



Association of Metropolitan School Districts

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Board of Directors Meeting
Friday, January 5, 2024, 7:30 – 9 a.m.
Quora Education Center, 70 West County B2, Little Canada, MN
Hybrid Meeting – In person and via Zoom

Members Present: Thirty-five members attended the meeting in person and 64 participated virtually.

I. Welcome and Introductions

AMSD Chair Marcus Hill called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m. Hill welcomed everyone in person and online. A few introductions were made.

II. Routine Business

A. Approval of Minutes of December 1 Meeting

Chair Hill asked members to review the minutes from the December 1 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved.

III. Executive Committee Report

A. Election of Vice Chair

Chair Hill reported that the Executive Committee has nominated Laura Oksnevad, School Board member, St. Anthony-New Brighton School District as the new AMSD Vice Chair. A motion was made and seconded to approve the nomination. The motion was approved.

B. Election of Legislative Committee Member

Chair Hill then reported that the Executive Committee has nominated Minnetonka School Board member Patrick Lee-O'Halloran to serve on the Legislative Committee. A motion was made and seconded to approve the nomination. The motion was approved.

IV. Legislative Committee Report

A. Approval of Updated Position Papers

Executive Director Scott Croonquist reminded board members that every year, the position papers are reviewed and updated to reflect new demographic data, research, or actions taken during the previous legislative session. Croonquist reported that the Legislative Committee had approved updates to the position papers on School Board Renewal of a Capital Projects Referendum, School Safety, and Tiered Licensure for Teachers. A motion was made and seconded to approve the updated position papers. The motion was approved.

V. Guest Speakers

Chair Hill introduced the speakers joining us from the Minnesota Department of Education – Dr. Lana Peterson, Director, Data Practices and Analytics Division, Maira Rosas-Lee, MSS and SLEDS Coordinator, Data Practices and Analytics Division, and Eric Billiet, High School Initiatives Supervisor, Career and College Success Division – who gave a presentation highlighting MDE’s work to use data to expand access to student-centered learning to improve pathways to educational and career attainment. Following their presentation, the speakers engaged in a brief question-and-answer session with board members.

VI. Executive Director’s Report

Chair Hill invited Executive Director Scott Croonquist to give his report. Croonquist reported that the budget forecast that was released last month projects a significant structural imbalance in the 2026-27 biennium that virtually wipes out the projected surplus in the current biennium. He noted that a big departure with this forecast is that inflation is included. Also, education spending was higher due to higher projected student enrollment (5,000 more students) and higher than anticipated costs related to the universal school meals program. The next forecast will come out at the end of February and that is the one the Governor and Legislature will use to make any adjustments to the biennial budget.

Croonquist reminded board members that next month is our Legislative Session Preview and encouraged them to extend a personal invitation to their local legislators. AMSD Chair Marcus Hill will present the AMSD platform along with superintendents Jason Berg and Laurie Putnam. MDE Commissioner Willie Jett’s attendance is confirmed and there will also be a legislative panel.

Croonquist reviewed a report from KnowledgeWorks culminating our joint work over the past six months to identify barriers and opportunities to expand student-centered, competency-based learning environments for students. To continue moving this work forward, we are hosting a workshop with KnowledgeWorks on Friday, Feb. 9. Croonquist mentioned that more information about the workshop would be in today’s Weekly Update.

Croonquist reported that the Minnesota Supreme Court issued a decision in the Cruz-Guzman lawsuit a few days ago. The Court ruled that although the plaintiffs do not have to prove that state action caused racial imbalances in certain Minneapolis and Saint Paul schools, racial imbalances alone are not sufficient to establish a violation of the Education Clause of the Minnesota Constitution. The Court ruled that the plaintiffs must prove that racial imbalances in schools are a substantial factor in causing their children to receive an inadequate education. The case now returns to district court.

VII. Adjourn

Chair Hill reminded members of the upcoming meetings and thanked everyone for their attendance. Chair Hill adjourned the meeting at 8:50 a.m.