

The Honorable Pat Garofalo, Chair
House Education Finance Committee
537 State Office Building
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

The Honorable Gen Olson, Chair
Senate Education Committee
235 Minnesota State Capitol
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155-1606

Dear Chairs Garofalo and Olson,

The forty two signers of this letter are elected by our communities to assure that our children have access to outstanding public education. We do this so that all of Minnesota's children will have the capability to be successful, contributing members of our state.

The K-12 Education funding bill that was vetoed hurt our school districts' ability to educate children. It is that simple.

Key elements of the bill including reductions in special education funding and eliminating integration aid effectively cut funding for all districts in the state. The elimination of integration aid cuts millions in the next two years affecting three large school districts with uniquely needy student populations.

We fully understand the budget challenges facing the State of Minnesota. We applaud the legislature's stated goal to maintain funding for K-12 education and hold the children of Minnesota harmless when it comes to budget cutting. The bill before you does not succeed on either count.

By cutting integration aid and reducing funding for special education and de-linking compensatory aid, the budget effectively transfers funding from those who need more attention to those children who are already succeeding.

This will make it much more difficult to intervene and educate children with special needs, children from families in poverty and children of color. It will increase the achievement gap that the legislature aims to close.

As school board members, we ask you, the leadership of our state legislature, to find another way to maintain funding for the education of Minnesota's children. Balancing the budget on the backs of special education students, students in poverty and students of color will make it that much more difficult to close the achievement gap and that much more difficult to educate the people who will make Minnesota's future.

We would welcome an opportunity to talk with you in greater detail. We can be reached through John Hoffman, Vice Chair, Anoka Hennepin School Board, 763-245-7562.

CC: **The Honorable Kurt Zellers, Speaker of the House**
The Honorable Amy Koch, Senate Majority Leader

Joel Albright	Apple Valley-Eagan School Board
Carol Bomben	Eden Prairie School Board
Mark Bomchill	Robbinsdale School Board
Ann Bremer	Westonka School Board
John Brodrick	Saint Paul School Board
Kathy Buchholz	Stillwater Area School Board
Anne Carroll	Saint Paul School Board
Deborah Clark	South Saint Paul School Board
Ann Counihan	South St. Paul School Board
Mary Jo Deters	Mahtomedi School Board,
Shari Dion	Roseville School Board
Kirby Ekstrom	North Branch Area School Board
Rita Ericson	South Saint Paul School Board
John Estall	Eden Prairie School Board
Natalie Fedie	Stillwater Area School Board
Natasha Fleischman	Stillwater Area School Board
Marilynn Forsberg	Spring Lake Park School Board
John Fossum	Northfield School Board
Rebecca Gagnon	Minneapolis School Board
Jim Gelbmann	South Washington County School Board,
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Kitty Gogins	Roseville School Board
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Peter Hamerlinck	Saint Cloud School Board
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Paul Mandell	Inver Grove Heights School Board
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Thomas E. Ring	Roseville School Board
Jeff Risberg	Saint Paul School Board
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Vicki Roy	Intermediate District 917
Hussein Samatar	Minneapolis School Board
Sherry Tyrrell	Robbinsdale School Board
Dick Tirk	Eastern Carver County School Board
Tom Walsh	Robbinsdale School Board
Melissa Halvorson Wiklund	Bloomington School Board