Association of Metropolitan School Districts

EFFECTIVE LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

A guide to establishing relationships with legislators to advocate for public education

Snapshot of 2026 Session

Second year of biennium

Budget set. Convenes Feb. 17, 2026.

House

Tied 67-67.

Committee co-chairs.

Senate

34-33 DFL majority.

2026 Election Year

Legislature

All 201 House and Senate seats.

State Constitutional Offices

Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State and Auditor.

Congress

Senate seat and all House seats.

Building Relationships with Legislators

Strive for ongoing, regular communication.

Be a familiar voice and face to them.

Don’t wait.

Reach out to legislators to discuss key district priorities and the state of your schools.

Communication methods.

Ask which methods of communication they prefer: texting, e-mails, phone calls, meetings in person, school visits, etc.

Keep in Mind

Know legislators background/expertise.

Don’t assume they are education policy or finance experts. What committees do they serve on? Are they parents? What is their experience outside of the Legislature?

Know the impact to your district.

Be able to let legislators know how proposals impact your district.

Provide real examples.

Use real district examples: “Our district’s cross-subsidy is…”

Maintaining Relationships with Legislators

Inventory your relationships.

By knowing your legislators' committees and issues of interest, you can identify who on your team can help make solid connections.

Keep them informed.

Give them a "heads up" on positive and negative news before it is released publicly. This will help them advocate for you.

Social media.

Keep social media positive. Always.

Communicating with Legislators

Share the AMSD platform and district priorities.

Know our data and share your district's information to back it up.

Be consistent.

Develop consistent messaging themes for leadership, school board members, principals and others to deliver to legislators.

Messaging.

Repeat priorities and needs in different delivery forms (meetings, school tours, e-mails, handouts) and from different stakeholders.

Communicating with Legislators

Prioritize.

Be concise; don't oversaturate them with too much information.

Be proactive.

If your legislator introduces a bill on your behalf or one your district supports, offer testimony and handouts to support the bill.

Timely information.

Make sure information you provide to them is relevant and timely.

Communicating with Legislators

Share your news.

Add legislators to your newsletter and press release distribution.

Check in.

Ask your legislators if they are interested in establishing a regular check-in time.

Be Positive.

Keep interactions positive and clear.

Communicating with Legislators

Show, don't just tell.

Invite legislators into your schools and classrooms to observe and participate in various activities or unique programs.

Participate.

Each year, AMSD member districts meet for a day at the Capitol.

DAY at the **CAPITOL** **April 13**

https://www.amsd.org/

Say THANK YOU

Whether on social media, your district newsletter, a public acknowledgement or a personal note, legislators appreciate recognition of the impact of their work.

https://www.amsd.org/

Testifying at the Legislature

Practice.

Be clear and concise, try to avoid repeating previous testimony.

Know your position.

State whether you are testifying in support of, or in opposition to, legislation.

Be Specific.

Provide local examples of impacts to your district.

Testifying at the Legislature

Time is not on your side.

Plan on very brief testimony – often limited to 2 minutes.

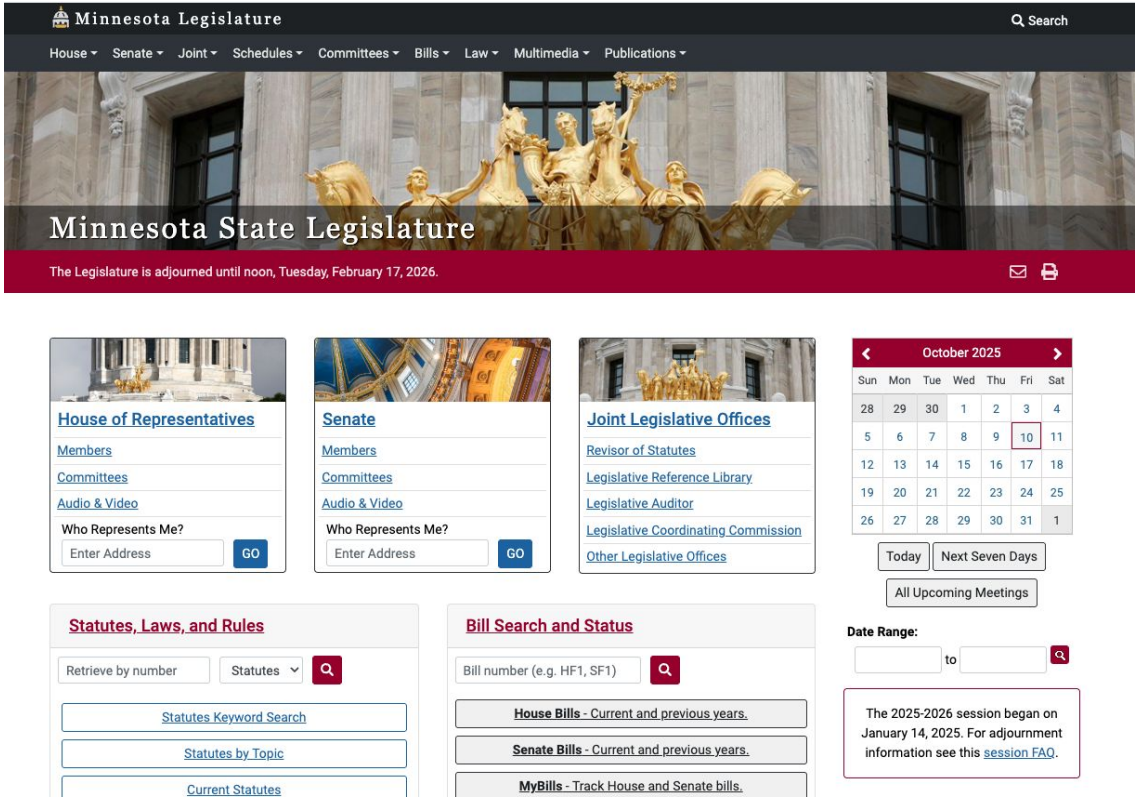
Decorum.

Start your testimony when directed by the chair by introducing yourself, and “Thank you, Madame/Mr. Chair.”

Don’t guess.

It is better to say you will research the issue and provide the information to the committee as soon as possible.

MN Legislature Website: https://www.leg.mn.gov/



MN Legislature Website:

https://www.leg.mn.gov/

House/Senate.

Member information, committee membership, bill introductions, non partisan fiscal and research.

Joint/Revisor.

Statutes (K-12 120-129C), LCC, GIS, Pension Commission.

Schedules.

Committee and floor calendars, information on bills scheduled.

MN Legislature Website

Bills.

Information on bills, summaries, and status. Search by authors, topics, committees, conference committees, signed into law.

Media.

Watch livestreams or access archived video/audio of hearings or floor sessions.

Publications.

Reports, research, House Session Daily, historical information.

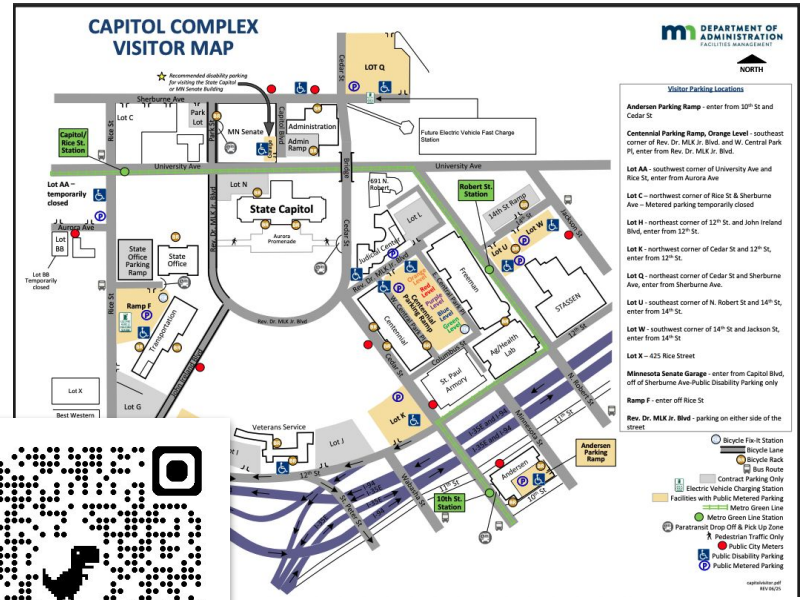
The Minnesota Capitol

Getting to the Capitol

https://www.leg.mn.gov/leg/faq/faq?subject=14

Map of the Capitol

https://mn.gov/admin/assets/capitolvisitor.13_tcm36-206004.pdf



AMSD Website: www.amsd.org

We have the latest Session information on our web page to help helps keep you informed about the happenings at the Capitol.

- **2026 Legislature:** www.amsd.org/legislature
- **Bill Tracker:** www.amsd.org/billtracker
- **Find your legislator by school district and more:** www.amsd.org/advocacy

AMSD Resources

Platform and research.

Our website contains our platform and the current AMSD positions on key legislative issues affecting public education.

Keep in touch with AMSD.

AMSD monthly Connections newsletter.

X / Twitter: www.x.com/amsdmn
Facebook: www.facebook.com/AMSDMN

LINK: View the AMSD Social Media Guide

THANK YOU

https://www.amsd.org/