

**Education Policy Committee**

Chair Laurie Pryor

January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**H.F. 368 – Rep. Hanson – A2 Amendment**

Dear Chair Pryor and Members of the Education Policy Committee,

The Minnesota Council on Disability supports the adoptions of the A2 Amendment to H.F. 368 which includes “disability” in the list of prohibited classes regarding malicious and sadistic conduct.

Schools should be a safe place for students with disabilities to learn and socialize with their peers. It is the obligation of school administration to provide that safe place through a coherent policy against bullying or malicious and sadistic conduct. More often than their peers, students with disabilities are the victims of physical and verbal harassment not only from other students, but teachers and administrators themselves.

When schools are a hostile learning environment for students with disabilities, this has detrimental impact on their academic outcomes and can instill years trauma, which a has lasting negative impact. All students deserve a world class education that is free from violence or psychological harm.

Every school should have a clear and coherent policy against bullying or malicious and sadistic conduct that is repeated often through signage, training, and educational materials. Students should know exactly where and who to go to should they be experiencing bullying. It should also be clear what disciplinary actions will be taken against the perpetrators of sadistic and malicious conduct. The disciplinary actions must be effective enough to prevent more bullying from occurring and victims must be protected from potential retribution.

H.F. 368 seeks to ensure that school districts have such a policy in place and the A2 amendment rightly adds “disability” to this policy. Thank you for supporting H.F. 368 and helping to ensure that students with disabilities have a safe, positive learning experience.

Sincerely,



Trevor Turner

Public Policy Directory

Minnesota Council on Disability