# Association of Metropolitan School Districts

2 Pine Tree Drive, Suite 380, Arden Hills, MN 55112 • 612-430-7750 • www.amsd.org

**Legislative Committee Meeting**
Friday, May 15, 2026, 7:30 – 9 a.m.
Hybrid meeting – In person and via Zoom

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Members Present:** | Sally Browne | Colin Cox | Jim DeMay |
| | Marcy Doud | Sue Linser (alt.) | Wendy Lundsgaard |
| | Julie Nielsen | Cassandra Palmer | Kent Pekel |
| | Alison Sherman | Michael Thomas | |
| **Staff Present:** | Scott Croonquist | Kimberly Jansa | Troy Melhus |
| **Guests Present:** | Kris Amundson | Josh Downham | Jim Grathwol |
| | Lori Grivna | | |

## I. Approval of Minutes of April 24 Meeting

AMSD Chair Alison Sherman called the meeting to order at 7:36 a.m. Sherman asked members to review the minutes from the April 24 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved.

## II. Discussion of AMSD Conference

Executive Director Croonquist reminded committee members that Dr. Michael Thomas previously recommended Dr. Tommy Watson as a potential keynote speaker at our fall conference scheduled for November 10. Dr. Watson's focus is resiliency. Croonquist reported that he connected with Dr. Watson, and with the help of Dr. Thomas, have secured him as this year's conference keynote speaker. More details regarding the conference will be discussed in future meetings.

## III. Executive Director's Report

Chair Sherman invited Executive Director Scott Croonquist to share his report. Croonquist began by sharing that the Governor and legislative leaders have reached a global budget agreement that includes just $31 million for E-12 education. The funding is directed to a scaled down hold harmless for compensatory revenue and grants to implement anonymous threat reporting systems. Croonquist noted that it was a disappointing, but not unexpected, outcome given the lack of focus on education during the session by state policymakers.

Croonquist reported that the Permanent School Fund Constitutional Amendment bill is moving forward, with the conference committee report being approved. It now must be adopted by the House and Senate. Croonquist noted that constitutional amendments do not require approval from the Governor. Croonquist also noted that for the amendment to be approved, the ballot question much receive a majority of all votes cast in the election. Consequently, if a voter does not vote on the question, it is effectively a "no" vote. Croonquist noted that districts with referendum question in November will need to take into account the constitutional amendment as they develop their marketing plan. He shared that we will be sharing a one-page information sheet on this topic soon.

Croonquist shared that legislators have until midnight on Sunday to finalize agreements on the remaining issues and pass bills. The last day of the session will be dedicated to speeches from retiring legislators. Croonquist shared that Sen. Carla Nelson just announced her retirement, bringing the total number of retirements to 25. There are also several House members seeking Senate seats as well as legislators running for another office.

Supt. Marcy Doud gave a brief update on the Blue Ribbon Commission on Special Education and reported that several subcommittees are meeting to develop recommendations on various topics. Those recommendations are due May 22, and the next meeting — which will be public — is scheduled for June 4. Supt. Kent Pekel shared an overview on the Compensatory Revenue Task Force. He noted that the task force has agreed that poverty should be the primary criteria to identify students eligible for compensatory services and task force members have identified direct certification, the application for educational benefits form, and possibly income tax data as the core mechanisms to determine poverty level. Pekel shared that the task force will be meeting over the summer as their work needs to be completed in October.

Croonquist shared the draft Federal Scholarship Tax Credit information brief with committee members and asked for feedback. He noted this will also be shared at the next Board of Directors meeting.

Croonquist and Chair Sherman recently attended an update on MSBA's MN Kids Rise initiative. They both shared that the update was mostly informational, with a major focus on rollout at the State Fair. MSBA is also identifying Minnesota high school graduates to highlight in the campaign and is open to suggestions.

Croonquist invited committee members to review a draft of the annual membership survey. He shared that the survey seeks input on AMSD's communications, events and advocacy work. The committee members shared some feedback on the survey. Croonquist noted that this will be sent out soon and will also be available in the May 29 Board of Directors' meeting materials.

## IV. Adjournment

There being no other business, Chair Sherman reminded members of upcoming meetings and adjourned the meeting at 8:34 a.m.