

October 2009  
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## AMSD Calendar

**October 30, 2009**  
**Executive/Legislative Committee Meeting,**  
7:30 a.m., TIES Building,  
St. Paul

**November 6, 2009**  
**Board of Directors Meeting,** 7 a.m., TIES Building, St. Paul

**November 10, 2009**  
**AMSD Advocacy Workshop**  
5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Ties Building, St. Paul  
Details at [www.amsd.org](http://www.amsd.org)!

**November 20, 2009**  
**Executive/Legislative Committee Meeting,**  
7:30 a.m., TIES Building,  
St. Paul

**November 26, 2009**  
**Happy Thanksgiving!**

## AMSD's Mission

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



**Association of  
Metropolitan School Districts**

## Friend of Public Education Award Winners

AMSD was pleased to present 2009 Friend of Public Education Awards to Representatives Mindy Greiling and Kim Norton at its October board meeting. AMSD Chair Jon Tynjala presented the awards and thanked the recipients for their contributions in support of public education. Both Greiling and Norton have been tireless in their efforts to pass the New Minnesota Miracle legislation and providing more local control for school boards. This is the second time Representative Greiling has been presented this award, making her the first and only legislator to receive it twice. Congratulations to Representatives Greiling and Norton.



## From the Chair:

**D**uring the last AMSD Board of Directors meeting we honored Rep. Mindy Greiling and Rep. Kim Norton with *Friend of Public Education Awards*. This followed a similar recognition of Rep. Jim Davnie and Sen. Sandy Rummel at the August board meeting.

It is important that we take the time to recognize state policymakers who make significant contributions to public education and show the courage of their convictions during the legislative session. Virtually every candidate for state office claims to be a strong supporter of public education when they are campaigning. However, far too many fail to follow through on their campaign promises once they are in office and our public schools have suffered as a result.

The 2010 election process is already in full swing with nearly two dozen gubernatorial candidates. In addition, many state legislative campaigns are taking shape throughout the state. It is absolutely imperative that those of us who care about the future of public education get engaged in the electoral process. Whatever your political affiliation, do what you can to educate political candidates about important educational issues. Attend candidate forums and ask them if they support the New Minnesota Miracle. Find out what each candidate's vision is for public education. Most importantly, support those candidates whom you are confident will follow through on their promises to invest in our schools.

*Jon Tynjala, school board member from Mounds View, is chair of AMSD.*

# Personal Learning Plans: Mounds View Customizes the School Experience

Parents are increasingly expecting schools to personalize the educational experience for their students. In response, one district is turning to technology to create personal learning plans (PLPs) for every secondary school student.

After months of planning, this fall Mounds View Public Schools provided every middle and high school student in the district with an online personal learning plan. PLPs enable teachers to track student progress and assemble meaningful data to form and monitor achievement goals. Soon, Mounds View won't be among only a few districts offering such plans. Several other metro districts are working towards providing similar services for their students.

“Schools often hear from parents how well we serve at-risk students and our high-performing groups. But many parents ask us, ‘What about the majority in the middle?’ These personal learning plans are specifically designed to help those kids in the middle,” says Superintendent Dan Hoverman. “PLPs will make sure all students — not simply our struggling students or our highest performers — are receiving the attention and guidance that they need to make decisions regarding their secondary program and post-secondary options.”

Activities (click to expand/collapse)										
Activity	When Occur	Amount of Time	Location	Participants	Created	Last Modified	Created By	User Type	Completion Date	Comments
<a href="#">After-school math tutoring</a>	Every Thursday, 3pm	1 hour	Math resource room	Student Mr. Favre	3/17/2009	4/28/2009			5/29/2009	
<a href="#">Math Homework Checkins</a>	Every Friday at 1pm		Math resource room	Student Mr. Favre	3/17/2009				5/29/2009	
<a href="#">Before school math tutoring</a>	Every Tuesday, 7am	1 hour	Math resource room		4/13/2009	4/13/2009			4/17/2009	
<a href="#">Test activity</a>					4/16/2009				4/30/2009	
<a href="#">STAND-Students Taking a New Direction</a>	During School Day	20 minutes	Gymnasium	Student	4/28/2009		Dave Campen	Teacher	5/22/2009	

Measurement Plans (click to expand/collapse)										
Measurement Plan	Measures	Staff	Frequency	Measurable Goal	Created	Last Modified	Created By	User Type	Status	Benchmarks
<a href="#">Mathematics common assessments</a>	Math Info tests	Mr. Favre	Weekly	Student will achieve 80% correct on 4 consecutive weekly assessments	3/17/2009				In Progress	<a href="#">Add/View Performance Benchmarks</a>
<a href="#">Test</a>					4/16/2009				In Progress	<a href="#">Add/View Performance Benchmarks</a>

**This example of a Mounds View Public Schools online personal learning plan illustrates the activities and measurement plans offered to a student in order to meet specific, measurable goals.**

## How do they work?

Feedback from parent preview groups helped create a system that allows parents, students and their deans to log into a PLP to customize their school experience based on their achievement and their goals. Drawing from academic data and personal connections with a student, a Dean can create a unique goal for a student. In turn, the student and parents can view the PLP online by entering a parent portal called SchoolView, clicking on that goal and viewing a list of recommended actions to meet the goal — from course suggestions, to tutoring opportunities to practice tests to increased homework check-ins. Families also can view the student’s progress made along the way, receiving performance benchmark data throughout the year.

Mounds View’s middle and high school families also will be able to use the online Naviance Career Planning System to provide guidance in post-secondary planning. The system, secured with a free two-year trial through an Office of Higher Education grant, offers web-based interest, ability and personality assessments for students with integrated career descriptions and planning activities. Together, the PLPs and Naviance System are helping students meet District and state graduation standards and will support individual student planning for post-secondary success.

To create the PLPs and career planning system, Mounds View worked closely with TIES to create a system uniquely serving the district’s student population needs.

*This month’s member spotlight was submitted by Colin Sokolowski, Public Relations Director for Mounds View Public Schools.*

# Public Recognizes That Schools Have Been Under-Funded

Each year Phi Delta Kappan teams up with the Gallup polling organization to survey American opinions on public schools. The survey covers a number of current topics as well as gathering information on baseline questions that have been asked for years. One recurring question provides some interesting insight into how respondents feel about the challenges facing public schools.

Response	2009	2008	2007
Lack of funding	32%	17%	22%
Lack of Discipline	10%	10%	10%
Overcrowding	9%	6%	7%
Drugs	5%	4%	4%
Fighting	4%	6%	6%
Lack of Standards	3%	3%	4%
Lack of Good Teachers	3%	4%	5%

People were asked the following open ended question: “What do you think are the biggest problems that the public schools of your community must deal with?” Almost one third of those surveyed said the biggest problem facing public schools is a lack of funding. This was up significantly from previous surveys. The complete results are in the table on the left.

Respondents were also asked to grade schools A, B, C, D or Fail. More than half of the people graded the public schools in their community an A or B. This is the highest percentage since 2001. Parents continue to give the school their oldest child attends high marks with 74 percent offering a grade of A or B. However, when asked to grade public schools nationally the percentage of A’s & B’s is significantly lower. The chart to the right compares these three questions and the percent of respondents who offered a grade of A or B.

Question – What grade would you give:	2009	2008	2007
Public schools in your community?	51%	46%	45%
The school your oldest child attends?	74%	72%	67%
The public schools, nationally?	19%	22%	16%

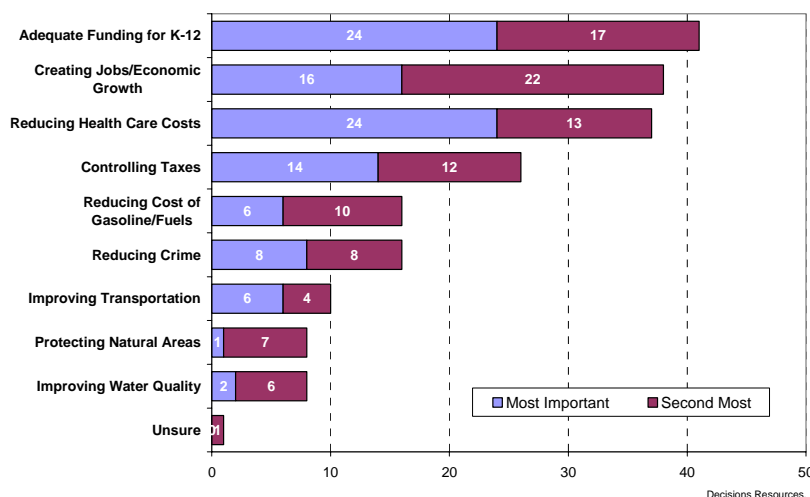
These results are consistent with the results of a survey conducted by Decision Resources last May and shared with the AMSD Board of Directors. In this survey people were asked to identify the top 2 most important state issues. Once again the issue of adequate funding for K-12 education came out on top. More than 40% said it was either the number 1 or number 2 most important issue facing our state. See the chart at left for complete results.

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It appears that the general public, both nationally and locally, understand that our public schools have not received adequate funding. They also understand that for Minnesota to remain competitive both nationally and internationally, it is critical that our state policymakers find a way to provide our schools the resources they need to help our students reach their full potential.

## Important State Issues

2009 Perceptions of Education in the Metropolitan Area



**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, 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. Cloud, St. Louis Park, St. Paul, Stillwater, TIES (Associate Member), Wayzata, West Metro Education Program, West St. Paul, and White Bear Lake.