

## Mark Your Calendar!

### REGIONAL MEETINGS SET

Regional meetings have been scheduled for the following dates in January. All AMSD legislators will be invited to attend the regional meetings for a presentation of the AMSD platform and an informal dialogue about educational issues.

#### January 12

Central regional meeting at 3:30 p.m. in the TIES building.

#### January 13

Eastern regional meeting at 3:30 p.m. in the TIES building.

#### January 14

Western regional meeting at 3:30 p.m. at Minnetonka High School, Small Auditorium.

### AMSD Annual Conference

Thursday, January 22 from 8 a.m.–noon at the Sheraton Four Points, Midway in St. Paul. See “From the Chair” in this month’s *Connections* for more information.

## AMSD’s Mission

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



## ISD 199’s Atheneum Gifted Magnet School is Making the Grade

All students need to be stimulated and motivated to develop their potential to the highest level of achievement. In order to accomplish this broad educational goal, students need to be provided with educational opportunities in which the pace and level of the content matches the ability and achievement level of the students.

Inver Grove Heights Community Schools saw an opportunity to better meet the needs of gifted students and responded with a successful new program. As a result of a program evaluation and the identification of a large number of highly-gifted individuals residing in and around Inver Grove Heights, the “Atheneum” magnet school was created and implemented during the 2002-2003 school year.

Due to its great success, Atheneum has since expanded from a two-classroom magnet school to a four-level school. Currently, there is one third, one fourth, and one fifth-grade classroom housed at Salem Hills Elementary School, and a sixth-grade program housed at the Inver Grove Heights Middle School. Plans also include expanding Atheneum for the 2004-2005 school year by offering gifted services to incoming seventh graders.

In addition to the Atheneum program, District 199 offers other services for gifted and talented learners. These options include: cluster classrooms, Jr. Great Books, Destination Imagination, Challenge after-school enrichment classes, Pancakes and Poetry writing enrichments, Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl, Brainboosters math enrichments, honors classes, advanced placement classes and post-secondary opportunities.

For more information about the Atheneum program for gifted students, contact:

Erin Boltik, Able Learner Coordinator  
9875 Inver Grove Trail  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076  
651.306.7750  
boltike@invergrove.k12.mn.us

*This month’s district spotlight was submitted by Pat Williams, communications coordinator for the Inver Grove Heights Community Schools.*

## From the Chair

Each year AMSD is proud to host a major policy conference to bring educators and state policymakers together to examine an important educational topic. This year’s conference promises to be one of the best yet—focusing on ways to begin closing the achievement gap between white students and students of color.

The conference will be held on Thursday, January 22 from 8 a.m.–noon at the Sheraton Four Points, Midway in St. Paul. The following topics and speakers will be featured:

- “The Changing Face of Minnesota” by Hazel Reinhardt
- “What Impacts Student Achievement?” by Dr. Samuel Myers
- “Identifying and Investing in Programs that Work” by Dr. David Heistad
- “The Importance of Measuring Individual Student Growth in Closing the Achievement Gap” by Dr. Jim Angermeyr
- “An Overview of the Governor’s Initiatives to Close the Achievement Gap” by Dr. Cheri Pierson Yecke, commissioner of education

Following the speakers, the conference will conclude with a panel discussion focused on next steps in moving Minnesota forward. Scheduled panelists include: Commissioner Cheri Pierson

## From the Chair (cont)

Yecke, Senator Steve Kelley, Representative Barb Sykora, Superintendent Toni Johns, Brooklyn Center Public Schools and Melanie Lawrence, teacher, Richfield Public Schools.

Due to space limitations, each AMSD district can send up to six people to the conference. Registration forms, which were e-mailed in December, are due no later than January 15, 2004. If you need another form, contact Darla Schmitz at 651-999-7325. We look forward to seeing you January 22.

*Keith Broady, board member for the St. Louis Park Schools, is chair of AMSD.*

## News Briefs

### Share Your Good News in Connections

Please submit good news happening in your district, or ideas for the monthly spotlight, to share with fellow AMSD members and legislators.

Send your ideas to Amy Parnell, AMSD communications consultant at [amymparnell@msn.com](mailto:amymparnell@msn.com) by the 15th of each month to be included in a future issue of *Connections*.

## Research Notes

# AMSD Districts Face Over \$61 Million Shortfall Without Legislative Action

AMSD recently surveyed its 26 member school districts regarding their projected budget outlook for the 2004-05 school year. Results of the survey indicate that AMSD districts face a combined shortfall of over \$61 million. A press conference was held January 6 at

the Capitol to share the results of the survey. "We wanted to make sure that all legislators and the public are aware of the facts and the immediate need for action in the upcoming legislative session," stressed Keith Broady, chair of AMSD.

Districts were asked to assume no changes to current

law and no changes to their current program offerings. The results of the survey are below. It should be noted that were it not for voter-approved operating referendums, the budget outlook would be considerably worse.

## BUDGET SURVEY RESULTS FOR FY 2004-05

Districts	Projected Budget Shortfall for FY 2004-05 <sup>1</sup>	Percentage of General Fund
Bloomington	\$1,800,000	2.20%
Brooklyn Center	\$500,000	3.20%
Burnsville	\$7,000,000	8.00%
Chaska	\$1,000,000	1.47%
Eden Prairie	\$1,500,000	2.00%
Edina	\$1,000,000	2.00%
Fridley	\$0	0.00%
Hopkins	\$3,200,000	4.80%
Inver Grove Heights	\$975,000	3.15%
Mahtomedi	\$500,000	2.30%
Minneapolis	\$17,000,000	3.80%
Minnetonka	\$2,200,000	3.50%
Mounds View	\$0	0.00%
North St. Paul	\$2,665,670	3.15%
Orono	\$750,000	4.00%
Richfield	\$987,272	2.70%
Robbinsdale	\$1,800,000	1.50%
Roseville	\$1,620,000	3.00%
St Anthony - New Brighton	\$320,000	2.95%
St Louis Park	\$2,136,916	5.13%
St Paul	\$12,000,000	2.80%
Shakopee	\$0	0.00%
South St Paul	\$0	0.00%
Spring Lake Park	\$1,000,000	3.50%
Wayzata	\$2,182,614	2.75%
Intermediate 287	\$861,955	1.81%
<b>AMSD Total</b>	<b>\$61,737,472</b>	<b>2.70%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Projected shortfall is based on current law and maintaining current programs.

Members of AMSD include: Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Burnsville, Chaska, Eden Prairie, Edina, Fridley, Hopkins, Intermediate District 287, Inver Grove Heights, Mahtomedi, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, Mounds View, North St. Paul/Maplewood/Oakdale, Orono, Richfield, Robbinsdale, Roseville, Shakopee, South St. Paul, Spring Lake Park, St. Anthony/New Brighton, St. Louis Park, St. Paul and Wayzata.