



Voice For Greater Minnesota Education

# 2024 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

MREA advocates on behalf of about 237 school districts, 30 education districts and additional associate members across Greater Minnesota to provide educational opportunities and close achievement gaps in Minnesota.

*MREA Member Approved Platform Approved 12/5/2023*



Minnesota's Public Schools are struggling to attract and retain staff. Funding a system of schools is a primary duty of the legislature and Governor. MREA is calling on state officials to improve educator compensation, making the profession more attractive, through several legislative actions.

## KEY ACTIONS NEEDED

### TEACHER COMPENSATION

- Establishing a Teacher Compensation Adjustment Revenue program initially aimed at improving starting teacher salaries to a minimum of \$60,000.
- Improving TRA by either lowering the combination of the normal retirement age and total years of service OR minimizing the reduction in retirement benefits paid before normal retirement age.
- Amending the Grow Your Own application requirements at MDE so rural districts can qualify.
- Reforming QComp so all schools qualify for the basic \$169/pupil and ensure allowable uses include paid student teaching.
- Providing direct underwriting to state colleges for teacher preparation programs so those credits are free to undergraduates seeking teaching degrees.

### CLEAN UP FROM 2023

- On-going financial support for UI costs
- Clarify instances of and professional judgement by school employees for use of restraints
- Additional funding for the Read Act
- Establish a new proxy for Compensatory Revenue
- Eliminate the \$200 daily rate required for the short call substitute pilot program

### CLOSE FUNDING GAPS

- Increase the LTFM allowance and allow roofs, pavements and HVAC projects in Health & Safety
- Increase Basic Formula & Local Optional Revenues to address inflationary pressures
- Restore Seasonal & Recreational Property to the RMV tax base, eliminating it from the state's Commercial/Industrial levy.
- Ensure minimum revenues for small schools & cooperatives for meaningful revenue generation across all public-school entities.
- Expand VPK to all 4-year-olds qualifying for free and reduced-price meals

### POLICY FLEXIBILITY, NOT MANDATES

- Create flexible pathways to licensure, in addition to broader licensure categories
- Oppose unfunded mandates and "one-size-fits-all" education policy