

Education Minnesota

Education Minnesota supports expansion of full-service community schools

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ST. PAUL, Minnesota. March 10, 2020 – Several members of Education Minnesota and supporters of full-service community schools testified Tuesday in the Minnesota House that expanding full-service community schools was a proven model for reducing racial disparities in public education.

“This is one of the proven solutions to the urgent and obvious needs of students living in poverty and students of color,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “There is no reason for the Legislature to wait for more evidence. Full-service community schools work. It’s time to use the budget surplus to expand this type of school into every community that needs one.”

The members of Education Minnesota testified in the House Education Finance Division on HF1013. About 60 educators from Duluth, Rochester, Brooklyn Center, Deer River, St. Paul and Minneapolis spent the day at the Capitol on Tuesday talking to legislators about the innovative approach to providing wraparound services to students and their families.

Full-service community schools put education, health care and other student and family services under one roof. While outside nonprofits, businesses and government agencies typically provide most services, school districts may pay for start-up costs and hire coordinators.

“Children who are healthy will be able to have a positive, social-emotional stature and are better positioned for academic success,” said Miamon Queeglay, the community schools manager at Brooklyn Center Community Schools. She was among the educators who lobbied on Tuesday.

Queeglay said schools in her district that used the model had graduation rates above the state average and were improving. There were also declines in discipline referrals to administrators and more students were getting to school on time.

“By systematically addressing educationally relevant health disparities, schools can reduce both educational and health disparities,” she said, adding that the status quo outside community schools wasn’t working. “This will not occur efficiently with the current strategy of investment in school health problems.”

About Education Minnesota

Education Minnesota is the voice for professional educators and students. Education Minnesota’s members include teachers and education support professionals in Minnesota’s public school districts, faculty members at Minnesota’s community and technical colleges and University of Minnesota

campuses in Duluth and Crookston, retired educators and student teachers. Education Minnesota is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association and AFL-CIO.

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