

April 2011
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South St. Paul: Minnesota's First K-12 IB World Schools District— Setting the Standard for Rigorous and Relevant Education in the 21st Century

[South St. Paul Public School District](#), the first K-12 International Baccalaureate (IB) World Schools District in Minnesota, is building a better graduate. From kindergarten through 12th grade, the IB framework is helping all South St. Paul students become Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-minded, Caring, Risk-takers, Balanced, and Reflective. These characteristics, described in the [IB Learner Profile](#), are attributes that best describe the internationally-minded, lifelong learners we seek to develop through our three IB programs.

The IB Learner Profile is not intended to be a profile of the perfect student, but instead, a roadmap for the pursuit of lifelong 21st Century learning—it places the student at the heart of IB programs and focuses on the processes and outcomes of learning. The following activities are representative of the projects our students have recently pursued along this roadmap:

- Our Elementary students demonstrated **Caring** by collecting 1,828 pounds of food donations for our local food shelf.
- Our second grade students **Inquired** about adult monarchs and raised six adult monarchs from eggs! The students' curiosity led to a scientific experiment and entry in the Annual Insect Fair at the U of MN.



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AMSD Calendar

April 15, 2011

Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00 a.m., TIES Building, St. Paul

April 29, 2011

Executive/Legislative Committee Meeting, 7:30 a.m., TIES Building, St. Paul

May 6, 2011

Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00 a.m., TIES Building, St. Paul

May 13, 2011

Legislative Committee Meeting, 7:30 a.m., TIES Building, St. Paul

May 27, 2011

Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00 a.m., TIES Building, St. Paul

AMSD's Mission

To advocate for state education policy that enables metropolitan school districts to improve student learning.



**Association of
Metropolitan School Districts**

From the Chair:

At a time when Minnesota's public schools are making significant budget cuts and laying off hundreds of teachers and other staff, the House and Senate are advancing proposals that would provide taxpayer dollars to students, or the parents of students, attending private or religious schools. The House Education bill includes a provision that would provide a voucher to low-income students attending a low performing school in a city of the first class – Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth and soon Rochester. The Senate Tax bill includes a tax credit for low income filers who pay tuition to a private school.

Not only do these efforts come at a time when state support for our public schools has been falling, but the proposals fly in the face of research. Recently released data by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction showed that students who received vouchers to attend private or religious schools performed worse on statewide reading and math tests than their public school counterparts. Numerous other studies across the country have produced similar findings.

AMSD Board Members and concerned citizens need to contact their local legislators and ask them to oppose proposals that would direct public funding to private and religious schools. State policymakers should instead focus on their constitutional obligation to fund our public schools.

Patsy Green, school board member from Robbinsdale Area Schools, is chair of AMSD.

Special Education Freeze Threatens School Budgets

The recently adopted House and Senate Education Funding Bills propose to eliminate the growth factors in both the regular and excess cost special education programs. Removal of these growth factors would result in a rapid acceleration of the special education cross-subsidy and cause severe pressure on school district budgets. The special education cross-subsidy represents the amount of general education funding school districts spend on mandated special education programs due to the failure of the state and federal governments to adequately fund special education.

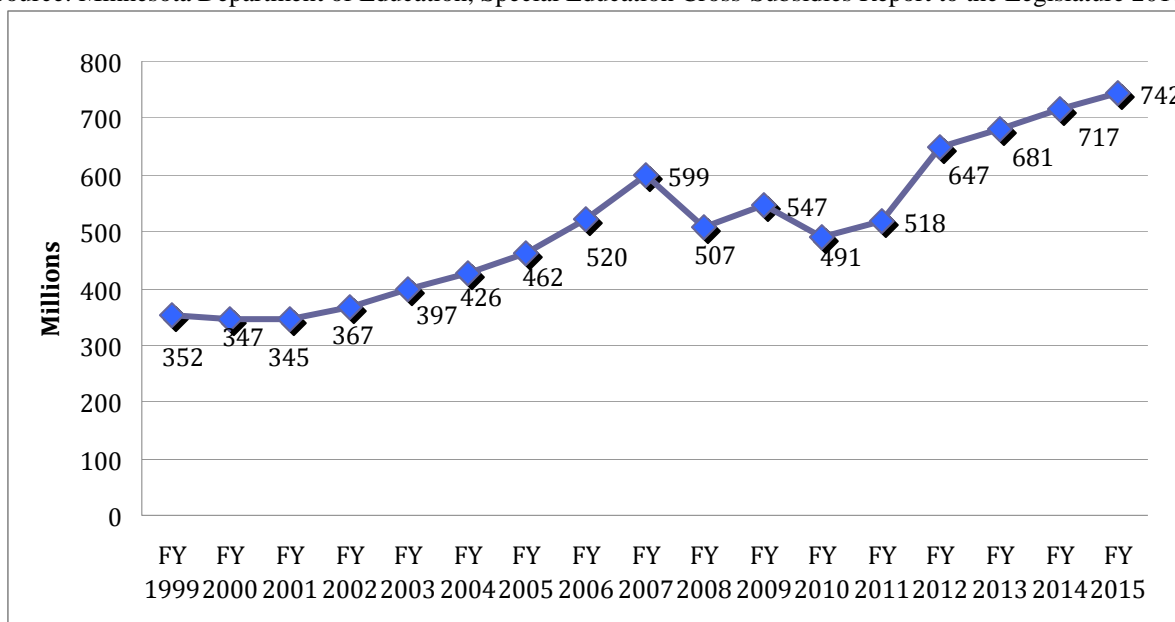
Under state law, local school districts are required to provide appropriate and necessary special education services to children with disabilities from birth to 21 years of age. Children with disabilities are defined in law to include children with a hearing impairment, visual disability, speech or language impairment, physical handicap, mental handicap, emotional/behavioral disorder, learning disability or other health impairment. Instruction and services must be based on the assessment and the individual education plan.

Furthermore, school districts are required to provide services for children who are placed outside the district where their parents reside. In addition, school districts are required to provide special education services on a shared time basis to students enrolled in nonpublic schools and charter schools.

Even with the growth factors in place, the special education cross subsidy is projected to grow significantly in the coming years. Figure 1, from the Minnesota Department of Education’s, “Special Education Cross-Subsidies Fiscal Year 2010 Report to the Legislature,” shows a projected gap of \$518 million between revenues and expenditures in FY 2011. Under current law assumptions, with the growth factors in place, that gap was projected to spike to \$647 million in FY 2012.

Figure 1: Special Education Cross Subsidies FY1999-FY2015

Source: Minnesota Department of Education, Special Education Cross-Subsidies Report to the Legislature 2010¹



¹The Minnesota Department of Education, Special Education Cross-Subsidies Report to the Legislature 2010, uses the “Adjusted Net Cross-Subsidy” which equals the gross cross-subsidy (difference between total special education expenditures and categorical special education revenues) minus the amount of general education revenue attributable to special education students for time spent receiving special education services outside of the regular classroom for 60 percent or more of the school day to calculate the cross-subsidies.

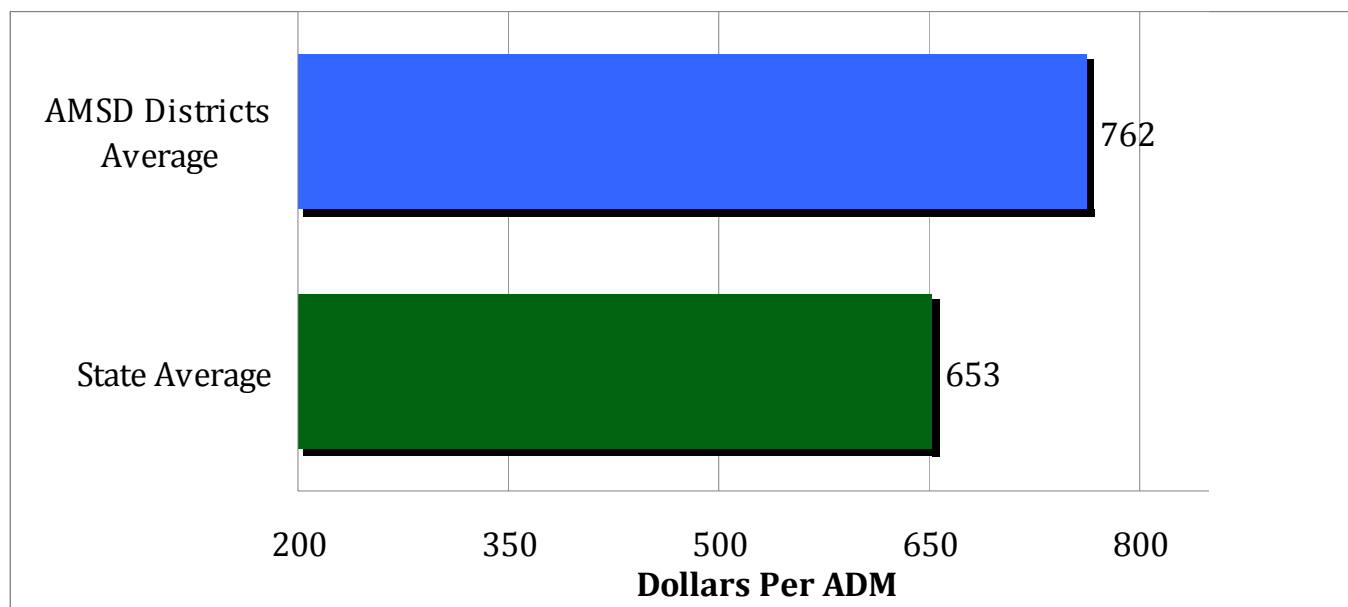
AMSD Members: Anoka-Hennepin, Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Burnsville, Columbia Heights, East Metro Integration District 6067, Eden Prairie, Edina, Elk River, Fridley, Hopkins, Intermediate District 287, Intermediate District 917 (Associate Member), Inver Grove Heights, Mahtomedi, Minneapolis, MSU Mankato Center for Engaged Leadership (Associate Member), Minnetonka, Mounds View, Intermediate School North St. Paul/Maplewood/Oakdale, Northeast Metro District 916 (Associate Member), Northwest Suburban Integration District (Associate Member), Orono, Osseo Area Schools, Richfield, Robbinsdale, Roseville, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, Shakopee, South St. Paul, Spring Lake Park, St. Anthony/New Brighton, St. Cloud, St. Louis Park, St. Paul, Stillwater, TIES (Associate Member), Wayzata, West Metro Education Program, West St. Paul, and White Bear Lake.

Metro Districts Hit Hard by Special Education Cross-Subsidy

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Figure 2: Cross Subsidies: State Average & AMSD Districts Average per ADM FY 2010

Data from Minnesota Department of Education, Special Education Cross-Subsidies FY 2010



AMSD member districts are hit particularly hard by the special education cross-subsidy. As you can see in Figure 2, the state average cross-subsidy is \$653 per pupil compared to the AMSD member average of \$762 per pupil. In other words, AMSD member districts are forced to spend \$762 per pupil in funds meant for regular classroom instruction, on state mandated special education programs.

Removing the special education growth factors would significantly increase the special education cross-subsidy as school districts would be forced to spend even more general education revenue on state mandated special education programming. State policymakers began the 2011 session pledging to make progress toward repealing unfunded mandates or to fund existing mandates. Removal of the special education growth factors goes in the exact opposite direction.

White Bear Lake Area Parent Leaders Visit Capitol

A group of parent leaders from White Bear Lake Area Schools recently visited the State Capitol to meet with their local legislators to advocate for adequate funding for public education. The parents were joined by School Board Members Lori Swanson and Cathy Storey and Superintendent Mike Lovett.

AMSD Executive Director Scott Croonquist and Senior Policy Advocate Alice Seuffert helped facilitate the visit and met with the parents during their visit. AMSD members interested in scheduling a similar visit should contact Alice at 651-999-7327 or aseuffert@amsd.org.

