

# COALITION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

March 17, 2022

Education Policy Committee  
Minnesota House of Representatives  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Richardson and Members of the Education Policy Committee,

On behalf of the Coalition for Children with Disabilities, we are writing to express support to House File 951, Representative Richardson's bill to end suspensions for students aged kindergarten through third grade.

The Coalition supports legislation that decreases the use of suspensions, exclusions, and expulsions and other disciplinary practices that neither meet the needs of students nor promote a positive school culture. Our students need to be in the classroom. Suspending our youngest students for behavioral concerns does not provide any benefits for the student, teacher, or school. Suspensions do not help address the underlying reason for any disruptive behavior. It is in these moments that our students need more access to school resources and connection to their school community to serve any unmet needs of the student. Removing a student from the school community inhibits a child's academic success and reduces their ability to form connections with their classmates. Additionally, suspensions are disproportionately used against students of color and students with disabilities. There are other tools available for our school system to utilize that are more inclusive for our students and our school community.

We strongly support HF 951 and to remove the option for teachers to suspend our youngest learners.

## **Coalition for Children with Disabilities**

The Arc Minnesota • Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota  
Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid/Minnesota Disability Law Center • Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance  
PACER Center • Prader-Willi Syndrome Association of Minnesota  
Proof Alliance