

# Minnesota legislative scorecard

Measuring support for education & student achievement in the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislature

# Minnesota legislative scorecard

Measuring support for education & student achievement in the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislature

This report was published in September 2014 by MinnCAN: The Minnesota Campaign for Achievement Now

To order copies of this report please contact MinnCAN: [info@minncan.org](mailto:info@minncan.org)

**MinnCAN: The Minnesota Campaign for Achievement Now**  
[www.minncan.org](http://www.minncan.org)

*Design & Layout*  
[house9design.ca](http://house9design.ca)

## **Table of contents**

Intro: Letter from Daniel Sellers	4
Education champions	6
Senate scorecard	7
House scorecard	13
Important policies	22

---

## **Disclaimer**

This scorecard is for informational purposes only. When judging the qualifications of any candidate or incumbent, voters should consider matters such as performance on committees, constituent service, and positions on all matters in addition to those reflected on the scorecard.

# Introduction

Dear friends,

I am thrilled to release MinnCAN's first legislative scorecard! In 2013 and 2014, during the 88th Legislature, we worked to find changing-the-odds public schools, share their stories at the Capitol and help their successes inform policy that will improve public schools across Minnesota. This scorecard showcases the tremendous progress we made to pass and implement such policies and to ensure that all kids have access to a great public school.

## **During the 88th Legislature, our bipartisan allies:**

- invested nearly \$45 million to help low-income 3- and 4-year-olds access quality pre-K
- strengthened public charter school accountability
- implemented well-rounded educator evaluations
- made schools safer
- allowed the state to recruit and retain the best teachers and leaders
- increased college access, and more.

Still, we know we must do much more to guarantee each and every Minnesota kid a high-quality education.

## **Our five policy pillars guide our efforts:**

- Start early with high-quality pre-K
- Expand high-quality school options for all families
- Elevate great teaching and leadership
- Meet individual student needs
- Set high expectations for everyone

These pillars—as well as our conversations with educators across the state—inform the policies we pursue on behalf of Minnesota kids.

This scorecard highlights these policies, holds our elected officials accountable and helps you better understand where your legislators stand on important education issues facing our state. Find out who represents you here: [edscorecard.minncan.org](http://edscorecard.minncan.org). (coming soon)

### **How this scorecard works**

Legislators' scores reflect the percentage of votes they took in support of our policy initiatives to improve public schools. For example, a legislator who voted 80 percent of the time with MinnCAN received 80 points. We then gave 15 extra credit points to legislators who played a leading role on an important policy—whether it passed into law, was discussed or voted on by committee, caucus or the general body, or failed to be considered in a meaningful way. Points and extra credit were compiled to give each legislator a final score, not exceeding 100.

The 88th Legislature proved to us once again that real progress to improve our schools and increase academic achievement for all kids is possible, but oftentimes far too slow. We'll accomplish more during the next biennium only with a relentless belief in all kids, a commitment to passing and implementing smart policy, and the continued backing of people like you.

Thank you for your support!

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Daniel Sellers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

**Daniel Sellers**  
**MinnCAN's Executive Director**

# Education champions: MinnCAN's Top 3

MinnCAN strives to celebrate legislators who go above and beyond to ensure all kids have access to a great public school. Education champions in our Top 3 act boldly—often crossing party lines—to support proposals that aim to improve our schools, elevate great teaching and leadership, and prepare all kids for successful futures. To rank our Top 3 education champions, we started with each legislator's composite score, and—to recognize those who consistently took a stand for kids—added an additional point for each important policy on which they led.

## Senate

---

### Top 3 Democrats

Terri Bonoff  
Melisa Franzen  
Ron Latz

### Top 3 Republicans

Carla Nelson  
Branden Petersen  
Eric Pratt

## House

---

### Top 3 Democrats

Yvonne Selcer  
Kim Norton  
Paul Rosenthal

### Top 3 Republicans

Anna Wills  
Bob Barrett  
Bud Nornes

# Minnesota Senate

## 1 Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act (HF826)

This legislation provides clear definitions of bullying and intimidation, as well as prevention and intervention training and resources for students, staff and school volunteers. The law enumerates protections for students who are most likely to be bullied or harassed because of their actual or perceived race, color, religion, disability, sex, age, national origin, immigration status, family and socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression. Students who are bullied or who feel unsafe in school have higher rates of absenteeism, lower aspirations to attend post-secondary schooling and below average GPAs. This legislation helps identify and hold schools accountable for student safety. The Senate passed the bill on April 3, 2014. Democrats: 36 yes, 3 no, 0 not voting; Republicans: 0 yes, 28 no, 0 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the bill.

---

## 2 Staffing flexibility (Senator Pratt Amendment to HF2397)

Sen. Eric Pratt offered an amendment to the omnibus education policy bill that would repeal seniority-based layoffs and bumping, and would provide greater flexibility when assigning the best teachers to schools most in need. The amendment would require school districts and local unions to negotiate a process should school districts need to lay off teachers.

Minnesota is one of only 14 states nationwide with a law that bases teacher layoffs on seniority. It doesn't matter if a teacher goes the extra mile or increases student achievement; if that teacher is relatively new, he or she will be the first to be laid off. The Senate failed to pass the amendment on April 8, 2014. Democrats: 4 yes, 29 no, 5 not voting; Republicans: 25 yes, 0 no, 3 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.

---

## 3 Student teacher placement with effective mentors (Senator Petersen Amendment to HF2397)

Sen. Branden Petersen offered an amendment to the omnibus education policy bill that would require that, during their clinical experience, student teachers be placed only with effective educators, as determined by professional teacher evaluations. Teachers who are deemed ineffective by the three-year summative evaluation should concentrate on their own professional development rather than the development of our future teachers. The Senate failed to pass the amendment on April 8, 2014. Democrats: 3 yes, 32 no, 4 not voting; Republicans: 24 yes, 0 no, 4 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.

---

## 4 PSEO “gag rule” (HF2397 Conference Report)

Post-Secondary Enrollment Options, or PSEO, enables 10th-, 11th- and 12th-graders to earn college credit while still in high school. Colleges and universities can provide information to students and parents about PSEO, but only pertaining to the program's academic benefits—not its financial perks. The final vote on the

omnibus education policy bill hinged on a small, yet important provision allowing colleges and universities to talk about the money families could save by participating in the program. The Senate passed the conference report on May 14, 2014. Democrats: 32 yes, 4 no, 3 not voting; Republicans: 5 yes, 21 no, 2 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the Conference Report.

---

## **5 Remedial instruction student reimbursement (Senator Pratt Amendment to HF630)**

Sen. Pratt introduced the “Remedial Instruction; High School Diploma Warranty” provision as an amendment to the omnibus K-12 education policy and finance bill. This amendment instructs high schools to pay a portion of the tuition required for remedial courses taken by college students who graduated high school but did not exhibit proficiency in the subjects where they needed remediation. The Senate failed to pass the amendment on April 24, 2013. Democrats: 3 yes, 35 no, 1 not voting; Republicans: 23 yes, 4 no, 1 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.

---

## **6 Seniority-based layoffs (Senator Petersen Amendment to HF630)**

Sen. Petersen introduced an amendment to the omnibus K-12 education policy and finance bill. The amendment would require school districts and local unions to negotiate a process should school districts need to lay off teachers. The Senate failed to pass the amendment on April 24, 2013. Democrats: 3 yes, 35 no, 1 not voting; Republicans: 27 yes, 0 no, 1 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.

## **7 Seniority-based “bumping” (Senator Petersen Amendment to HF630)**

Sen. Petersen introduced an amendment to the omnibus K-12 education policy and finance bill. The amendment would remove the requirement that school districts implement “bumping” or the reinstatement of laid-off teachers based only on seniority and not on any other variables, such as subject expertise, effectiveness or innovation in the classroom. Under current law, should a Minnesota school lay off an English teacher who also happens to have a license in math, for example, that English teacher could replace a math teacher with less seniority. The Senate failed to pass the amendment on April 24, 2013. Democrats: 4 yes, 34 no, 1 not voting; Republicans: 28 yes, 0 no, 0 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.



# Minnesota Senate

## Key

1. Anti-bullying
  2. Staffing flexibility
  3. Student teachers
  4. PSEO
  5. Remedial reimbursement
  6. Layoff plans
  7. Retaining experts
- Voted in support of MinnCAN position
  - Voted against MinnCAN position
  - Didn't vote
  - ★ Indicates this legislator received 15 extra credit points, which is included in the score







# Minnesota House of Representatives

## 1 Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act (HF826)

This legislation provides clear definitions of bullying and intimidation, as well as prevention and intervention training and resources for students, staff and school volunteers. The law enumerates protections for students who are most likely to be bullied or harassed because of their actual or perceived race, color, religion, disability, sex, age, national origin, immigration status, family and socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression. Students who are bullied or who feel unsafe in school have higher rates of absenteeism, lower aspirations to attend post-secondary schooling and below average GPAs. This legislation helps identify and hold schools accountable for student safety. The House passed the bill on April 8, 2014. Democrats: 69 yes, 3 no, 1 not voting; Republicans: 0 yes, 60 no, 1 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the bill.

---

## 2 Seniority-based layoffs (HF2397 Amendment 79)

Rep. Sondra Erickson introduced an amendment to the Omnibus education policy bill. The amendment would require school districts and local unions to negotiate a process should school districts need to lay off teachers. Minnesota is one of only 14 states nationwide with a law that bases teacher layoffs on seniority. It doesn't matter if a teacher goes the extra mile or increases student achievement; if that teacher

is relatively new, he or she will be the first to be laid off. The House failed to pass the amendment on April 4, 2014. Democrats: 0 yes, 70 no, 3 not voting; Republicans: 51 yes, 0 no, 10 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.

---

## 3 Student teacher placement with effective teachers (HF 2397 Amendment 53)

Rep. Erickson offered an amendment to the omnibus education policy bill that would require that, during their clinical experience, student teachers be placed only with effective educators, as determined by professional teacher evaluations. Teachers who are deemed ineffective by the three-year summative evaluation should concentrate on their own professional development rather than the development of our future teachers. The House failed to pass the amendment on April 4, 2014. Democrats: 3 yes, 67 no, 3 not voting; Republicans: 51 yes, 0 no, 10 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.

---

## 4 Women's Economic Security Act (HF2536)

This bill addresses economic insecurity and gender disparities threatening women and families. A vital provision in the legislation considered by the House removes the arbitrary \$5,000 cap on early learning scholarships. The average tuition for early learning programs is about \$6,000, so the \$5,000 scholarship cap prevented some low-income families from enrolling their kids in high-quality early learning programs. The House removed this cap by passing the comprehensive version of HF2536 on April 9, 2014. Democrats: 70 yes, 0 no, 3 not voting; Republicans: 36 yes, 24 no, 1 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the bill.

## **5 Remedial instruction student reimbursement (HF630 Amendment 65-3)**

Rep. Erickson introduced an amendment to the omnibus K-12 education policy and finance bill. The amendment requires the state to reimburse Minnesota high school graduates the cost of any remedial courses they are required to take before entering a Minnesota public higher education institution. The House failed to pass the amendment on April 23, 2013. Democrats: 0 yes, 73 no, 0 not voting; Republicans: 61 yes, 0 no, 0 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.

---

## **6 Student placement with effective teachers (HF630 Amendment 61)**

Rep. Erickson introduced an amendment to the omnibus K-12 education policy and finance bill. The amendment prevents school administrators from placing students in consecutive years with a teacher who receives the lowest evaluation rating. Students who are tracked with low-performing teachers often need effective teachers to bring them to proficiency. This amendment requires school administrators consider the needs of all kids. The House failed to pass the amendment on April 23, 2013. Democrats: 6 yes, 67 no, 0 not voting; Republicans: 61 yes, 0 no, 0 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.

---

## **7 Charter School Authorizer Empowerment (HF630 Amendment 58)**

Rep. Kelby Woodard introduced an amendment to the omnibus K-12 education policy and finance bill. The amendment requires the authorizers of chronically low-performing charter schools to either close the schools or write a letter to the Minnesota Department of

Education explaining the benefits of the schools and how the schools might measure growth and proficiency differently from state standards. The House failed to pass the amendment on April 23, 2013. Democrats: 3 yes, 70 no, 0 not voting; Republicans: 60 yes, 1 no, 0 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.

---

## **8 Seniority-based “bumping” (HF 630 Amendment 59)**

Rep. Erickson introduced an amendment to the omnibus K-12 education policy and finance bill. The amendment would remove the requirement that school districts implement “bumping” or the reinstatement of laid-off teachers based only on seniority and not on any other variables, such as subject expertise, effectiveness or innovation in the classroom. Under current law, should a Minnesota school lay off an English teacher who also happens to have a license in math, for example, that English teacher could replace a math teacher with less seniority. The House failed to pass the amendment on April 23, 2013. Democrats: 0 yes, 73 no, 0 not voting; Republican: 57 yes, 4 no, 0 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.

---

## **9 Retaining effective teachers (HF630 Amendment 157)**

Rep. Erickson introduced an amendment to the omnibus K-12 education policy and finance bill. Should a school district need to resort to teacher layoffs, this amendment requires educators be laid off based on effectiveness, as demonstrated by the results of their teacher evaluation, rather than by seniority. The House failed to pass the amendment on April 23, 2013. Democrats: 1 yes, 72 no, not voting; Republican: 59 yes, 1 no, 1 not voting.

— MinnCAN supported the amendment.

# Minnesota House of Representatives

## Key

1. Anti-bullying
  2. Layoff plans
  3. Student teachers
  4. Pre-k scholarships
  5. Remedial reimbursement
  6. Student placements
  7. Charter authorizers
  8. Retaining experts
  9. Protecting great educators
- Voted in support of MinnCAN position
  - Voted against MinnCAN position
  - Didn't vote
  - ★ Indicates this legislator received 15 extra credit points, which is included in the score















# Important policies

During the 88th Legislature, MinnCAN supported the legislative initiatives listed below, organized by our policy pillars. Some of these measures became law, and some never even reached committee or a floor vote. For the policies that reached a vote, we scored legislators on how they voted. But legislators do more than just vote—they lead. That’s why if a legislator authored, co-authored or introduced one or more of the below measures—regardless of how it played out—he or she received 15 extra credit points for leadership. And legislators who led on multiple policies had a better shot at making the MinnCAN Top 3 education champions.

## Senate Legislation

### Start Early

- SF162 Voluntary full-day kindergarten funding authorization; prekindergarten programs funding option
- SF481 Early learning scholarship program establishment; access to quality early learning and care expansion
- SF1613 Early learning scholarship program establishment
- SF1640 Early learning scholarship program establishment
- SF1966 Early learning scholarships appropriation availability expansion
- SF2692 Early learning scholarships appropriation availability expansion and appropriations

### Expand high-quality school options for all families

- SF222 Charter school enrollment preference to children eligible for free and reduced-price lunch authorization
- SF836 Charter school contracts accountability measures expansion
- SF921 Charter school annual portfolio report authorization
- SF2992 Charter school authorizers annual review requirement

## **Elevate great teaching & leadership**

- SF789 Student placement with ineffective teacher multiple times prohibition
- SF808 Collaborative urban educator recruitment and training programs appropriation including a grant to widen the teachers of color pipeline
- SF975 Teach For America appropriation
- SF1873 Teacher unrequested leave of absence provisions modifications
- SF2129 Unrequested leave of absence for teachers in special circumstances modification
- SF2382 Teachers unrequested leave of absence provisions modification
- SF2540 Practice or student teachers placement limitation

## **Meet individual student needs**

- SF740 Career and technical education advisory task force establishment
- SF783 Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act
- SF1211 Flexible year-round school calendar implementation authorization
- SF1222 Career and technical education revenue formula modification
- SF2479 Career pathways and technical education system policy review and clarifications requirement and providing P-20 partnership education system support
- SF2549 Postsecondary enrollment options (PSEO) information dissemination modification
- SF2790 Curriculum credit equivalencies provision modification; advanced placement computer science course allowed to fulfill a mathematics or science credit requirement authorization

## **Set high expectations for everyone**

- SF2200 Education assessment reporting requirements to parents modification

# **House Legislation**

## **Start Early**

- HF821 Voluntary, full-day kindergarten funding authorized, and school district flexibility provided.
- HF1058 Early learning scholarship program established, access to quality early learning and care expanded, funding provided, and money appropriated.
- HF1880 Early learning scholarships availability expanded.
- HF3131 Early learning scholarship availability expanded, home health visit program funded, child care providers provided assistance to participate in the quality rating system, early childhood scholarship pilot program created, and money appropriated.
- HF2381 Early learning scholarships clarified

## **Expand high-quality school options for all families**

- HF998 Charter schools additional accountability provided.
- HF1042 Charter schools allowed to give an enrollment preference to children who are eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch.
- HF1059 Charter school provided, and annual portfolio report authorized.
- HF3389 Charter school authorizers annual review required.

## **Elevate great teaching & leadership**

- HF888 Schools and school districts prohibited from placing a student multiple times with an ineffective teacher.
- HF973 Collaborative urban educator recruitment and training program grants authorized, funding provided, and money appropriated.
- HF1594 Teach for America program funding provided, and money appropriated.
- HF2380 Teachers' unrequested leaves of absence and teaching assignments policies modified.
- HF2489 Teachers unrequested leave of absence provisions modified.
- HF2575 Practice or student teacher placement limited.

## **Meet individual student needs**

- HF734 Career and technical education advisory task force established for improving student outcomes in grades 11 to 14.
- HF826 Safe and supportive schools provided by prohibiting bullying.
- HF910 Flexible year-round school calendar created.
- HF1708 Career and technical education revenue formula modified.
- HF2367 Advanced placement computer science course allowed to fulfill a mathematics or science credit requirement.
- HF2776 Minnesota's career pathways and technical education system key elements further clarified, and P-20 partnership support enlisted.
- HF2942 Dual credit provisions established and modified.

## **Set high expectations for everyone**

- HF2594 Student assessment reporting requirements modified.



## About MinnCAN

Launched in 2011, MinnCAN: The Minnesota Campaign for Achievement Now is an education advocacy nonprofit. MinnCAN is a movement of 11,000 Minnesotans—and growing—dedicated to creating the political will to enact smart public policies to ensure that every Minnesota child has access to a great public school.

Learn more at [www.minncan.org](http://www.minncan.org).  
Join the conversation! [#edscorecard](https://twitter.com/edscorecard)

