



2022 Candidate Forum on Education

What We Do

The Hopkins Public Schools Legislative Action Coalition (LAC) is a non-partisan advocacy group comprised of school board members, parents, students, and community members organized to advocate for education funding and policies at the state and federal levels.

Working closely with District Leadership, the LAC identifies the most pressing education issues each year and creates a Legislative Platform, which is approved by the School Board to represent the district's priorities.

The Hopkins Public Schools LAC is recognized as a valuable resource for Legislators, policymakers, and other advocacy groups for research, community connections and timely advocacy.

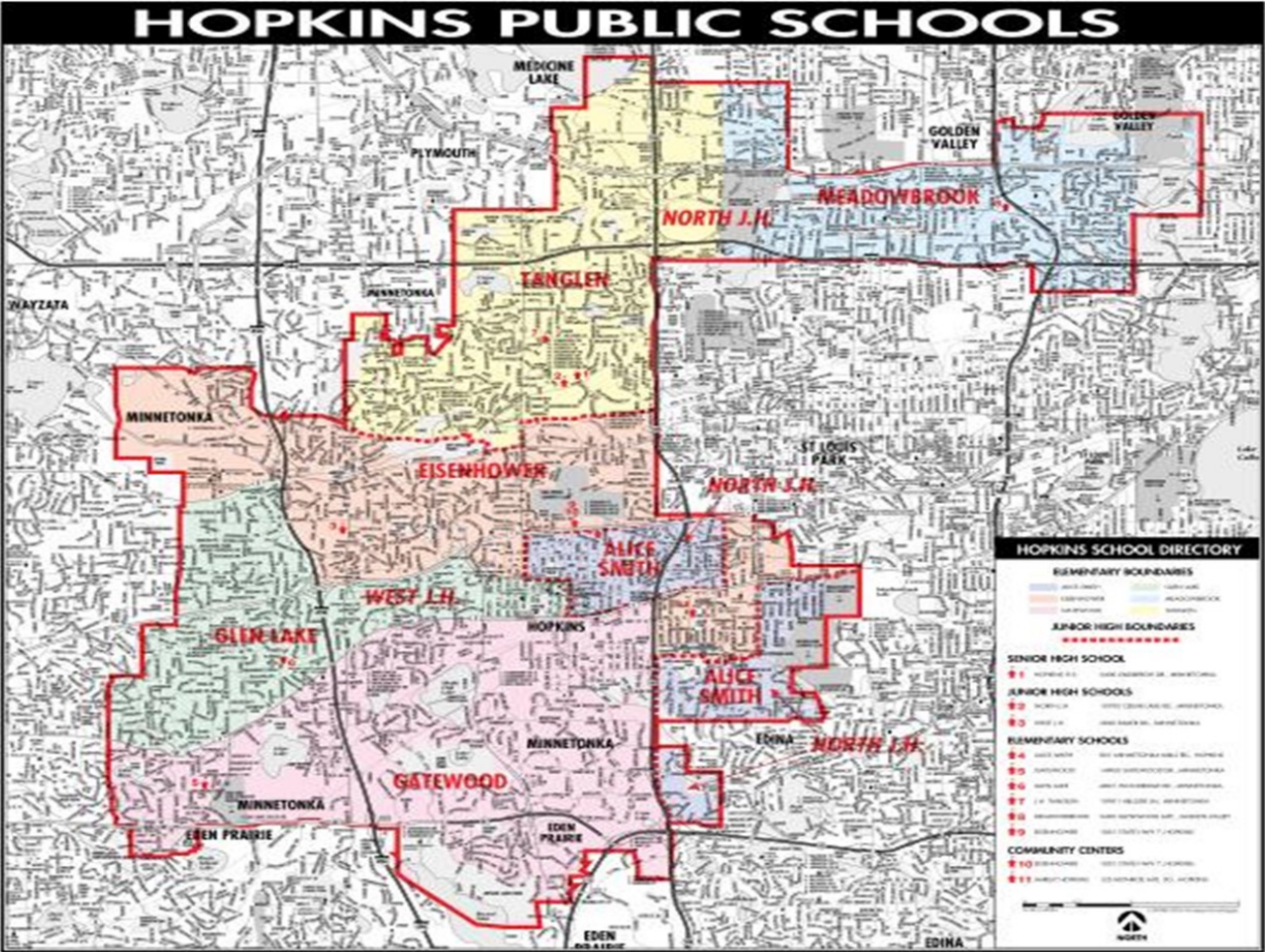
The LAC partners with similar advocacy groups from our neighboring school districts to host community events around topics like education finance, special education, and school safety. Together, the LACs rally at the Capitol for an annual event which includes individual meetings with all of our Legislators.



JOIN US!

Our collective voice is powerful and we encourage all levels of participation: meet with legislators at the Capitol, attend community events, learn about effective advocacy, partner with other advocates. Please visit the LAC **webpage** under the NEWS section of the District Website. <https://www.hopkinsschools.org/district-news/legislative-action-coalition> or **email** us at lac@hopkinsschools.org

Map of Hopkins Public Schools District



Saturday, September 26, 2020

- **9:00 am:**

- State Senate District 44
- [Ann Johnson Stewart \(DFL\)](#)
- [Greg Pulles \(R\)](#)
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- State Representative District 44B
- [Patty Acomb \(DFL\)](#)
- [Gary Porter \(R\)](#)
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- **10: 30 am:**

- State Senate District 45
- [Ann Rest \(DFL\)](#)
- [Roxana Bruins \(R\)](#)
- [Andrew Schuler \(LMN\)](#)
-
- State Representative District 45B
- [Mike Freiberg \(DFL\)](#)
- [Ken Fitzgerald \(R\)](#)

- **1:30 pm:**

- State Senate District 48
- [Steve Cwodzinski \(DFL\)](#)
- [Jeff Jiang \(R\)](#)
- State Representative District 48A
- [Laurie Pryor \(DFL\)](#)
- [Eric Wessels \(R\)](#)
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- **3:00 pm:**

- State Senate District 49
- [Melisa Lopez Franzen \(DFL\)](#)
- [Julie Dupré \(R\)](#)
-
- State Representative District 49A
- [Heather Edelson \(DFL\)](#)
-
- State Representative District 49B
- [Steve Elkins \(DFL\)](#)
- [Joe Thalman \(R\)](#)

- **4:30 pm:**

- State Senate District 46
- [Ron Latz \(DFL\)](#)
- [Bryan Björnson \(R\)](#)
-
- State Representative District 46A
- [Ryan Winkler \(DFL\)](#)
- [Anne Taylor \(R\)](#)
-
- State Representative District 46B
- [Cheryl Youakim \(DFL\)](#)
- [Melissa Moore \(R\)](#)
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Guidelines for constituent questions

- The LAC does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.
- The views expressed in this forum are those of the candidates, and not of the LAC or Hopkins Public Schools.
- This purpose of this forum to is offer an opportunity for voters to hear the candidates discuss important education issues that will affect students and families in our school district and across Minnesota.
- Questions may be submitted in advance via email: lac@hopkinsschools.org. Questions that are unclear, hostile, or of a personal nature will not be used. Questions that are similar may be combined and summarized by the moderator.
- Questions may be submitted via chat during the Facebook Live event, and the moderator will treat them as stated above.

Guidelines for Candidates

- Each candidate will have 2 minutes to introduce themselves and 1 minute for a concluding statement.
- Each candidate will have 2 minutes to answer each question presented by the moderator.
- The timekeeper will present a running timer to keep track of the 2-minute countdown.
- The moderator reserves the right to utilize the mute feature if a candidate exceeds the time allotment.
- The candidates will be selected in a randomized order to answer the presented questions.

Questions sent in advance

1. Currently, school boards may not start the school year before Labor Day unless there are extenuating circumstances. Also, of all types of taxing authorities in Minnesota (cities, counties, school districts, watershed districts, sports facilities commissions, mosquito control districts, etc.), school districts are the ONLY type of taxing authority required to conduct a referendum in order to renew or increase the property taxation rate.

Do you support allowing locally-elected school boards to set their own school calendar? Why or why not?

Do you support allowing locally-elected school boards to renew an existing operating referendum by a majority vote of the school board after a public hearing? Please tell us your reasons.

Questions sent in advance

2. Distance Learning and the changes made to educational delivery during a pandemic have been particularly hard for families with special needs and those students needing extra support.

What are your plans for ensuring that schools are able to meet those needs?

Questions sent in advance

3. A proposed Constitutional Amendment was brought forth last spring regarding the state's obligation toward public schools. It is designed to replace Article XIII, Section 1, a part of Minnesota's State Constitution since 1857.

This proposed amendment will likely resurface post-COVID-19.

What is your opinion of its proposed changes to the current language, which does not include any “provisions by taxation” for funding Minnesota's public schools?

[MN Constitution, Art.XIII, Sec.1](#)

[Proposed amendment language](#)