

# AMSD Position on the Integration Revenue Program

The Association of Metropolitan School Districts believes the State should form a task force, comprised of state policymakers and education stakeholders, to conduct a comprehensive review of the state's desegregation rule and the integration revenue program. The task force report should include an analysis of Minnesota's changing demographics, the value of integrated learning environments and an evaluation of the impact existing school choice laws have on desegregation efforts. The task force should forward its report, including recommended rule and law changes, to the Commissioner of Education and the House and Senate Education Policy and Finance committees by December 1, 2010.

## AMSD BELIEVES

- Integrated and equitable learning environments enhance achievement and opportunities for **ALL** students
- Minnesota's demographics have changed dramatically since the desegregation rule was adopted with significantly higher percentages of students of color, new immigrants and English language learners
- Teacher effectiveness is increased with cultural proficiency training
- The Integration Revenue Program provides critical resources that allow school districts to provide staff training, magnet schools and other inter-district collaborative interactions that enhance student achievement

## BACKGROUND

In 1972, in *Booker v. Special School District 1*, the U.S. District Court found that the Minneapolis schools were illegally segregated. The court ordered that no Minneapolis public school could have more than 35% minority students. In 1973, the Minnesota State Board of Education adopted a racial balance requirement known as the 15 percent rule. This rule prohibited a school from having a minority enrollment more than 15 percent higher than the district-wide average of minority students for the grades served by those schools.

Beginning in the 1980's, the state provided funding for the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth school districts to assist with their integration efforts. In 1997, the legislature

created the current Integration Revenue Program which made funding available to additional school districts to address integration issues. In 1999, the Minnesota Department of Education replaced the 15 percent rule with a new desegregation rule outlining eligibility criteria and requirements associated with a new Integration Revenue Program.

In November of 2005, the Office of the Legislative Auditor released an evaluation report of the Integration Revenue Program. The report made several recommendations including clarifying the program's purpose.

Minnesota's demographics have changed dramatically since the earlier court decisions and since the desegregation rule was adopted. Since 1988, the percentage of minority students enrolled in Minnesota's public schools has nearly tripled from 8.6 percent to 23.6 percent of total enrollment. In light of these dramatic changes, it is critical that the state conduct a thorough review of the desegregation rule to determine what changes are necessary to maintain Minnesota's commitment to providing integrated and equitable learning environments.



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