



LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM FOR 2024

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 76 students to 37,626 students – 870,693 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 FY25 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.