



Association of Metropolitan School Districts

Board of Directors Meeting
Friday, February 5, 2021, 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Conducted via Zoom

I. Welcome

Chair Curtis Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. and welcomed everyone.

II. Routine Business

Approval of Minutes of December 4 Meeting

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the December 4 meeting. The motion was approved.

III. Guest Speakers

Chair Johnson invited Executive Director Scott Croonquist to introduce the guest speakers. Croonquist welcomed Sen. Roger Chamberlain, Chair of the Senate Education Finance and Policy Committee and Rep. Jim Davnie, Chair of the House Education Finance Committee. Sen. Chamberlain and Rep. Davnie shared an overview of their respective priorities for the legislative session, as well as a summary of the issues and legislation their committees have been hearing. Sen. Chamberlain and Rep. Davnie answered questions from AMSD board members. Both speakers encouraged AMSD members to reach out to them throughout the session. Chair Johnson and Executive Director Croonquist thanked them for their willingness to join the meeting.

IV. Legislative Committee Report

Chair Johnson gave a brief update on the most recent AMSD Legislative Committee meeting. Chair Johnson shared that Rep. Rena Moran joined the meeting to discuss the proposed constitutional amendment. Chair Johnson also touched on the success of the Session Preview and extended thanks to Superintendents Kim Hiel, Christine Tucci Osorio and Mike Redmond for presenting an overview of the AMSD platform.

A. Approval of Session Brief on Proposed Constitutional Amendment

Executive Director Croonquist reminded members that the proposed brief was reviewed at the December Board of Directors meeting, including discussion via Zoom breakout rooms. He reported that the Legislative Committee has approved the brief, which is based on language that was proposed last year. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Session Brief on the proposed Constitutional Amendment. The motion was approved.

V. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Scott Croonquist reported that the session is in full swing, but COVID restrictions have presented unique challenges for lobbying and advocating. The Senate is hoping to move to a hybrid format in the coming weeks.

Executive Director Croonquist reviewed the Governor's budget proposal, which was much better than anticipated. The Governor proposes an increased investment of more than \$662 million for education for the 2022-23 biennium. The Governor also proposes an additional \$150 million in one-time funding in the current fiscal year, half of which would come from federal stimulus funds, to address enrollment decline related to COVID-19 and expanded summer learning opportunities. Croonquist noted that the Governor is proposing that the one-time funding be included in a separate bill to allow it to move through the process more quickly. Croonquist noted that many of AMSD's legislative platform priorities are included in the Governor's proposed budget including a formula increase, special education funding, English learner funding, referendum equalization and funding to address the mental health needs of our students.

Croonquist shared that the next step will be the February Budget and Economic Forecast which is due out at the end of February. Following the release of the forecast, the Governor will make any necessary adjustment to his proposal and the House and Senate will begin developing their respective budgets

Croonquist reported that the legislature has adopted committee deadlines, with March 12 being the first policy deadline. The legislative recess is scheduled to begin end of day, Friday, March 26 and go through Monday, April 5. Croonquist urged members to use this time to schedule town halls or other meetings with their legislators.

Croonquist reported on a few key bills that have been introduced. The bills include HF4, which addresses the COVID-19 related enrollment drop and HF217, the Increase Teachers of Color Act. In the Senate, SF 2 would repeal a governor's ability to close schools or alter school schedules during a peacetime emergency. The Senate Education Committee also heard SF 244 which provides grants for school districts to implement the Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling program.

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. The group continues to work closely with MDE and MDH on the vaccination rollouts and how to ensure teachers and other staff get vaccinated.

Executive Director Croonquist invited the new school board members joining the AMSD Board of Directors to introduce themselves. Several introductions were made.

Troy Melhus, AMSD Director of Communications and Advocacy, provided a brief overview of the AMSD website.

VI. Adjourn

Chair Johnson thanked everyone for their attendance. There being no further business, Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:48 a.m.