

AMSD

CONNECTIONS

News and Updates from the Association of Metropolitan School Districts

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AMSD Calendar

APRIL 11, 2008

Executive Committee Meeting, 7 a.m., TIES Building, St. Paul

APRIL 18, 2008

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

APRIL 25, 2008

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

MAY 2, 2008

Executive Committee Meeting, 7 a.m., TIES Building, St. Paul

MAY 9, 2008

Board of Directors Meeting, 7 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



Richfield education center set to open Summer 2008

New district 287 school to serve 350 special education and at-risk students

Intermediate District 287 will open its new South Education Center (SEC) in Richfield this summer with a variety of programs that serve the unique learning needs of 350 students from 13 metro area member school districts as well as other participating districts. Every area of the three-story, 109,000 square foot structure is carefully designed to help students get the most out of school.

Some of the students at SEC have severe challenges to learning, including autism, health impairments, and anxiety disorders. Learning areas may be adapted to the level

"We know that both our students and our member districts will benefit from a building that is truly different by design."

**Sandra Lewandowski
Superintendent**

of sensory stimulation that a student needs at various times of the day. Spaces are carpeted and have acoustical wall treatments to minimize noise and the impact of disruptions. Students in the Area Learning Center programs find it easier to succeed in smaller, supportive settings. Ten classrooms are

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From the Chair

If Minnesotans are satisfied with being average, then we can be proud of the most recent data released by the U.S. Census Bureau showing that our state's 2005-2006 per pupil spending was equal to the national average at \$9,138 per student. Minnesota has been hovering around the average mark since about 1999-2000.

However, it was not long ago when Minnesota ranked much higher in per pupil spending. In 1995-1996, Minnesota's rank was 13th. Just ten years later, the state dropped to 22nd due in large part to education funding cuts made in 2000-2001 and again in 2002-2003. These cuts started a steady decline that put us below the national average in 2004-2005.

At the same time, financial challenges for our districts continue to increase. The No Child Left Behind Act has placed ever-increasing and costly requirements upon our schools. As you will read in the research article on Page 2, our state also faces the expensive challenge of educating increasing numbers of LEP and special educa-

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Minnesota's changing demographics affect districts

Population Trends

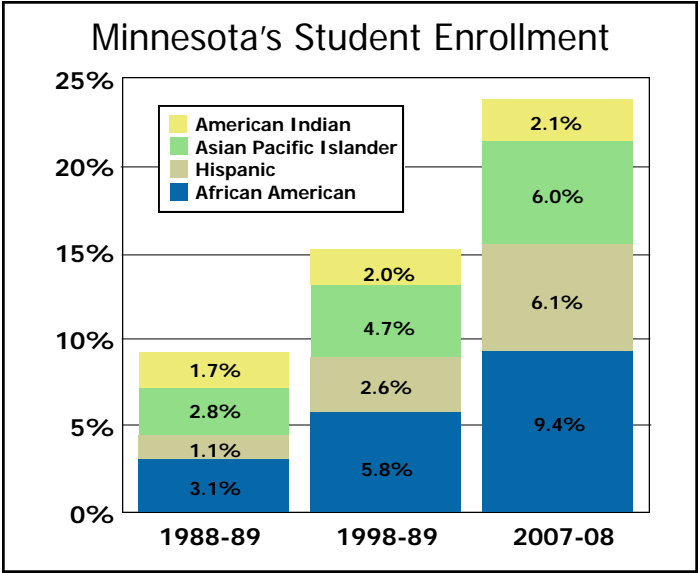
The high school class of 2008 is expected to be the largest since 1978. Projections show that K-12 enrollments have peaked and will show a moderate decline over the next few years before rising again. By contrast, the number of people over age 65 will skyrocket in the next two decades. The chart below shows the population fluctuations of the groups based on age.

Diversity

Minnesota K-12 schools are becoming more diverse. As you can see in the chart at right, Minnesota has seen significant increases in students of color in the past 20 years. In the 2007-08 school year, students of color account for 23.6 percent of overall K-12 enrollment. The percentage of Hispanic students has more than doubled in the past 10 years. The percentage of African American students has tripled in 20 years. The percentage of white students has dropped from 91.4 percent in 1988-9 and 84.8 percent in 1998-9 to 76.4 percent in the 2007-8 school year.

Demographic changes are not evenly distributed across the state. Enrollment statewide dropped by 3.5 percent while the student of color population increased by 14.3 percent.

Additionally, three demographic areas that greatly impact school district operations have experienced significant increases in the past 10 years. The number of LEP (Limited English Proficiency) students statewide more than doubled. The number of students participating in the free and reduced lunch programs went up by 16



percent and the number of special education students increased by 15 percent.

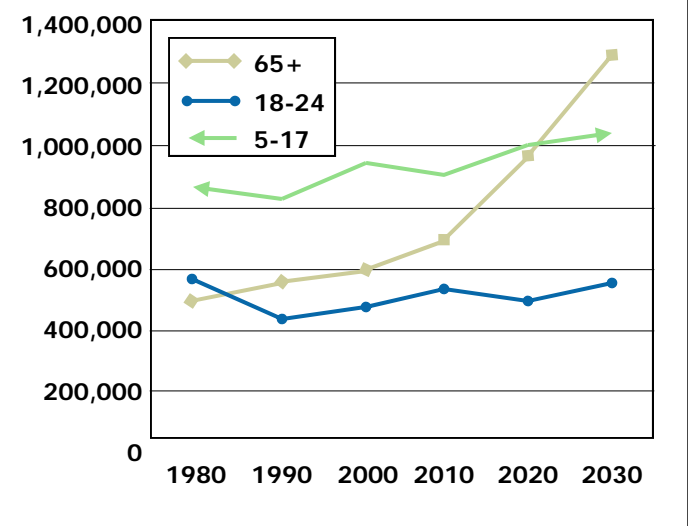
Another important change affecting school districts is the number of homes where English is not the first language. In the past 10 years, the number of different first languages has increased by 43.3 percent.

Minnesota's changing demographics will require strategic action by both state policymakers and school leaders. The Governor and legislators must provide the resources necessary to allow school districts to offer the programs and services these students need to succeed. School administrators and teachers must hold high expectations for all students and implement programs and strategies that have proven to be successful. The future economic prosperity of Minnesota is directly related to raising student achievement for all students and giving all students the opportunity to reach their full potential.

AMSD school districts can obtain specific demographic trend data for their district by sending an email to: ksampers@amsd.org

Language Spoken at Home	96-97	96-97	Change
K-12 Enrollment	840,061	827,610	-1.02%
Non-English	41,219	85,904	+108.4%
% Non-English	4.9%	10.4%	+5.5%
# Non English Languages	67	96	+43.3%

Baby Boomers start turning 65 in 2011



SEC maximizes efficiency for student learning

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linked together with a full science lab that doubles as an art room. An onsite daycare provides childcare and parenting education for pregnant and parenting students. Rooms are designed for maximum daylight.

“SEC was an excellent opportunity for us to work with our member districts and design a learning environment that meets the wide-ranging needs of our students,” noted District 287 Superintendent Sandy

Lewandowski. “In addition, SEC was a chance for us to own rather than lease space and combine several poorly configured sites for greater efficiency. We know that both our students and our member districts will benefit from a building that is truly different by design.”

Many of the high school students at SEC are learning independent living skills in addition to academics. A simulated apartment setting enables students to learn skills such as food preparation, housekeeping and personal business management. In addition, a “school store” allows them to gain retail experience.

The SEC construction cost was \$25.4 million— a square foot cost of \$235.40. District 287’s Board, comprised of two board members from each of its 13 districts, worked hard to ensure construction costs were contained. Board members are pleased that the SEC construction project is not only ahead of schedule, but under budget at this time as well.

The Architect/Engineer on the project is TSP Inc. and the Construction Manager is Parsons, both located in Minneapolis. Early in the design process the District, along

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with TSP, made a commitment to design and build with sustainable practices wherever feasible. The District chose the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification process to measure and verify their progress towards that goal. As a result of sustainable design features, SEC will be 68 percent more energy efficient than a comparable-sized building built to code, resulting in annual energy savings of \$160,000.

Intermediate District 287 is an innovative education partner to 13 Hennepin County public school districts, including Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Eden Prairie, Edina Hopkins, Minnetonka, Orono, Osseo, Richfield, Robbinsdale, St Louis Park, Wayzata, and Westonka. For more than 40 years, member districts and other education professionals have trusted District 287 to customize unique services for their most challenging students and complex business needs so that all students get the best education possible.

This month’s member spotlight was submitted by Linda Rees, Communications Liaison at Intermediate School District 287.

From the Chair: Minnesotan’s shouldn’t be satisfied being average

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tion students. Yet, Minnesota’s per pupil funding hasn’t even kept pace with inflation since 2003.

We are beginning to see the results of our “average” investments in education. The 2007 National Assessment of Education Progress tests results released this week show that our eighth grade students’ writing skills are average. (The results also showed that the achievement gap between Minnesota’s white students and their non-white peers had not changed since 1998.)

Unfortunately, the trend is continuing. Districts across the state will face major budget shortfalls for the 2008-2009 school year if the Governor and Legislature do not provide supplemental funding during the 2008 Session. Call the Governor and your local legislators and let them know that average funding is not acceptable in Minnesota. Our students deserve better.

John Malone, school board member from Orono, is chair of the Association of Metropolitan School Districts.

View AMSD’s Bill Tracker for the latest information on the legislation that affects you!

www.amsd.org

AMSD Members: Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Burnsville, Chaska, 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, Northeast Metro Intermediate School District 916 (Associate Member), North St. Paul/Maplewood/Oakdale, Orono, Richfield, Robbinsdale, Roseville, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, Shakopee, South St. Paul, Spring Lake Park, St. Anthony/New Brighton, St. Louis Park, St. Paul, Wayzata, West Metro Education Program, and West St. Paul