



Working Meeting Agenda

Diamondhead Education Center
200 W. Burnsville Parkway
Burnsville, MN 55337
November 28, 2023
6:00 PM

- I. Welcome
- II. Review AMSD and MSBA Legislative Priorities
Speaker(s): Director Lesley Chester
- III. Draft ISD 191 Legislative Priorities for 2024
Speaker(s): Director Lesley Chester
- IV. Wrap Up
- V. Adjourn



Association of Metropolitan School Districts

2024 Legislative Platform

DRAFT

The AMSD Board of Directors acknowledges and appreciates the significant investments in education approved in the 2023 legislative session. Linking the formula to inflation and reducing the shortfalls in the special education and English learner programs provides a foundation for restoring Minnesota's historic commitment to education.

At the same time, historic inflation and new programs and requirements adopted in the 2023 session have created budget challenges for school districts. AMSD urges state policymakers to refrain from enacting any new mandates and address the priorities outlined below in the 2024 session.

Fund New Requirements and Inflationary Costs

Stable funding sufficient to cover inflationary cost increases and mandated programs is essential to ensuring equitable academic outcomes for students. AMSD urges the Governor and Legislators to provide funding for the new programs adopted in the 2023 legislative session including Paid Family Medical Leave, Earned Sick and Safe Time, The READ Act, and Unemployment Insurance. Specifically, the Governor and Legislators should:

- Increase the basic formula allowance by an additional 2 percent for FY 25;
- Make compensatory hold harmless funding permanent;
- Establish an ongoing funding stream for unemployment insurance costs;
- Increase Local Optional Revenue to \$920 per pupil to recover ground lost to inflation and link it to the basic formula; and
- Increase equalization of the operating referendum and local optional levies to reduce taxpayer and education funding disparities.

Enhance School Safety

To ensure safe and secure learning environments for students and staff, the Governor and Legislature should:

- Remove the per pupil limit in the Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue program and expand allowable uses of revenue to include security modifications to buildings, remodeling, and additions to existing space; and
- Increase the Safe Schools levy from \$36 to \$108 per pupil; and

- Clarify language related to the use of physical restraints to ensure the safety of students and staff.

Enhance Local Control and Spur Innovation

Locally elected school boards are in the best position to work with their staff, students, parents, and communities to address local needs and challenges. One size fits all mandates stifle innovation and creativity and consume staff time and resources. Accordingly, the Governor and Legislature should:

- Repeal the requirement that school boards negotiate e-learning days and student-to-staff ratios;
- Increase student-centered learning opportunities by creating alternative pathways to graduation and allowing students to earn credit for learning wherever it occurs;
- Reduce special education paperwork requirements to allow teachers to spend more time with students; and
- Use the flexibility allowed under the ESSA to reduce the number of required standardized tests so school districts can offer assessments that more accurately measure growth, proficiency, and college or career readiness.

Address the Educator Workforce Shortage

To address staff shortages and diversify the educator workforce, the Governor and Legislature should:

- Enhance support for programs like Grow Your Own and apprenticeships; and
- Extend the short-call substitute teaching pilot project to 4 years and eliminate the required minimum salary.

The Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) is a statewide organization and a leading advocate for public education, serving 331 public school districts. School boards lead and govern school districts small and large – from 32 students to 38,590 students – 869,055 statewide. Our student demographic profile is 37.7 percent students of color, 43.4 percent qualify for free or reduced-priced meals, 9.2 percent English Learner, 1 percent homeless and 17.6 percent receiving special education services. Our districts and students' needs are growing faster than the amount of money districts have received – now is not the time for the legislature to stop or pause the progress made in 2023.



"Minnesota's students deserve high-quality academic instruction and social-emotional supports," said Commissioner Willie Jett. *"Our public schools must be provided with the necessary resources to meet these needs."*

The MSBA platform recognizes and is appreciative of the investments made last year. The 2024 Legislature has another opportunity to continue progress made last year in meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of students. A supplemental budget will provide stability and help continue the student services provided with expiring federal funds and other impacts to districts like enrollment declines and inflation.

Despite notable funding in 2023, districts are experiencing a shortfall putting students at risk of losing more ground. Stabilizing education funding has many pieces and a supplemental budget will provide relief for all public school districts.

Supplemental Funding Pieces:

The first critical piece to education funding is the per pupil formula, which currently is underfunded by \$1,356 for FY25⁵ per student due to inflation.

MSBA asks the legislature to increase the basic education formula by an additional 2% for the 2024-25 school year to address critical staffing shortages, Elementary and Secondary Education Relief (ESSER) funding running out, student and staff mental health supports, decline in enrollments, and interrupted learning recovery efforts. Cost: \$160 million.

Another critical piece, create a permanent state funding stream for unemployment insurance for nonlicensed employees.

MSBA asks the legislature to fully fund the cost of unemployment insurance for nonlicensed employees.

Another critical piece, eliminate the per pupil cap on the Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue to allow all school districts to address their critical facility maintenance needs efficiently and effectively.

MSBA asks the legislature to eliminate the cap on the Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue.

The final piece, increase eroded equalization formulas to address the inequities in education related property tax levies:

- Operating referendum
- Local optional revenue (LOR)
- Debt service formulas

MSBA asks the tax committee of the legislature to include an increase in equalization.

Supplemental Policy Pieces:

Allow school boards authority to transform and innovate our high schools for the future by providing flexibility in how schools define "instructional hours."

MSBA asks the legislature to increase personalized learning pathways for high school students.

Empower local decision making by resisting new unfunded mandates:

- Expedite the teacher licensure process.
- Extend the short-call substitute teaching pilot program and repeal the \$200 daily rate of pay.
- Allow school districts that are not required to have a licensed school nurse to qualify for Student Support Personnel Aid.
- Reduce special education paperwork by eliminating or reducing the reports that go beyond federal compliance to help retain and recruit our workforce.
- Repeal the language in the 2023 Jobs and Labor bill that requires "adult-to-student ratios in classrooms", "student testing", and "student-to-personnel ratios" as terms and conditions in collective bargaining and reinstate "the number of personnel" from the matters of inherent managerial policy.

MSBA asks the legislature to resist any new unfunded mandates and honor local control and inherent managerial rights.

Ensure school districts, their staff and partners in school safety and security have clear guidelines and improve definitions related to the use of force and to resolve dual and conflicting standards.

MSBA asks the legislature to provide and fund safe and secure school environments.

Recognize efforts by early adopters of evidence-based reading by reimbursing districts for expenditures related to implementation and training.

MSBA asks the legislature to provide additional Read Act funding for districts that have been engaged in evidence-based reading curriculum. And, provide full funding for Read Act expenditures into the future.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA), data and scores and rating report cards should not include the scores for students who do not participate or opt out. School districts should not reflect poorly in academic achievement when students do not participate in the testing.

MSBA asks the legislature to discontinue the current practice of including scores of students whose parents/caregivers choose to opt out of Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) standardized testing, which counts as a zero, and change practice to only include scores of students who took the assessment.

2023 Legislative Platform

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Supporting all learners and addressing inequity in education

On behalf of the students, educators, families and community members of Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District 191, the District 191 Legislative Committee asks the Minnesota State Legislature and U.S. Congress to take the actions described in this platform in 2023.

Platform items

Reduce the cross subsidy for special education and English Learner funding

Provide a legislative exemption to allow local control of property sale proceeds

Remove 15-day residency requirement for students enrolled in online schools

Increase Safe Schools funding to expand mental health supports

Provide targeted funding to increase diversity among teachers

Make funding for Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) permanent and increase access to school-based pre-kindergarten programs.

Continue medicaid eligibility as a means of direct certification for a student to receive free school meals.

Details to be included similar to back-page of [2022 Legislative Platform](#)

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

2023

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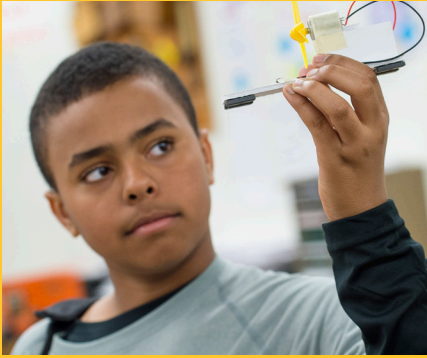
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District 191 Legislative Platform

Reduce the cross subsidy for special education, English Learner funding

These services are essential for supporting the individual needs of students and are mandated by law. But in 2018-19, for instance, District 191 received about \$12.8 million less in funding than was spent to provide those services. Those costs were covered by the district's general fund — the cross subsidy — meaning less money for general education staff, programming and services.

Remove the 15-day residency requirement for online students

Under current law, a student who leaves Minnesota for longer than 15 consecutive days is automatically unenrolled from their school. In the age of online school options, this requirement should be removed for any student enrolled online whose permanent address remains in the state.

Increase funding for mental health

It's never been more important to address the mental health needs of students to ensure they are prepared to learn and grow. Increasing the Safe Schools levy will allow schools districts to hire staff to address those needs.

Provide targeted funding to increase diversity among teachers

In District 191 and across Minnesota, only about 4% of teachers are people of color. Studies show that all students do better when they are taught by a diverse teaching staff, and the lack of representation especially harms students of color.

Make funding for Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) permanent and increase access to school-based pre-kindergarten programs

The benefits of access to preschool for students' future success is well documented. Funding should be approved to increase and stabilize access for more Minnesota families.

Provide a legislative exemption for District 191 property sale

District 191 is planning to sell one or more properties and is seeking a legislative exemption that would allow proceeds of the sale after paying off any remaining debt to be transferred to the district's general fund.

Continue medicaid eligibility as a means of direct certification for a student to receive free school meals

Removing the application for educational benefits as a barrier for many families will help ensure more students get the food they need without their families incurring debt.

ABOUT DISTRICT 191

Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District 191 is a future-forward school district creating barrier-free pathways for learning for everyone in our community.

We believe learning is a lifelong pursuit, and create programs, services and opportunities that inspire this belief.

Each Student.

Future Ready.

Community Strong.

one91
Burnsville · Eagan · Savage

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