



March 12, 2021

Dear members of the Senate Education Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of Educators for Excellence - Minnesota (E4E), a teacher-led nonprofit with approximately 2,300 members across the state, we are submitting the following written testimony in support of SF 1554.

Committee members, as you probably know, the education achievement gap in our state is not only limited to racial or income graduation rate discrepancies. Access to rigorous courses, particularly math and science, are too often subjective in ways they don't need to be.

As an immigrant and as a former teacher, I want to share that parents' awareness of honors and other rigorous courses is often low within minority communities. We support SF 1554 because it would allow school districts to offer automatic enrollment in advanced math courses for students who meet the specific criteria established by the Board of Education where they are enrolled.

Such a policy would take the guesswork and inherent bias out of enrollment in honors courses without taking students and parents' ability to make their own course choices if they choose to.

States who have already implemented such practice have shown a considerable increase in the percentage of students of color who enrolled in an advanced course. School districts in Washington state, for instance, have also expanded this opportunity to other subjects due to the success they have seen in the ten years the policy was implemented.

We call on the Senate Education Finance and Policy Committee to support SF 1554 in order to make our honors course enrollment system more equitable and bias free.

As always, our members are available to speak with you, should you have questions about this matter.

In partnership,

Paula Cole  
Executive Director, E4E-MN