



Association of Metropolitan School Districts

Board of Directors Meeting
Friday, December 4, 2020, 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Conducted via Zoom

I. Welcome

Chair Curtis Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m. and welcomed everyone.

II. Routine Business

A. Approval of Minutes of November 6 Meeting

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the November 6 meeting. The motion was approved.

III. Guest Speakers

Chair Johnson invited School Board Member Andrea Cuene to introduce Senator-Elect Ann Johnson Stewart and School Board Member Bob Erickson to introduce Senator-Elect Zach Duckworth. Senators-Elect Johnson Stewart and Duckworth shared an overview of their background and their priorities as they join the Legislature. Both are strong advocates for public education and asked AMSD members to reach out to them with feedback, concerns and potential solutions. The Senators-Elect answered some questions from AMSD board members. Chair Johnson and Executive Director Croonquist thanked the Senators-Elect for their willingness to join the meeting.

IV. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Scott Croonquist reported that the State Budget Forecast was released this week and the news was better than expected. State leaders now project a \$641 million surplus for the current biennium. There is still a projected deficit of \$1.27 billion for the 2022-23 biennium, but that is significantly lower than earlier projections. There are some difficult decisions facing the Legislature as the next session is about to begin. Croonquist also noted that state expenditures came in lower than projected. The lower education spending is driven by the decline in student enrollment related to COVID-19. Croonquist shared that the next special session is tentatively scheduled for December 18. The agenda for this special session includes consideration of a pandemic relief package. Croonquist expressed hope that E-12 education could be addressed, but said it is more likely that the focus will be on small business relief. Croonquist shared that the current deadline for free or reduced applications is December 15, but the Minnesota Department of Education is supportive of a measure to extend that deadline to January 4. AMSD is working to see if an extension to that deadline could be approved in the special session.

Croonquist reminded members that the Legislative Session Preview will take place on January 8 via Zoom. Governor Walz has been invited to attend. Commissioner Mary Cathryn Ricker will attend, along with Rep. Hortman, Rep. Kresha, Sen. Gazelka and Sen. Kent, who will participate in a legislative leadership panel. Croonquist shared that Superintendents Christine Tucci Osorio, Kim Hiel and Mike

Redmond will present the AMSD legislative platform. Croonquist encouraged board members to reach out to their local legislators with an invitation to the preview.

Croonquist reported that AMSD superintendents continue to meet on a weekly basis to share ideas to address the many issues that arise as a result of the pandemic. From these meetings, a Learning Model Transition Group has been formed to help clarify guidance for school leaders on transitioning between learning models and the safe return to school. This panel includes Superintendents Theresa Battle, Sandy Lewandowski, Cory McIntyre and Jeff Ronneberg as well as four rural Minnesota superintendents and representation from MDH, local public health, school nurses, regional support teams, and the Governor's office.

V. Legislative Committee Report

A. Approval of AMSD 2021 Legislative Platform

Executive Director Croonquist shared the final draft of the 2021 Legislative Platform, which was revised with the feedback gathered at the November Board of Directors meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the AMSD 2021 Legislative Platform. The motion was approved.

B. Review and Approval of Position Papers on Compensatory Revenue, Early Childhood Education, English Learner Funding, Facilities Funding, School Board Renewal of an Operating Referendum and Special Education

Executive Director Croonquist reminded board members that these are all standing position papers that have been previously approved. The papers have been updated to reflect new demographic data, research and any actions taken during the previous legislative session. Croonquist reported that the Legislative Committee had approved updates to these position papers. Chair Johnson asked if there was any discussion or questions about the revised papers. A motion was made and seconded to approve the position papers on Compensatory Revenue, Early Childhood Education, English Learner Funding, Facilities Funding, School Board Renewal of an Operating Referendum and Special Education. The motion was approved.

C. Recognition of Outgoing School Board Members

Executive Director Croonquist invited school board members who were attending their last AMSD Board meeting to share a few words with the group. School Board Members Bob Erickson, Holly Link Stephanie Levine and Mike Ptacek all extended their appreciation for the opportunity to serve along with so many talented AMSD members. Croonquist thanked all of these school board members, along with Terri Swartout, for their tireless work, dedication and advocacy for Minnesota public education.

D. Breakout Sessions to Review and Discuss Draft Session Brief on Constitutional Amendment

Executive Director Croonquist shared a draft session brief on the proposed constitutional amendment. Board members broke into small Zoom breakout rooms to discuss the brief and share feedback. A Google Doc was provided for the groups to share their feedback. At their December 18 meeting, the Legislative Committee will review an updated draft of the session brief.

VI. Adjourn

Chair Johnson thanked everyone for their attendance. There being no further business, Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 9:02 a.m.