

**St. Cloud Area School District 742 – (DRAFT) Resolution 2025-3**  
**Establish Minnesota Privacy and Cybersecurity for Education (PACE) Council**

**2025 Delegate Assembly**

**Proposed Legislative Resolutions**

**RESOLUTION 2025-3 - Establish Minnesota Privacy and Cybersecurity for Education (PACE) Council**

**SUBMITTED BY: St. Cloud Area School District 742**

**Recommendation**

St. Cloud Area School District 742 supports and recommends that the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) advocate for the creation of a statewide council to develop a unified approach to updating and securing data privacy agreements with third-party vendors and to strengthening cybersecurity measures.

**Background Information**

Minnesota's public schools are rapidly adopting AI-enabled and cloud-based educational tools, even as data privacy obligations expand under laws such as the Minnesota Consumer Data Privacy Act (effective July 31, 2025). Many districts, particularly smaller and rural systems, lack the specialized legal, technical, and procurement capacity to evaluate vendor data practices or negotiate strong protections.

Building on Minnesota's proven cooperative models, this resolution proposes the creation of a statewide **Privacy and Cybersecurity for Education (PACE) Council** to:

- Maintain standardized vendor assessments and model contract language (including AI transparency, data minimization, ownership rights, and verified deletion); and
- Issue unified privacy and cybersecurity guidance that districts
- Certify vendors who meet statewide privacy and cybersecurity standards and maintain this list publicly for districts to view

Participation would remain advisory and opt-in, preserving local board authority while lowering costs and improving protections for students, families, and staff.

**Whereas Statements**

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota's publicly funded schools face increasingly complex privacy compliance obligations alongside the rapid expansion of AI-enabled educational technologies; and

**WHEREAS**, individual districts - especially small and rural systems - often lack the specialized technical, legal, and procurement expertise required to evaluate vendor data practices and negotiate strong data-protection terms; and

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota school districts must comply with FERPA, the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MNGDPA), COPPA, and the Minnesota Consumer Data Privacy Act (effective July 31, 2025), creating overlapping obligations best addressed through coordinated guidance and shared services; and

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota Consumer Data Privacy Act (MCDPA), effective July 31, 2025, imposes new obligations on controllers and processors of personal data, further increasing the need for coordinated implementation support for school districts and their vendors; and

**WHEREAS**, a statewide council dedicated to privacy and cybersecurity can provide model contract language, standardized vendor assessments (including AI transparency and data-minimization checks), and shared guidance—without undermining local decision-making authority; and

**WHEREAS**, this initiative concerns protective infrastructure, not curriculum, instruction, or pedagogical policy, and is intended to strengthen local governance;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Minnesota School Boards Association urges the Minnesota Legislature to establish a Minnesota Privacy and Cybersecurity for Education (PACE) Council to:

- Maintain standardized privacy requirements and model agreements for educational technology and AI vendors, including evidence-informed efficacy disclosures, data minimization, clear ownership and use limits, and verifiable data deletion at the end of contracts; and
- Provide unified guidance, practical tools, and optional model policies to help districts navigate privacy and AI adoption responsibly; and
- Strengthen direct support for school districts in building and maintaining cybersecurity capacity, including access to expertise, training, and shared resources to protect student and staff data.
- Ensure that privacy and cybersecurity standards incorporate accessibility requirements, so that technology and AI tools used in schools remain inclusive and compliant with IDEA and Section 504.
- The Legislature should ensure the PACE Council is resourced through dedicated state appropriations and positioned to maximize and align with available federal funding streams, while providing continuity if such funds are reduced or eliminated

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the PACE Council’s enabling language shall include, at minimum:

- **Scope:** A clearly defined advisory scope to guide districts without becoming a vendor-approval bottleneck;
- **Participation:** *Vendor* compliance with PACE Council standards *shall be mandatory* for all educational technology and AI providers contracting with Minnesota public schools, while *district* participation in shared services, tools, and incident response resources *shall remain voluntary* and supported by state funding;
- **Membership:** Balanced representation from school boards, district administrators, higher education, MNIT, and privacy and cybersecurity experts;
- **Facilitation:** The work of the council shall be facilitated by the Minnesota Generative AI Alliance (MNGAIA) for Education; and
- **Reporting:** The council must submit an annual report to the legislature summarizing its activities, guidance issued, and recommendations for improving statewide privacy and cybersecurity practices in education.

### **Supporting Rationale**

A coordinated, statewide approach drawing on expertise across sectors offers the most effective and efficient way to address the complexity of modern AI governance, privacy management, and cybersecurity readiness. While many districts lack access to specialized knowledge and resources, a statewide council can harness cooperation, reduce costs, and deliver timely, pragmatic solutions when they are most urgently needed.

This resolution is not only about compliance - it is about safeguarding students, families, and staff from harm. Strengthened privacy and cybersecurity protections reduce the risk of identity theft, cyberbullying, and commercial misuse of personal data. Clear standards and shared expertise also help ensure AI and digital tools used in classrooms are safe, accessible, and inclusive, supporting students of all abilities.

With current district protections heavily reliant on federally funded cybersecurity and Safe Schools grants, potentially resources that face uncertain renewal, the PACE Council provides Minnesota with a stable, state-level framework to sustain protections even if federal dollars diminish.

Equally critical, coordinated **incident response capacity** will allow school districts to prepare for, manage, and recover from data breaches or cyberattacks swiftly and effectively. By combining prevention with shared response resources, the PACE Council will ensure that Minnesota schools can protect sensitive data and restore operations with minimal disruption. Together, these measures will

reinforce public trust that Minnesota schools take seriously their responsibility to create safe, secure, and equitable learning environments in the digital age.

Because no existing state division has the specialized expertise to lead this work, establishing a council of practitioners and experts, facilitated by MNGAIA, provides an essential interim structure until a permanent state capacity can be developed.