Association of Metropolitan School Districts

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AMSD 2026 Legislative Priorities

Rising operational costs, reduced special education transportation reimbursement, disruptions in compensatory revenue, and underfunded new state programs and requirements have created significant fiscal pressure for school districts. As a result, AMSD member districts face a combined budget shortfall of more than **$223 million for the 2026-27 school year**.

Without action, these shortfalls will lead to staff layoffs and cuts to programs and services that directly support students. AMSD urges the Governor and Legislature to adopt the following priorities to enhance school safety, help stabilize school district budgets, and protect educational opportunities for students:

- **Extend compensatory hold-harmless funding** for the 2026-27 school year;
- **Increase the Safe Schools levy** to $100 per pupil for school districts and $35 per pupil for intermediate and cooperative districts;
- **Repeal the contingent $250 million reduction** in special education cross-subsidy aid scheduled for the 2028-29 biennium;
- **Approve a ballot question to amend the State Constitution** to allow larger and more stable distributions from the Permanent School Fund;
- **Provide school boards greater flexibility** to transfer non-federal fund surpluses among operating accounts;
- **Establish a task force to recommend reforms to Minnesota's assessment system**, focused on a more balanced, student-centered system to ensure meaningful learning and accurate educational accountability;
- **Strengthen the PSEO program** to ensure financial sustainability, academic rigor, student support, and strong preparation for postsecondary success;
- **Permit limited removal time within non-exclusionary discipline** to support effective reentry planning and maintain safe classrooms; and
- **Strengthen secure gun storage requirements.**

In addition, AMSD urges the Governor and Legislature to **avoid enacting new mandates during the 2026 session**, given the significant budget challenges facing school districts.

*Approved by the AMSD Board of Directors April 10, 2026.