



Association of Metropolitan School Districts

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Board of Directors Meeting
Friday, April 8, 2022, 7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.
Quora Education Center, 70 West County B2, Little Canada, MN
Hybrid Meeting – In person and via Zoom

I. Welcome and Introductions

AMSD Chair Kelsey Dawson Walton called the meeting to order at 7:38 a.m. Dawson Walton welcomed everyone.

II. Routine Business

A. Approval of Minutes of March 4 Meeting

Chair Dawson Walton asked members to review the minutes from the March 4 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved.

III. Guest Speaker

Chair Dawson Walton introduced Rep. Dan Wolgamott (DFL-St. Cloud). Rep. Wolgamott provided an update on the legislative session and highlighted his priorities, specifically fully funding special education and eliminating the cross-subsidy. Following his comments, Rep. Wolgamott answered questions from board members.

IV. Guest Speakers

Chair Dawson Walton introduced guest speakers from the MN Department of Education: Assistant Commissioners Bobbie Burnham and Stephanie Graff, Director of Career and College Readiness Paula Palmer, and State Dyslexia Specialist Dr. Amy Schulting. The presenters shared an overview of Gov. Walz's BOLD Literacy, MTSS and Competency-Based Education Proposals. A question-and-answer session followed the presentation.

V. Executive Director's Report

Chair Dawson Walton asked Executive Director Croonquist to present his report. Croonquist shared that today is the third and final committee deadline. Legislators begin a spring recess tomorrow that runs through Monday, April 18. When legislators return from the break, they will have less than five weeks to complete their work before the constitutionally mandated adjournment day of May 23. Croonquist encouraged board members to connect with their local legislators during this break to advocate for AMSD's priorities.

Croonquist shared an overview of the House and Senate E-12 bills. The Senate's Omnibus Bill is 9 pages long and is focused on literacy with a \$30.7 million appropriation in FY 2023 and \$1.4 million in FY 2024-2025 for the Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) program and literacy specialists at the Regional Centers of Excellence. Alternatively, Croonquist reported that the House Omnibus bill is 232 pages long with a \$1.15

billion increase for FY 2023 and \$2.1 billion in 2024-2025. The House bill contains several of AMSD's priority issues including a significant reduction of the special education and English learner cross-subsidies, funding for student mental health, and allowing school districts to offer digital learning without going through the cumbersome approval process. Croonquist noted that the wide gulf between the House and Senate E-12 bills makes it clear our advocacy efforts will be critical over the final five weeks of the session.

Croonquist reported that some legislators have been arguing that education funding has increased significantly – significantly more than inflation – since 2006. Croonquist reviewed a funding chart that has been distributed by legislators and noted that the chart includes all state aid – including aid to charter schools and property tax equalization – and that it uses inflation as measured by the CPI – a more conservative measure of inflation.

Croonquist noted that another big issue at the Capitol is student data privacy legislation which would allow parents to opt out of digital platforms important for school operations and instructional delivery. Croonquist encouraged members to talk to their local legislators about this legislation and the impact it would have on instruction and operations

Lastly, Croonquist requested that board members share any questions or concerns related to the MDE initiatives presented earlier in the meeting with him.

VI. Adjourn

Chair Dawson Walton thanked everyone for their attendance and adjourned the meeting at 9:07 a.m.