

Alliance for Student Achievement

Chair Dan Pyan ▪ 7362 E. Point Douglas Rd S – Cottage Grove, MN 55016
Telephone 651-458-6260 ▪ Fax 651-458-6312 ▪ E-mail dpyan0@sowashco.k12.mn.us

Members: Association of Metropolitan School Districts ▪ Education Minnesota ▪ Minnesota Association of School Administrators ▪ Minnesota Association of School Business Officials ▪ Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals ▪ Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association ▪ Minnesota Administrators for Special Education ▪ Minnesota Community Education Association ▪ Minnesota Parent Teacher Association ▪ Minnesota Rural Education Association ▪ Minnesota School Boards Association ▪ Schools for Equity in Education
Partners: Minnesota School Public Relations Association ▪ Parents United for Public Schools

December 19, 2014

Dear Governor Dayton:

We, the undersigned members of the Alliance for Student Achievement, want to thank you for the ardent and long-standing support of public education you have displayed during your entire career as a public servant. This support was especially evident during the last biennium when you fought for increases on the basic formula, funding for all-day/every day kindergarten, and increased funding and reform of the special education formula.

Your commitment to new revenue and a structurally balanced budget have stabilized education, human services and workforce development programs. As you consider your next budget proposal we ask you to consider the investments in the next generation of human capital that will ensure our continued economic success. We think it's reasonable to consider a similar investment in E-12 programs to mirror the forecasted growth of 13.9% or \$1.5 billion in important human service programs.

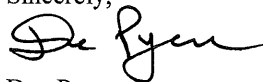
As you know, our public schools continue to face significant challenges in recovering from the decade of underfunding of education before you became governor. It is critically important that we build on the accomplishments of the last biennium as we strive to create the World's Best Workforce in Minnesota. There are a number of areas that require increased state investment, including:

- **The General Education Basic Formula.** Even with the increases of the past biennium, the basic formula is \$343 per student below inflation since 2003.
- **Facilities Funding.** The Minnesota Department of Education has developed a set of comprehensive recommendations that would provide school districts throughout the state with greater authority to address building needs, including deferred maintenance, safety and security improvements, and technology upgrades. Further, the recommendations allow for these improvements to be made in a way that is fair to property taxpayers.
- **Special Education.** The state should fully fund its own special education formula to meet the needs of the state's children with disabilities. Special education funding continues to lag behind the level of need causing school districts throughout the state to transfer large amounts of revenue from their general funds to pay for programming that is not supported by the current level of special education funding.

School districts are working diligently and successfully to implement the World's Best Workforce and the required statewide Teacher Development and Evaluation system to ensure that all students have access to high quality instruction. High quality school-based early learning is also a priority for school districts throughout the state. These priorities demand increased and on-going resources.

We want to thank you for your unwavering support of public education. Under your leadership, we have always had an open door to discuss our concerns and work with you to improve our state's system of public schools. We look forward to meeting with you to discuss our shared agenda for student success.

Sincerely,



Dan Pyan

Chair, Alliance for Student Achievement