

AMSD Calendar

FEBRUARY 8, 2008
Executive/Legislative
Committee Meeting,
7 a.m., TIES Building,
St. Paul

FEBRUARY 12, 2008
2008 Legislative
Session Convenes,
noon,
State Capitol, St. Paul

FEBRUARY 22, 2008
Board of Directors
Meeting, 7 a.m., TIES
Building, St. Paul

MARCH 7, 2008
Executive/Legislative
Committee Meeting,
7 a.m., TIES Building,
St. Paul

MARCH 14, 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

Integration discussion



St. Paul Supt. Meria Carstarphen (far right) responds as part of a panel of superintendents at AMSD's Integration, School Choice and Student Achievement Conference on Jan. 23. The conference drew about 200 participants and covered a broad array of topics related to integration and student achievement. The superintendents panel was moderated by Minneapolis Supt. Bill Green (not shown) and also included (from left) Robbinsdale Supt. Stan Mack, North St. Paul Supt. Patty Phillips and Burnsville Supt. Ben Kanninen.

EMID's Office of Equity and Integration seeks to increase cross-cultural opportunities in districts

As part of an ongoing effort to address issues of equity in education throughout its member districts and schools, East Metro Integration District #6067 launched the Office of Equity & Integration (OEI) in Spring 2007. Through OEI, EMID is able to focus its outreach efforts in the areas of student programming, professional development, and technical assistance.

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From the Chair

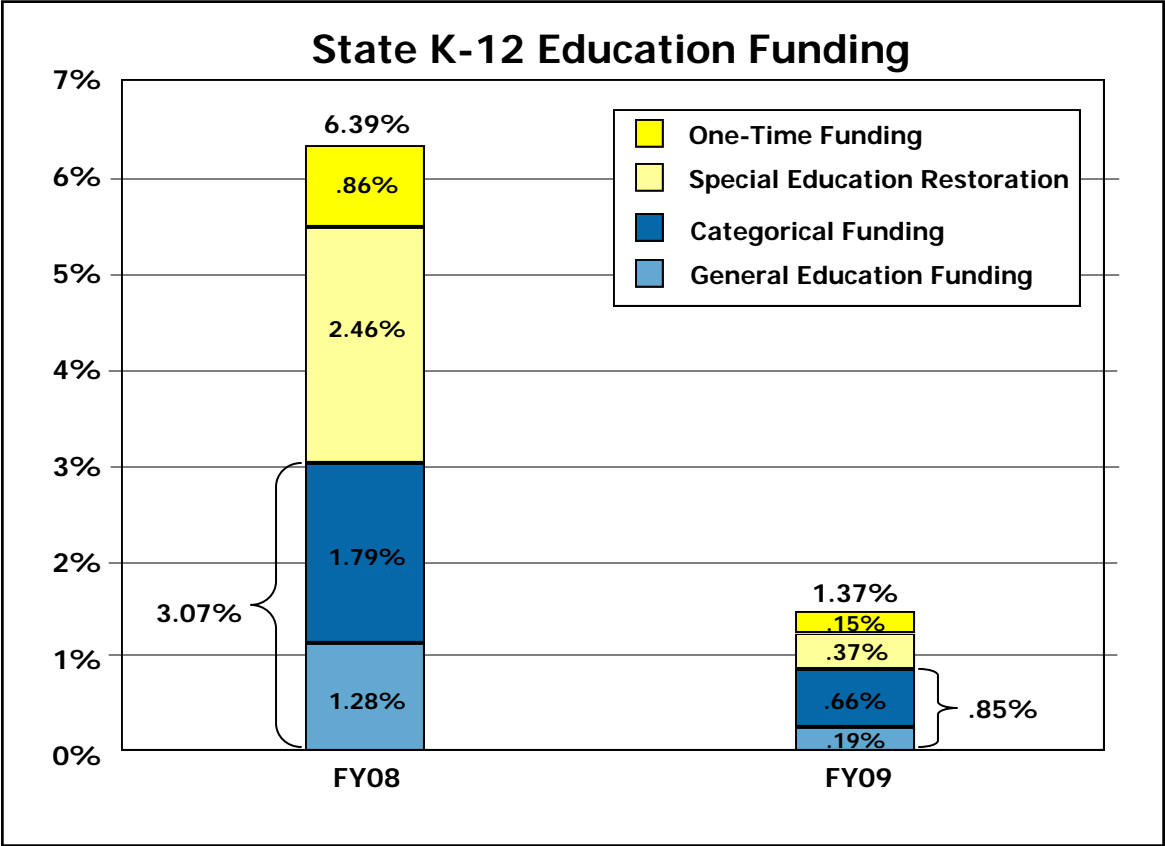
The Legislative Auditor recently released an evaluation report on school district student transportation which offers further evidence that the state is not adequately funding public education. The report found that over the past 11 years, student transportation expenditures have consistently exceeded revenues. The primary cost driver has been for costs related to mandated special education transportation services which increased 68 percent between 1997 and 2006 while revenue for these services increased by only 31 percent.

This is another example of how school districts are forced to use funds meant for classroom instruction on other expenditure areas. The most notable area in which this occurs is in special education. In the current year, Minnesota school districts will need to divert \$435 million in funding meant for regular classroom instruction on mandated special education programs. The Legislative Auditor's report shows that school districts must likewise divert classroom funding to

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Education Funding – What’s the Real Story?

Governor Pawlenty recently told reporters that the education funding bill approved during the 2007 legislative session was sufficient and that supplemental funding would likely not be approved in 2008. This was a stark departure from the prevailing opinion among state policymakers at the conclusion of the last legislative session when it was widely acknowledged that the 2007 funding bill did not adequately fund our schools in the second year of the biennium - the 2008-09 school year.



What is the real story? A review of the bill approved last session quickly removes any doubt about the necessity of supplemental funding for education in the 2008 session. The 2007 funding bill can be broken down into four major components:

One Time Funding

One-time expenditures for things such as building repairs, purchasing

computers, etc. The money is allocated for specific purposes and can only be used for one-time expenditures.

Special Education Restoration

The 2007 funding bill made significant progress toward restoring special education funding that had been cut in 2003. However, even

after the increase approved last year, the state will only be funding 88 percent of its commitment to special education.

Categorical Funding

Funding provided for specific purposes. Revenue in this area is directed toward specific programs and must be spent on the prescribed items.

General Education Funding

Basic funding mechanism for all districts. It is the main funding source for the day-to-day operations of a school district and makes up, on average, nearly 90 percent of a district’s state revenue. General education funding is by far the most im-

Funding Component	FY08	FY09
One Time Funding	.86%	.15%
Special Education Restoration	2.46%	.37%
Categorical Funding	1.79%	.66%
General Education Funding	1.28%	.19%
Total:	6.39%	1.37%

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EMID provides student programming, professional development

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“The positive response we’ve gotten so far let’s us know that OEI’s programs and services meet a real need in our member districts,” said Kathy Griebel, EMID’s director of education services. “Students and staff are energized about the opportunity to participate in meaningful learning across districts.”

By drawing on key resources such as its magnet schools, the Multicultural Resource Center, Inter-District Classroom Partnerships, and member district integration leaders, OEI provides services that seek to improve academic achievement, increase interracial student learning, and lead to organizational effectiveness.

Student Programming

Providing students with positive opportunities is at the forefront of OEI’s mission. Through a variety of unique out-of-school opportunities, OEI facilitates interracial learning experiences between urban and suburban students. These social experiences seek to empower students with their own voices as they evolve into civic-minded global citizens. Events include youth leadership conferences, after-school cultural awareness clubs, performing arts with a social justice focus, and mentor and college preparation programs. Student response has been overwhelmingly positive.

“These programs are so awesome,” one student exclaimed. “They should have them at every school so all kids can come to them.”

Another student added, “I like coming here. This program is fun and the teachers really care about us.”

In Fall 2007, students in grades 6-12 representing several of EMID’s member districts started coming together via programming that will

make the most of participants’ gifts and talents, increase achievement and intercultural competence, and foster leadership and civic engagement. In general, OEI’s secondary programs help students develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to participate in a free and democratic society. The programs focus on developing a positive cultural/racial identity and engaging in personal and civic action.

In the future, OEI plans to coordinate summer elementary programs that will bring elementary youth from different backgrounds together to build community and learn together. The summer programs will focus on positive interracial contact and respectful appreciation for the culture of self and others.

Professional Development Opportunities

OEI coordinates a range of professional development opportunities that enable individual teachers and school teams to build on their awareness of self, culture, and cross-cultural skills to increase understanding of issues in educational equity and create equitable classrooms and schools. Toward this end, OEI sponsors multidistrict workshops that focus on differentiated instructional practices designed to foster inclusive learning environments and increase student achievement. Recent workshops have included:

- *Learning and Lecture Series:* OEI has invited a series of nationally known experts to lead professional development workshops. Recently, author and educator Dr. Gail Thompson of Claremont University spent a day with EMID educators providing specific strategies to help increase the engagement and

achievement of African American and Latino students.

- *Creating Inclusive Classrooms:* OEI staff presented a workshop that outlined how culturally responsive educators modify curriculum materials and instructional strategies and methods to meet the needs of the students in their classrooms. In addition, culturally responsive educators examine their personal belief systems and how they may be impacting the way they instruct their students.
- *Culturally Proficient Leadership Training:* During training, administrators, coordinators, and teacher leaders learn how to embed cultural proficiency into current practices such as walk-throughs and professional learning communities. Leaders analyze in-house systems to identify those that support or hinder cultural proficiency efforts; then design cultural proficiency plans at both the district and site levels in an effort to increase achievement for all students.

Going forward, OEI is hoping to take advantage of teacher availability during the summer when it offers its Multicultural Curriculum Institute in July. Stacie Stanley, OEI program supervisor, says the institute’s goal is to gather teachers together in a larger context, provide them with skills that they will go back and apply in their classrooms, and then sponsor a series of opportunities through which they can discuss the impact of what they’ve learned.

OEI staff provides member district professional development catered to individual district needs in the areas of multicultural education,

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EMID: OEI hopes to expand partnerships

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curriculum, instruction, assessment, and intercultural communication. In addition, OEI is exploring partnerships with post-secondary institutions with the goal of providing additional opportunities for educators and administrators surrounding issues that arise around educational equity.

“We are excited about our community partnerships and expanded experiences that we will offer our stakeholders,” Stanley explains.

Technical Assistance

OEI staff provides technical assistance to schools or school teams wanting to participate in an intense examination of teacher practice and program effectiveness. OEI also helps schools analyze data, engage in meaningful professional inquiry, and implement multicultural education strategies and concepts.

To assist school teams in deciding the content for their professional learning based on student-focused problems they identify, OEI staff use a framework for problem solving and professional development. This framework requires data, much of

which districts already collect at the classroom, grade, and school level. OEI staff members assist school teams in using data in a systemic, coordinated, and integrated way. Teams engage in dialogue about how their school supports equity, look at how factors such as curriculum, school climate, and instruction affect student achievement, and use that information to make decisions about how to teach in the future.

EMID is a collaborative of 10 area school districts that have united to address the educational issues resulting from dramatic demographic changes and inequities. Through EMID, nine suburban districts partner with St. Paul Public Schools to provide culturally responsive learning opportunities that enable all students to participate fully in the social, economic, and democratic lives of their communities. For more information about EMID and the Office of Equity and Integration, visit www.emid6067.net.

This month's member feature was submitted by Carrie Smith, Communications Director at East Metro Integration District #6067.

Research: Lawmakers must recognize '08-'09 budget deficiencies

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portant funding stream for our schools.

Looking at the specific increases in each of these individual areas, it is clear to see why 36 metro areas school districts are facing a combined \$75 million funding gap if they simply want to continue existing educational programs next year.

When you remove the one-time funding and the funding to restore previous cuts in special education, you can see that the new, ongoing funding increase provided to schools was actually about 3 percent for the current school year and less than 1 percent for next year.

Rapidly rising energy and health care costs are greatly outpacing the funding increase approved by the Governor and Legislature last session. Absent a supplemental funding package, school districts across the state will be forced to implement significant budget cuts next fall. School boards are already grappling with possible budget cuts including eliminating extra curricular activities, reducing program offerings, charging higher fees, reducing transportation service and laying off teachers which will result in higher class sizes.

This is clearly not the direction we should be moving in Minnesota. Parents and students are counting on the Governor and Legislature to properly fund their schools and begin to modernize the education funding system.

From the Chair: Eliminating cross-subsidies

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student transportation services due to the failure of the state to adequately fund student transportation.

With the 2008 legislative session about to begin, concerned citizens need to contact the governor and their local legislators to make them aware of the desperate need to provide supplemental funding for public education. Your voice can make a difference!

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

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