

April 1, 2014

TO: Members, Minnesota State Senate

RE: Delayed Implementation of 2011 Teacher Evaluation Law

Thank you for working to ensure that all Minnesota students have access to a world-class education and can achieve success through the goals of the World's Best Workforce. To advance this cause, we ask that you **not** delay statewide implementation of teacher evaluations.

Specifically, we ask that you not delay:

- implementation of teacher evaluations for non-Q Comp districts; and
- use of student performance and engagement data for all districts.

Our teachers are the most important in-school factor for student success. By passing the teacher evaluation law in 2011, Minnesota made a commitment to teachers, their professional growth, and by extension – their students.

Since 2011, many districts throughout the state have implemented evaluations or have begun developing plans that are set to launch in the 2014-15 school year. This – along with MinnCAN's 2013 statewide poll, in which 89 percent of responding district teachers support evaluations that align with professional development opportunities and will help advance student learning – demonstrates that Minnesota educators are ready for meaningful evaluations.

In addition to our concerns about the implementation delay, we are troubled by the proposed delay in the use of student performance and engagement data. Nothing is more central to evaluating a teacher's impact than student academic achievement and engagement, which is why these two factors account for 55 percent of evaluations under the state model. Given the importance of these factors, and the latitude districts have in determining how to measure them, a delay is not warranted.

Finally, Minnesota's waiver from federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements is predicated on on-time implementation of teacher evaluations. By delaying evaluations, Minnesota risks losing our NCLB flexibility waiver or having it not renewed – which would create significant disruptions for our schools. **Any alleged benefits of delaying full implementation of evaluations are not worth this risk.**

Thanks to your leadership, Minnesota is poised to provide teachers with professional evaluations, development opportunities, and recognition. Moving forward with teacher evaluations is the right thing to do for our students and teachers.

Thank you, and we look forward to working with you on behalf of our students.

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