



MASA

Minnesota Association of School Administrators

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Former Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Alan Page and Federal Reserve President and Chief Executive Officer Neel Kashkari have proposed an amendment to the Minnesota constitution referred to as the Page Amendment that they contend will guarantee all students receive a quality education. Their proposal is referred to as the Page Amendment. The amendment, introduced in the 2021 Minnesota Legislature, is anticipated to be taken up during the 2022 Legislature. As the leading voice for education in Minnesota and with over 600 members, the Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) believes it important to share the position of the MASA Board of Directors on the proposed amendment.

The current education clause in the Minnesota Constitution (Article XIII, SEC 1) states “The stability of a republican form of government depending mainly upon the intelligence of the people, it is the duty of the legislature to establish a general and uniform system of public schools. The legislature shall make such provisions by taxation or otherwise as will secure a thorough and efficient system of public schools throughout the state.” This language was meant to secure a uniform system of public schools.

The proposed amendment reads, “All children have a fundamental right to a quality education that fully prepares them with the skills necessary for participation in the economy, our democracy and society, as measured against uniform achievement standards set forth by the state. It is the paramount duty of the state to ensure quality public schools that fulfill this fundamental right.” This language is intended to secure the equal right to a quality education for all children.

MASA has engaged in thoughtful discussions about the proposed amendment through statewide regional meetings and leaders attended Federal Reserve sponsored webinars and in person meetings. Justice Page and President Kashkari met with 2021 MASA Fall Conference attendees, allowing participants to ask specific questions seeking clarity on the proposed language in the amendment.

The MASA Board of Directors and the legislative committee examined the proposed amendment. Additionally, a sub-committee of the board carefully studied the positions of partner education organizations along with the FAQ provided by the Federal Reserve.

MASA values the conversations and questions the Page Amendment advocates and opponents have raised. While MASA firmly believes in the fundamental right to a quality public education for every child and the collective responsibility to deliver on that promise, MASA asserts the proposed amendment, as written, has too many unanswered questions. The amendment is silent on how Minnesota’s public education system should be funded, who determines uniform achievement standards and who is ultimately responsible for meeting these standards.

MASA asks that supporters of the proposal amend the language to include full funding for public schools, and to strengthen the current language in the Minnesota Constitution to close achievement gaps and to ensure a quality education for every child in Minnesota.

MASA welcomes continued conversation on the specifics of the amendment and stands ready to provide feedback on proposed changes. However, MASA cannot endorse the Page Amendment in its present form.