

February 22, 2021

Rep. Dean Urdahl
279 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155



Dear Representative Urdahl:

The Minnesota School Boards Association and the Association of Metropolitan School Districts would like to share some thoughts about HF 562. The bill proposes two significant changes. The first change would require students to take a course for credit in Government and Citizenship in 11th or 12th grade and the second would allow one of the required social studies credits to be in either economics or personal finance.

Our members believe curriculum decisions are best made at the local level by school boards working with their staff, students, and community. That said, we understand your concern that students should engage in a government and citizenship course in the junior or senior year when they are approaching the age to vote. If such a change is implemented, it is critical that the effective date be aligned with the implementation of the revised social studies standards. Implementing new curriculum is very costly and it is important that school districts are able to implement any revisions in the same cycle.

If this change is adopted, we ask that you consider eliminating the civics exam that is required under current law. Students and parents have expressed a strong desire to reduce the number of standardized tests that students are required to take. Reducing the number of required standardized tests would allow high school students to focus on college entrance exams and Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams that allow them to gain college credit.

Finally, we do not believe it is advisable to require personal finance **or** economics in the list of required social studies credits. Personal finance is covered in the economics standards and requiring only personal finance is too limiting.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns and please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Denise Dittrich
MSBA

Scott Croonquist
AMSD

CC: Members of the House Education Policy Committee