



## Bits 'n Pieces Fall 2010

For use by School Leaders

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### Just the Facts

#### The Past

- During the 1990s, Minnesota consistently spent more money per pupil than the national average. The value of the investment was evident in Minnesota's schools' national standing. (i.e. number one in achievement).
- Over the past 10 years, Minnesota's ranking for investment in education has fallen to 1.31 percent below the national average.
- In 2007 (the most recent data available), Minnesota ranked 42 among the states for its K-12 education spending per \$1000 of personal income.
- The increase in state funding to K-12 education has been less than the costs of running the educational program over the past 10 years. During those ten years, there have been:
  - Three years with no increases in the basic formula
  - Four years with a 1 to 2 percent increase
  - Three years with a 4 percent increase
- Additionally, the Minnesota Legislature has withheld promised aid, forcing school districts to borrow money and pay interest on the money borrowed.

#### The Present

- Minnesota is facing a \$6 billion structural budget deficit.
- Education funding accounts for half of the state budget.

#### The Future

- Options that have been suggested:
  - Increase the shift of state payments of schools from 27 percent to 50 percent
  - Add Racino money to the state's revenues
  - Cut Local Government Aid completely
  - Place a sales tax on clothing
  - Tax the rich
  - Cut funding to human services and education each by \$1 billion.
- If the state applied *all* of the above options that have been suggested, it would still have a \$100 million deficit.
- Alternatives some school districts may be considering:
  - Four-day school weeks
  - Consolidation
  - Closing schools
  - Increasing class sizes
  - Cutting electives, teachers and programs
  - New ideas for significantly increased efficiency and effectiveness you and your community develop

The above information is taken from *What Will It Take to Get off the Funding Cliff?*, Greg Abbott, MSBA Journal; *Funding crisis prompts hard choices on education*, ECM Publishers, the Office of Budget and Management; and Jon Tynjala, President AMSD, Star Tribune Opinion

#### The Challenge

- Evaluate the funding sustainability crisis
- Engage creativity to explore new alternatives, initiatives, and structures
- Accept and inspire change that will significantly increase efficiency and effectiveness
- Move forward collaboratively
- Measure outcomes

### Red Flags

- The U.S. birth rate fell 2.6% last year to its lowest level in at least a century.
- The poverty rate went up 15% last year to a level not seen since the 1960s. (U.S. Census)

### Did You Know? ( Laura Cooper, StarTribune Editorial Counterpoint, September 17, 2010)

- The following are findings of a study of arbitration decisions issued over a 24-year period in discipline and discharge cases of public employees. The study was done by Professor Stephen Befort of the University of Minnesota Law School and emeritus professor Mario Bognanno of the Carlson School of Management. The study reflects public employee cases between 1982 and 2005)
  - Arbitrators uphold in full public sector employer’s decision to discharge an employee 56 percent of the time.
  - Arbitrators found that the employee should be subject to some discipline short of discharge 27 percent of the time.
  - Arbitrators in government employee cases found that no discipline was appropriate only 16 percent of the time.

## Quotes and Quotables

### Leadership

- “Growing consensus on the attributes of effective school principals shows that successful school leaders influence student achievement through two important pathways — the support and development of effective teachers and the implementation of effective organizational processes.” – The Leadership Study, Stanford Educational Leadership Institute

### Communications

- “Effective communication is one of the critical characteristics of effective and successful school principals.” – Bnet, Ibtesam Halawah
- “If one person is talking too much, it is likely that another person is talking too little.” – unknown

### Future

- “The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails.” – William Arthur Ward

### Progress

- “We must resist resistance to change. The status quo in education provides reason enough. Consider three stunning statistics. First, 53 percent of U.S. children in our 50 largest cities graduate from high school. According to research by McKinsey & Co., underperforming students, many of whom are poor, have lower earnings, poorer health and higher rates of incarceration. This costs us money – the economic equivalent of a permanent national recession year after year, according to McKinsey.” – Kathleen McCartney, Dean of Harvard Graduate School

### Accountability

“The shift in education payments is comparable to your boss telling you that the company can afford to pay you only 70 percent of your salary this year and the other 30 percent next year if things get better.” –Jon Tynjala, Chairman, AMSD

These materials are provided by:  
**Minnesota Association of School Administrators**  
**Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals**  
**Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association**

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