

Association of Metropolitan School Districts 2008 Legislative Funding Priorities

The Association of Metropolitan School Districts Board of Directors urges the governor and legislators to provide supplemental funding for public education during the 2008 legislative session. The funding bill approved during the 2007 session included some positive steps toward restoring some of the cuts made in previous years. However, the state is still falling short of funding its own special education formula and the increase allotted for the basic education formula fails to keep pace with inflation.

In addition, the state is not providing the resources necessary to allow school districts to maintain safe and secure school facilities and invest in technology that will enhance student achievement.

It is critical that all Minnesota students have the opportunity to achieve state and federal performance expectations in a learning environment that is safe and secure. Therefore, the AMSD Board supports a state tax increase, if necessary, to provide the needed resources to ensure that the following proposals can be implemented.

- Fully fund the state special education formula.
- Increase the basic formula by an additional two percent.
- Increase access to the Alternative Levy and Bonding Program and increase Deferred Maintenance Revenue to \$100 per pupil to allow school districts to properly maintain and operate safe buildings.
- Increase lease levy authority for school districts and intermediate school districts so they can meet their facilities needs in a strategic, cost effective manner.
- Provide a reliable and sustainable funding stream for technology infrastructure, software and staff development.