

COALITION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

March 12, 2019

Chair Youakim and Members of the Education Policy Committee,

The PACER Center and the Coalition for Children with Disabilities appreciate the opportunity to share our views on the House Education Policy Omnibus Bill and provisions impacting students with disabilities:

Discipline Reform (lines 15.26-20.8)

We support updating Minnesota's discipline statutes to promote nonexclusionary disciplinary policies and practices, ensure provision of alternate education services, improve parental notification, and increase data collection on pupil withdrawals. We look forward to continuing to work with this committee to improving disciplinary practices to better serve students with disabilities.

Special Education

Short-Term Objectives (lines 74.30-74.32)

We oppose the option for parents to be able to opt-out of including short-term objectives in their student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). We believe that short-term objectives provide important information to parents and professionals to monitor progress on annual goals. We are very concerned that parents would be pressured to remove short-term objectives from their students' IEPs.

Reporting on State and Districtwide Assessments (lines 74.27-74.33)

We support the provision in lines 74.32-74.33 that states that the IEP may report the student's performance on general state or districtwide assessments.

We do not feel the provision in lines 78.27-78.30 that changes Minnesota Rules is necessary. The rules currently require that IEP teams consider the results of assessments as appropriate when developing the IEP but do not require the results to be reported in the IEP document.

Functional Behavioral Assessments (line 76.4)

We support allowing functional behavioral assessments to be conducted as stand-alone evaluations, with parents retaining the right to request a comprehensive evaluation when they feel it is appropriate.

Autism Society of Minnesota ausm.org (651) 647-1083	Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota efmn.org (651) 287-2300	Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance braininjurymn.org (612) 378-2742	PACER Center, Inc. PACER.org (952) 838-9000	Prader-Willi Syndrome Association of MN pwsa-usa.org/MN (763) 242-9074	Proof Alliance proofalliance.org (651) 917-2370	The Arc Minnesota arcmn.org (952) 920-0855
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Prior Written Notice & Conciliation Conference Modifications (lines 76.8-76.31)

We support providing parents the option to resolve disagreements by requesting a follow-up meeting with appropriate members of the IEP team. However, we do believe conciliation conferences are effective methods of resolving disputes so appreciate that this bill retains the requirement that school districts must offer a conciliation conference.

Prior Written Notice Working Group (lines 78.1-78.26)

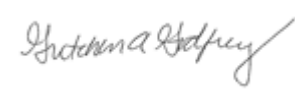
We prefer this House approach to resolving concerns regarding Prior Written Notice guidance to the rulemaking approach proposed in the Senate. We request that the working group to contain an equal number of members from professional groups as parent and parent advocacy group representatives.

Dyslexia Screening (lines 15.2-15.21)

We support requiring school districts to screen for dyslexia in kindergarten and later for students not reading at grade level.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our positions. Please contact Sarah Clarke at sclarke@hyldenlaw.com or 952-201-4654 with any questions. Thank you!

Sincerely,



Gretchen Godfrey
Assistant Director, PACER Center
Member of the Coalition for Children with Disabilities

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