education Policy Omnibus Bill (Article 2 Sec. 4). As it currently stands, individual families are required to arrange regular testing for their children/students each academic year. Conducting regular assessments is reasonable and beneficial for us as teachers to assess our children's progress.

The issue arises with the new language in the letter of intent requiring homeschooling families to report "proof that the testing plan for the previous year was fulfilled" and "a copy of the official test scores".

I strongly oppose this new language and requirements being added for homeschooling families. First, it puts a new regulatory requirement on the 30,000 or so homeschooling families in Minnesota that does not currently exist. This is not only a hassle from a paperwork standpoint (both for families and the school districts), but there is no stated justification as to why this requirement is now being proposed. Increasing regulatory burden on parents needs to be justified by some demonstrated failure to achieve objectives, and no evidence has been presented to this end. Therefore, the new regulatory requirement creates a burden that solves no present problem.

Second, and most importantly, the reporting of test scores is a serious privacy concern for me as a parent. The purpose of testing within a school is to accurately assess a student's progress. Learning is what matters, and test scores can help to measure this, albeit, imperfectly at times. Test scores allow the teacher to modify his or her approach and/or curriculum to more effectively transmit the lessons being taught. None of this information is the purview of the local school district or the state; it is between the teacher and the student. In a homeschool, it is between the parent and his or her child.

Therefore I strongly oppose any language that 1) introduces unnecessary and burdensome regulations on homeschooling families and 2) opens up privacy intrusions into my children's lives.

Sincerely,

Rory Groves

Northfield, Minnesota