



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, November 17, 2023, 7:30 – 9 a.m.

Hybrid meeting – In person and via Zoom

Members Present:	Crystal Brakke David Law (alt.) Laura Oksnevad Erin Rathke (alt.)	Marcus Hill Jill Lofald Lucy Payne Michael Thomas	Jeff Holmberg Rhoda Mhiripiri-Reed Bev Petrie
Staff Present:	Scott Croonquist	Kimberly Jansa	Troy Melhus
Guests Present:	Jon Alfuth Jim Grathwol	Kris Amundson Lori Grivna	Josh Downham

I. Approval of Minutes of October 27 Meeting

AMSD Chair Marcus Hill called the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m. Hill asked members to review the minutes from the October 27 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved.

II. Executive Director's Report

Chair Hill asked Executive Director Scott Croonquist to share his report. Croonquist thanked everyone for their attendance, participation, and assistance with the conference. He shared that the overall conference evaluation results were positive and are available for review on the website.

Croonquist reported that District 196 Board Member Bianca Virnig won the four-way DFL primary election to fill the House District 52B seat left open after the retirement of Rep. Ruth Richardson. The general election is Tuesday, December 5.

Croonquist noted that the Legislative Commission on Cybersecurity met earlier this week to discuss education related cybersecurity issues and recent security breaches.

Croonquist offered his congratulations to all districts that won their referendum elections. Of the 10 operating referendum questions, 5 were approved. Bond and capital projects requests fared better with 8 of 9 bond questions passing, and 9 of 11 capital project referendums approved.

Croonquist reminded committee members that the Session Preview is scheduled for February 2. This meeting is where we typically invite a few AMSD superintendents to share an overview of our legislative platform. The committee discussed how best to communicate key messages to legislators.

Croonquist mentioned that for several years, we have done a budget survey of our districts. Because districts are in the middle of contract negotiations, the survey results may raise questions. Croonquist asked members their thoughts on how to proceed with this. There was a discussion among members

about how best to gather and potentially share it. The committee agreed that we will take some more time to think about this before moving forward with a budget survey.

III. Discussion of AMSD Support of Minnesota's Hope Initiative

Chair Hill asked members their thoughts about the Minnesota's Hope Initiative. Executive Director Scott Croonquist reminded the committee that this organization is looking for AMSD to sign on as a supporter of their vision, but nothing further at this time. There was a thoughtful discussion among committee members about the direction and future of Minnesota's Hope Initiative. The committee agreed that there are too many unknowns at this point for AMSD to support.

IV. Discussion and Adoption of 2024 Legislative Platform

Executive Director Croonquist reviewed the draft legislative platform, which was amended based on the committee's feedback to stress the need to provide funding for the new programs and mandates adopted last session. There was a robust discussion among committee members including some additional edits and clarifications that may be helpful. The committee agreed on the following revisions to page 2:

- The 4th bullet under Fund New Requirements and Inflationary Costs to be amended by adding "and adjust the timelines to ensure successful implementation."
- The title of the 3rd section to be amended to read Prioritize Student-Centered Learning Through Enhanced Local Control.
- The last bullet under Address the Educator Workforce Shortage be amended by striking "current" and inserting "multiple."

Croonquist shared that the edits will be made and sent via email to committee members for review prior to the December 1 board meeting, where it will be brought for formal approval. A motion was made and seconded to approve the platform as amended. The 2024 Legislative Platform was approved.

V. Review and Approval of Updated Position Papers

Executive Director Croonquist next turned to a discussion of 4 standing position for review. The position papers were on Early Childhood Education, English Learner Funding, Special Education, and Taxpayer Subsidies for Nonpublic K-12 Education. The papers have been updated to reflect current demographic data, new research, and to reflect legislative action from the last session. Croonquist noted the few additional revisions that were made to the papers.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the updated position papers on Early Childhood Education, English Learner Funding, Special Education, and Taxpayer Subsidies for Nonpublic K-12 Education. The position papers were approved.

VI. Review and Discussion of KnowledgeWorks Report

Executive Director Croonquist reminded members that work with KnowledgeWorks has been going on for several months. This work is focused on competency-based and student-centered learning. Croonquist invited Jon Alfuth, KnowledgeWorks' Senior Director of State Policy, to review an executive summary of the opportunity analysis that has been developed with the committee. Alfuth, along with committee members Crystal Brakke and Lucy Payne, shared an overview of the key takeaways and the work moving forward.

VII. Adjournment

Executive Director Croonquist shared that at our December meeting, we will plan to talk about some of the issues that will likely be raised in the legislative session. Chair Hill reminded members of the upcoming meetings before adjourning the meeting at 8:55 a.m.