

February 14, 2022



Dear Members of the Senate Education Finance and Policy Committee:

On behalf of our members across the state, we want to assure you we value parent engagement in our buildings, districts and communities and believe it is the cornerstone in our public students' education.

We appreciate your recognition that parent engagement in our schools is critically important to the success of our students. Minnesota has long prided itself on being a local control state and our school board members and administrators have a long history of encouraging parents and community members to be actively involved in our schools. The attached document outlines existing state statutes and MSBA model policies demonstrating this commitment.

Although our work is rooted in school governance and management, our organizations recognize that parents are the first educators of their children. We recognize the important role parents have in the upbringing and educating of their children. Our districts strive to provide opportunities for parental engagement from volunteering in the classroom, to serving on committees that review curriculum and finance, to strategic planning. The stronger the partnership between educators and parents, the better the outcomes for our 850,000 school children.

As you consider the bills on your February 14 agenda, we encourage you to strive to enact policies that ensure parents are involved in their child's education, ensure professional educators will effectively meet the needs of each of their students, and avoid time-consuming and costly new mandates.

In short, our school board members and administrators' welcome parent and community engagement – in fact, we encourage it. It is our goal to have all students and all families feel welcome in our buildings working collaboratively to build a strong community.

Respectfully,

Kirk Schneidawind, executive director - Minnesota School Boards Association
Scott Croonquist, executive director – Association of Metropolitan School Districts
Deb Henton, executive director – Minnesota Association of School Administrators