



Association of Metropolitan School Districts

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AMSD Position on Facilities Funding

The Association of Metropolitan School Districts urges the Governor and Legislature to remove the per-pupil limit on Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue for all school districts and expand allowable uses to include safety and security modifications and remodeling and additions for instructional purposes. In addition, debt service equalization should be enhanced to ensure taxpayer equity.

AMSD BELIEVES

- Locally-elected school boards should have the ability to address the facilities needs of their students and community.
- Property tax levies should be equalized to ensure comparable taxpayer effort.
- Maintaining school facilities protects taxpayer investments.
- All school districts should have the ability to invest in technology to expand learning opportunities for students and ensure they graduate from high school ready for college and career.
- Facilities funding formulas should meet the needs of intermediate, joint powers and cooperative districts.
- School climate and student learning are impacted by the condition of a school building.

BACKGROUND

The 2013 Omnibus Education bill directed the Commissioner of Education to convene a working group to develop recommendations for reforming the financing of pre-K through grade 12 education facilities. The School Facilities Financing Work Group¹ released a report to the Legislature outlining comprehensive recommendations for reforming school facilities financing in

Minnesota. The group's recommendations included: establishing a long-term facilities maintenance revenue program; increasing the portion of debt service revenue that is eligible for equalization, equalizing the capital projects referendum levy; establishing a new school facilities improvement revenue program to replace and increase the current building lease levy program, increasing the operating capital revenue allowance and indexing it to inflation; streamlining the review and comment process and addressing facilities needs of other educational entities such as intermediate districts, charters and education cooperatives.

Significant progress has been made toward addressing the recommendations in the report including the establishment of the Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue program and streamlining the review and comment process.

The Governor and Legislature should continue to implement the School Facilities Financing Work Group's recommendations so all school districts are able to provide the needed instructional space for pre-K through grade 12 programming in safe and secure learning environments and taxpayers are treated equitably.

ENDNOTES

¹ <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/about/adv/inactive/facfin/>

² <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/schfin/fac/ltfm/>