



**Engagement. Voice. Success.**

Dear Representative Loon and Representative Peterson,

Thank you for presenting HF 1255, regarding increasing appropriations for school-linked mental health services, during the Minnesota Youth Council Committee meeting on March 21st, 2017. The bill was voted on and passed with 16 votes in the affirmative and 1 vote in the negative.

Overall, the bill received overwhelming support from the Minnesota Youth Council Committee. Earlier this year, we conducted a statewide survey of nearly 400 students from across Minnesota. With the information from our survey, as well as the Minnesota Student Survey, we found that mental health support was a theme that students consistently cared about. We also know that one in five high schoolers experience a mental health disorder, yet resources and support remain insufficient. Therefore we were pleased to hear of your bill's plan to delegate additional funds towards mental health services in schools, including through the development of alternative programs.

As a committee, we have a suggestion as to how this bill could improve. We noticed that the bill is focused mainly on level 4 special education students, and we believe it could be built upon by including students of all levels.

We truly appreciate your effort to expand support of student mental health. As students in the school system, we can tell you firsthand that there is not enough support for this issue. Thank you for being an advocate and supporting students.

Sincerely,

Minnesota Youth Council Committee



*An Initiative of Minnesota Alliance With Youth*