

March 1, 2021

Dear Chair Chamberlain and Members of the Senate Education Finance and Policy Committee,

As a state agency, the Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs (MCLA) has an important statutory role to inform policy makers on our constituent community and needs. Thus, MCLA writes to express support for S.F. 939, which modifies the state's postsecondary enrollment options (PSEO) program.

Research and data clearly demonstrate the benefits of the program that include significant savings for college tuition and allowing students to try out different careers. Additionally, PSEO exposes students to college life and expectations following high school graduation.

While the positive impact PSEO has on students of color, particularly Latinx students, are notable, systemic and information barriers exist to grow participation. According to People for PSEO, historical challenges to PSEO include a lack of information regarding the program, certain dissuading high schools for district fiscal reasons, transportation expenses, and access to online classes.

This proposed gap closing legislation would make post-secondary enrollment options information more available and improves access to PSEO courses. Additionally, S.F. 939 ensures that a district that is reimbursed for transporting an eligible pupil under this does not charge any pupil for transportation to or from a postsecondary institution.

To conclude, S.F. 939 includes good gap closing policy and smart investments that will help eliminate barriers for all students, including Latinx students, to participate in PSEO.

Moving forward, MCLA is pleased to stand ready and committed to support this effort this session.

Thank you for your leadership and doing what is right for all of our students.

Sincerely,



Samantha N. Diaz
Legislative and Policy Director
Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs