Association of Metropolitan School Districts

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2025 Conference Committee Priorities

AMSD recognizes that the state faces a budget challenge. At the same time, the State Constitution provides clear direction to state policymakers: "… it is the duty of the Legislature to establish a general and uniform system of public schools. The Legislature shall make such provisions by taxation or otherwise as will secure a thorough and efficient system of public schools throughout the state." AMSD urges the Governor and Legislators to fulfill this duty and address the priorities listed below.

Budget Target

The Governor, Senate, and House have proposed significantly different budget targets for education:

- Governor: Proposes $240 million in education cuts in the 26-27 biennium and $445 million in cuts in the 28-29 biennium.
- Senate: Holds education funding flat in 26-27 but cuts funding by $687 million in the 28-29 biennium.
- House: Provides a $40 million increase in the 26-27 biennium and holds funding flat in the 28-29 biennium.

AMSD supports the education budget target proposed by the House at a minimum. Even under the House budget target, most school districts will face significant budget shortfalls and staff layoffs.

Formula Link to Inflation

AMSD is strongly opposed to the Senate proposal to de-link the formula from inflation for the next biennium.

Compensatory Hold-Harmless

The Governor and Senate propose hold harmless funding for compensatory revenue and modifying the compensatory formula to include the application for educational benefits form, in addition to direct certification, to determine eligibility for compensatory services. AMSD supports restoring the educational benefits form and urges the Governor and Legislators to hold **all** school districts harmless from the change adopted in the 2023 session to compute compensatory revenue strictly on direct certification.

Approved by the AMSD Board of Directors May 2, 2025

Local Optional Revenue
AMSD supports the House proposal to change the name of Local Optional Revenue to Basic Supplemental Revenue and create a new tier of state aid with a per pupil allowance of $40.34 for FY26, $40.45 for FY27, $43.72 for FY28, and $43.82 for FY29 and later.

READ Act Funding
AMSD supports the House proposal to provide $40 million in one-time aid for Read Act implementation. The bill would provide the greater of $2,000 or $45.70 times the number of students served in the 2024 fall enrollment count, for costs related to implementation of the Read Act.

School Board Renewal of Capital Projects Referendum
AMSD supports the Senate proposal to allow locally elected school boards to renew an existing capital projects referendum one time at the same rate, following a public hearing.

LTFMR For Roof Replacement
AMSD supports the House and Senate proposals to make approved roof repair costs eligible for long-term facilities maintenance (LTFM) revenue for all school districts.

Fund Transfer Flexibility
AMSD supports the House and Senate proposals to provide additional flexibility in the food service fund and with Student Support Personnel aid. The Senate proposal related to the food service fund is preferred as it includes costs related to remodeling or reconfiguration, **facility expansion**, or costs of plumbing, electrical, air handling, ventilation or other building utility work essential for food service activities or to remediate certain health and safety hazards.

Local Control and Managerial Rights

AMSD urges Legislators and the Governor to refrain from enacting any unfunded mandates and to honor the historical role of school boards and their administrators to govern and manage their school districts. Specifically, the Governor and Legislators should address the following:

Summer Unemployment Insurance
The Governor's proposal would provide funding to cover unemployment insurance costs for FY26. The Senate provides funding to cover FY26 and FY27. The House provides funding for FY26 and repeals summer term unemployment effective Sept. 9, 2028.

AMSD urges state policymakers to fully fund or repeal summer term unemployment insurance for non-licensed staff. Without state funding, this mandate would have to be paid for with general fund revenue needed for classroom instruction.

Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST)
AMSD supports changes to the Earned Sick and Safe Time law proposed in HF2025/SF2300 to reduce administrative burdens and ensure adequate staffing:

- Allows an employer to advance earned sick and safe time hours based on the number of hours the employee is anticipated to work for the remaining portion of an accrual year.
- An employer providing paid time off or other paid leave more than the minimum amount required under the Safe and Sick Time law may limit the minimum standards and requirements to no less than the available leave or 160 hours in a 12-month period, whichever is less. An employer may not require an employee to use ESST leave prior to other available paid leave.

Paid Leave
AMSD supports setting the employer contribution at 50 percent. Current law requires the employer contribution to be at least 50 percent but leaves it open to the bargaining process.

Establishing an employer contribution rate of 50 percent in law will provide stability, reduce administrative burden, and ensure employee groups are treated equally. In addition, under current law school districts will be required to use general fund revenue to pay the employer share.

K-3 Discipline
AMSD supports allowing limited removal time from class within a non-exclusionary framework to enable schools to plan effective reentry supports and interventions to ensure safe classrooms.

School Calendar
AMSD supports HF1124/SF1336 to allow school boards to begin the school year prior to Labor Day in the 26-27 and 27-28 school years when Labor Day will fall very late. Locally elected school boards should have the ability to adopt the school calendar that best meets the needs of their students, families, and community.

Links to Omnibus Education Bills

- **House Omnibus Education Finance Bill**
- **House Omnibus Education Policy Bill**
- **Senate Omnibus Education Finance Bill**
- **Senate Omnibus Education Policy Bill**