MINNETONKA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #276
District Service Center
5621 County Road 101
Minnetonka, Minnesota

Summary of October 22, 2026 Study Session

The School Board of Minnetonka Independent School District #276 met in study session at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 22, 2026 in the Community Room at the District Service Center, 5621 County Road 101, Minnetonka, Minnesota. Board Vice Chairperson Dan Olson presided. Board members present were Sally Browne, Karen Jordan, Taunya Kolbinger, Mike Remucal and Superintendent David Law, ex officio. Absent: Kemerie Foss and Meghan Selinger. Student School Board representatives in attendance were Austen Harrison and KK Otaro. The Study Session was livestreamed on the District's YouTube channel.

CITIZEN INPUT

Vice Chairperson Olson extended an invitation to members of the audience who wished to address the Board on any topic. No one responded to this invitation to speak.

OPENING OF SCHOOL REPORT

General Counsel and Executive Director of Human Resources Anjie Flowers and Director of Student Accounting, Data Management and Enrollment Samantha Swenson presented this item to the Board. They shared information on district enrollment at both the elementary and secondary level, class size information, grade level comparisons year over year, enrollment numbers for immersion, Tonka Online, and Navigator programs, and paraprofessional and teacher hiring data. Highlights included the following:

- 11,544 students enrolled as of October 1 – 87 more students this year than last
- Slight decrease in elementary enrollment, but an increase in middle school and high school enrollment
- Highest Tonka Online enrollment since launching the program – currently at 260 students
- Open enrollment accounts for approximately 42% of total district enrollment in 2026-27
- Kindergarten enrollment has increased from previous years and slightly from last year
- First grade enrollment has seen the highest increase with 34 more students than last year
- 4th and 5th grades currently have the highest average class size at 29 students
- Kindergarten through 2nd grade class sizes range from 17-26

- Our current K-12 resident population is approximately 10,553 students – only 289 of those students decided to open enroll into another public or charter school
- 921 resident students have chosen a non-public option for school
- Navigator Program – historical high with 214 students across Excelsior and Scenic Heights
- Chinese and Spanish Immersion enrollment have remained steady districtwide
- 57% of our students are in the English program – 32% in Spanish Immersion – 11% in Chinese Immersion
- 96.76% of our paraprofessional positions are filled currently
- 31 new paras hired this school year
- 96 teachers hired – 21 are first-year teachers, 59 hold masters degrees, 7 hold international degrees

In the discussion that followed, student Board representative Austen Harrison noted that she had gone through the Navigator program at Scenic Heights after moving here with her family from Oklahoma. Vice Chair Olson noted that the Tonka Online numbers are very encouraging, and he is heartened that the district is able to offer that option to those families who want it. Superintendent Law commented that he had joined a Tonka Online elementary math class this past week, and the level of engagement and learning in the class was great to see. "I want to give a huge shout out to our Tonka Online teachers," he said.

ENROLLMENT/OPEN ENROLLMENT REPORT

Executive Director of Communications JacQui Getty presented this item to the Board. She noted that stable, consistent enrollment is an important indicator of a strong and healthy school district. As a component of the Minnetonka Public Schools' enrollment strategy, to ensure the District can continue to provide the continued excellence in education the community has come to expect, Minnetonka welcomes open-enrolled students to enjoy the benefits of Minnetonka's programs and staff.

The success of open enrollment over the past 19 years in the District has allowed Minnetonka Schools to stabilize enrollment throughout that time at its schools and increase the District's overall revenue. This additional revenue has helped to address the gap that inadequate state funding leaves districts to fill. Additionally, this revenue has been instrumental in sustaining the District's outstanding academic opportunities for students, including its ability to provide signature programs such as Spanish and Mandarin Chinese Language Immersion, Minnetonka Research, VANTAGE Advanced Professional Programs, MOMENTUM Design and Skilled Trades, and much more.

The District has continued efforts to attract new resident and open-enrolled families to maintain target enrollments at all schools. For many years, the District's efforts largely focused on welcoming Kindergarten families. The focus has expanded for the past few years to include High School families and Tonka Online families. With the Tonka Online

full online school option, there is additional capacity for student enrollment across the grades. The more recent addition of the VANTAGE/MOMENTUM Building provides more physical space for high school students, as well, which presents an opportunity to enroll more students in grades 9-12. Therefore, efforts to engage families to help fill these levels and the Tonka Online program through open enrollment have also been a focus the past two years.

Highlights of Ms. Getty's presentation included the following:

- As of October 7, the district has eight more incoming Kindergarteners than last year
- Current enrollment is 11,544 students, including those enrolled in our Tonka Online program
- Our schools are not at capacity – a recent district capacity study showed our capacity is 12,000 students
- Open enrollment helps us to meet the funded needs of our current program offerings
- Without open enrollment, there would not be enough resident student funding to support our programming
- Having a thriving, robust school district increases property values in the community
- Many young families hope to move into the district – realtors continue to tell us that homes sell quickly and many buyers are families who have open enrolled into the district and now want to live here
- OE students reside in 47 different districts for in-person learning, 59 different districts for Tonka Online learning
- $73M in revenue this year from in-person and Tonka Online open-enrolled students
- Minnetonka receives approximately $15,083 from general state aid and local sources for each resident and non-resident student
- Each non-resident student pays 100% of the cost of their instruction and other related costs, with more than $3,163 in revenue left over per student
- That revenue is then used to fund Minnetonka's innovative academic programming opportunities for students and to pay for additional teachers and support staff, as needed
- 880 current Kindergarten students (469 resident and 411 open enrolled)
- If we had only resident Kindergarteners enrolled, the reduction in revenue would be $6.2M annually
- We are in a unique position to set enrollment target numbers and close classrooms or programs as they fill

In the discussion that followed, student Board representative KK Otaro commented that she was initially an open enrolled student, but her family now resides in the district. Board Treasurer Browne noted that she was glad the district is not at capacity, and thanked the community for supporting the recent referendum. Board member Remucal asked for data regarding the number of students who convert from being open enrolled to residing in the

district in a given school year. Superintendent Law said he would work to provide that information.

EXCELLENCE IN STUDENT LEARNING – UPDATE ON ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Associate Superintendent Amy LaDue and Director of Research, Analysis and Systemic Improvement Matt Breen presented this item to the Board. They began by going over the type of assessments the district utilizes and their purpose:

Assessment	Description	Purpose
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) *Completed:* *Spring* *Results:* *End of August (typical)* *Into Fall (new assessment years)*	State required assessment. A series of statewide, standards-based tests given to students in reading, math, and science to measure their progress toward Minnesota's academic standards.	Provides a snapshot of student learning of grade level standards for individuals, schools, and districts to make data-driven decisions about the District's systems and to guide curriculum development.
NWEA - MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) *Completed:* *Fall, Spring* *Results:* *Following each assessment window; End of school year*	District selected assessment. Nationally normed, computer adaptive, assessment measuring academic achievement and growth in reading and math.	Compares student learning and progress against a grade-level standard and provides individual student growth measures.
FastBridge Curriculum-	State required/District	Used to inform literacy

Based Measures *Completed: Fall, Winter, Spring* *Results:* *Following each assessment window*	selected assessment. A research-based, State approved screening and progress monitoring tool used to assess early reading skills and oral reading fluency in order to identify students not yet reading at grade level.	progress against grade level expectations, including students who would benefit from further literacy assessments. Informs literacy instructional needs and supports in monitoring effectiveness of instruction.
ACT *Completed: Spring* *Results:* *Summer*	Optional assessment, strongly encouraged for all students. Standardized test that measures English, Math, Reading, and Science (now optional) skills.	Assess individual students' college readiness.
AP & IB Exams *Completed: Spring* *Results:* *Summer*	Optional assessment, encouraged for all students who enroll in these classes. Exams that are given as part of challenging, college-level high school programs that offer rigorous coursework - affords students an opportunity to demonstrate learning through assessments.	Allow high school students to take college-level courses and earn college credit or advanced placement at participating universities.

Dr. LaDue and Mr. Breen then provided trend data for Minnetonka results at a system level from the 2025-26 school year:

- MCA results including Reading, Math and Science data – all results were not available until September 30
- Five-year trend data compared to state proficiency rates along with comparisons to neighboring districts
- Five-year district trend data by grade level
- NWEA-MAP results including Reading and Math data
- A comparison to national mean score results by grade level
- Conditional Growth Percentile (CGP) by grade level
- NWEA updated its norms during the 2025-26 school year for MN, making it difficult to compare measures year to year
- ACT results, including trend data for 2022 through 2026 graduating classes, including subtest and composite scores
- ACT number of assessments completed and participation rate
- AP exam information and results, including trend data for 2022 through 2026 graduating classes
- IB exam information and results, including trend data for 2022 through 2026 graduating classes

Ms. LaDue and Mr. Breen noted that an ongoing effort is being made to become increasingly mindful and intentional about ensuring that data is consistently operationalized in meaningful ways throughout the District. This includes being clear about the purpose of each assessment and how the respective results interact with each other in informing system improvements separate from the response for each individual student. All these assessments provide valuable information regarding student achievement; however, it is the recognition that each alone is merely a single data point in a student's story that the District wants to honor to best respond to each student's unique needs.

For example, the MCA provides a single proficiency measure against the state standards at the specific grade-level which is beneficial to assessing the system but is not specifically helpful in showing growth or informing individual student instruction. The NWEA is nationally normed and provides measures concerning individual student growth but is not a measure against state standards. Fluency assessments, particularly in our elementary buildings, do not provide the same broad measures of the MCA or NWEA tests, but are most helpful to teachers to identify individual needs and inform instruction.

The District is in year two of having teachers and interventionists set up progress monitoring in FastBridge and interventions in eduCLIMBER for all students, grades K-12, not yet reading at grade level. It is also year two of the CAPTI ReadBasix, the State required diagnostic assessment for students in grades 4-12. During year one of the CAPTI assessment, the District began establishing follow up steps to ensure the intervention

aligned with the specific student need. These conversations have helped to refine District intervention efforts, particularly at the secondary level.

High School Exams - Analyzing the Data Further

At the high school level, students have ACT, AP, and IB results that provide information regarding college readiness and advanced-level programming, respectively. As part of our efforts to dig deeper into all District data, teachers were asked to reflect these last two on the relationship between their course grades and exam scores, focusing specifically on discrepancies between lower course grades and strong exam scores and vice versa.

The District continues to evaluate assessment summary data in new ways, and building leaders are increasingly asking questions and seeking opportunities to more deeply leverage the data as a building, department, professional learning team, or for individual teachers. This also includes leveraging our platforms, such as FastBridge and eduCLIMBER, to ensure that staff throughout the district can be responsive to positively impact student learning in a timely manner.

These efforts include elementary staff setting up progress monitoring that highlights both student rate of improvement and their overall performance relative to grade level. By utilizing two different graphical representations of the data, based on either improvement or grade-level benchmarks, staff are able to more clearly review student growth and the achievement gap. This information allows teachers to determine the effectiveness of the instructional response and identify any necessary modifications. Further, each graphical representation can support the review of the instructional plan with staff and families.

The math and reading intervention teams at all levels are utilizing this assessment data to ensure that they are serving the appropriate students at the requisite intensity in support of the goal of all students closing their gap to meet grade level expectations.

All levels are also working to better connect the impact of non-academic factors, such as attendance or social and emotional needs, with assessment data and student progress. This ensures that the design and configuration of supports are not based on standardized assessment results alone. The goal is for staff to collaborate to meet student needs across areas, while also partnering consistently with families to address factors such as attendance in order to mitigate their impact on student outcomes.

District Plan Moving Forward

The goal moving forward is to continue to increase responsiveness to student learning by focusing both on data trends as well as the full data story of each student. Doing so will continue to provide staff the opportunity to develop more targeted, proactive, and responsive instructional strategies while also providing a deeper evaluation of District curriculum and programming.

The Teaching and Learning team will continue to utilize feedback from building leaders, teachers, and support staff to ensure all assessments provide useful information including student achievement, responsive instructional plans, and system improvement efforts.

Processes for responding to student data from the District and building level through data-response meetings with elementary staff and building leadership teams continue to be a focus. This focus centers on connecting these comprehensive data reviews to action items in the classroom. This will be an ongoing focus for our building leadership teams, ensuring that these data-centered reflections evolve into discussion at the PLC level and consistent action in and across classrooms. Aside from turning student assessment data into more focused instructional responses, this process will also create a cycle of PLC discussions that focus on the most effective ways to respond to student benchmark assessment results.

An additional goal within this plan is for staff to fully operationalize the eduCLIMBER platform to support these discussions more regularly and organically. This could include reviewing progress monitoring data, looking at student data profiles across academic and social and emotional measures, or reviewing universal access accommodations that are or have been utilized in effectively supporting a student's success.

In the discussion that followed, Board member Remucal inquired about the drop in MCA Reading scores from sixth grade to seventh. Dr. LaDue responded that year-to-year comparators are difficult to assess, and we look more to see trends across cohorts. Board member Kolbinger asked what grade levels take the FastBridge assessment. Mr. Breen responded that all students in K-5 take it, but in middle school only the 8th graders take it. There was also discussion around the high school MCA results, and whether or not high schoolers are truly invested in scoring well on the exam. Board member Jordan noted that the legislature is considering ending the high school MCA testing. Superintendent Law noted that a few years ago, when the District changed the benchmark for AP exams, there had been concern that this would affect student participation and/or student success rates. He was pleased to see that was not the case. Vice Chair Olson noted that it's great to look at the data holistically, and to see that our students are consistently outperforming districts across the state. Superintendent Law said he had been at Deephaven today, and Mr. Breen and Literacy Coordinator Alyssa Rutherford had been conducting grade-level training with staff on the data. "This isn't just a School Board presentation. This work happens across the district all day, every day," he said.

REVIEW OF FINANCIAL COMPONENTS OF 2027 LEGISLATIVE POSITION STATEMENTS

Executive Director of Finance and Operations Paul Bourgeois presented this item to the Board. He explained that the draft financial planks focus on the need for the legislature to do the following:

- provide sufficient funding for key funding formulas that are the backbone of stability for the District
- rescind Special Education reductions
- permanently fund what is now the unfunded mandate of 10-month employee unemployment insurance
- restore the operating referendum cap stripped in FY2019 - $300 per adjusted pupil unit

In the discussion that followed, Board member Jordan asked whether 10-month employees, who can now receive unemployment during the summer, are required to return to work in the district in the fall, and was told that is not a requirement. Board Treasurer Browne asked that we strengthen the language around the SPED reductions, making it clear that the legislature is currently taking away our ability to meet the law. It was also suggested that members of the CFAC and CASE committees be allowed to give input on the document. Board members also asked that the document be made more visually interesting.

Superintendent Law noted that the financial planks would be brought back to the November 5 regular meeting for approval.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned the study session at 7:52 p.m. A special meeting of the Board followed.