

# Minnesota School Finance: A Guide for Legislators



## About this Publication

*This guidebook explains how public elementary and secondary schools are funded in Minnesota.*

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September 2023



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Minnesota Statutes cited in this work can be located on of the Office of the Revisor of Statutes website, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/>.



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## Executive Summary

Minnesota's school finance system provides funds to operate the state's public elementary and secondary schools. The bulk of Minnesota's support for elementary and secondary education is distributed to school districts and charter schools through the general education revenue program, which provides money for the current operating expenditures of the districts. The state's remaining appropriations are provided through special purpose or categorical aids, such as special education aid and local property tax relief aids. The state legislature also controls the amount each school district can levy through limits on the amounts and type of property tax levies. The purpose of this guide is to describe the programs that provide funding for Minnesota's school districts and charter schools. The guide provides program descriptions, financial information, and some historical background for each school funding program.

For the 2022-23 school year, a full-time equivalent staff of roughly 57,000 teachers served approximately 873,400 public school students. Minnesota's nonpublic schools served 72,500 students, and 26,400 students were homeschooled. During the same school year, total revenue for Minnesota's public schools is estimated at \$15.440 billion, of which \$10.085 billion is from state aid, \$4.341 billion is from local property taxes and other local source revenue, and \$851 million is from federal funds.

This publication describes the current system for funding the K-12 education system. It includes definitions of common terminology, explains how students are counted, details funding formulas, and describes various education programs. An appendix at the end of the document also provides some historical information for certain long-standing programs and programs that are no longer in effect but are referenced by current programs.

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## Introduction

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Minnesota's school finance system is shaped by the historical and legal context of public schools in the United States.

### Historical and Legal Background

Public education in the United States is the legal responsibility of state government. In Minnesota, as in most states, the state constitution charges the legislature with responsibility for public schools. Minnesota's constitutional charge reads as follows:

The stability of a republican form of government depending mainly upon the intelligence of the people, it is the duty of the legislature to establish a general and uniform system of public schools. The legislature shall make such provisions by taxation or otherwise as will secure a thorough and efficient system of public schools throughout the state.

(Minn. Const., art. XIII, § 1)

Minnesota delegates responsibility for the actual operation of schools to local school districts and charter schools, whose powers and duties are prescribed by state statute. Historically, the property taxes levied by the school boards governing these school districts have been the primary source of revenue for running schools. Some time after 1900, property taxes were supplemented by limited amounts of state appropriations for aid to school districts. By the 1970-71 school year, the Minnesota state foundation aid program provided all districts a flat grant per pupil unit (a pupil unit is a weighted enrollment measure) and provided some districts an additional "equalized" amount that varied inversely with a district's property valuation. Under this system, state aid funded about 43 percent of the cost of running schools, and school expenditures per pupil varied widely from district to district. Local property taxes rose rapidly in all districts in the late 1960s, and the tax rate for schools also varied widely among districts.

The 1971 Legislature addressed these disparities by substantially increasing the amount of equalized state foundation aid per pupil unit and imposing a uniform statewide limit on the property tax rate for schools. The 1973 Legislature eliminated flat grants and established a system whereby the amount of foundation aid program revenue available per pupil unit to low-spending districts would be increased to the state average over a six-year period. From 1973 to 1983, the legislature adjusted the foundation aid formula several times making it more responsive to differences among districts and altering the relationship between local tax effort and state aid, without changing the formula's basic structure.

The 1983 Legislature enacted a new foundation aid program replacing several components of the previous foundation aid formula with five tiers of optional aids and levies. The main characteristics of the new five-tier program were equal access to revenues, recognition of some specific cost differences, and more discretion on the part of school boards in choosing the necessary level of revenue.

**Current Program Design.** The 1987 Legislature replaced the foundation aid program with the general education revenue program, effective for the 1988-89 school year. General education formula components have remained relatively stable since 1989. In general, each component reflects school district funding needs in different areas and is based on pupil counts, demographic characteristics, and the extent of need for each school district.

General education revenue is the primary source of operating funds for Minnesota's public schools, which for the 2023-24 school year, consists of 327 operating school districts, two nonoperating school districts, and 180 charter schools. General education revenue pays for operating expenses of the district including employee salaries, fringe benefits, and supply costs. For fiscal year 2024, each school district's general education revenue is the sum of 14 components; two of which are the same per pupil unit for all districts and charter schools and 12 components that vary by district demographic and geographic characteristics.

In addition to general education revenue, school districts also receive state appropriations through categorical aids and authorized property tax levies, which provide funds for specific purposes (such as special education, school integration/desegregation, and safe schools activities).

## School Finance Litigation

Across the nation, there have been and are a number of legal challenges to states' school finance formulas. These lawsuits have been based on a series of principles, including equalization, fiscal neutrality, equal protection, and adequacy, among others.

**Equalization.** Equalization challenges measured state aid to districts compared with perceived need (using property wealth as the measure of need). The earliest challenges under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution ("...nor shall any state...deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws") were unsuccessful. These challenges claimed that the only permissible variations in public school expenditures across districts should be based on "educational needs." The courts concluded this standard was too political and unclear for them to apply to state school finance systems.

**Fiscal neutrality.** The second round of challenges, also made under the Fourteenth Amendment, proposed the standard of "fiscal neutrality." Fiscal neutrality means that the quality of a child's education, measured by the amount expended for that education, cannot be permitted to vary according to the property wealth of his or her parents and their neighbors. The taxpayers in a property poor district cannot be required to pay a higher tax rate than taxpayers in a property rich district to attain the same quality of education for their children. This standard was first endorsed by the California Supreme Court under the federal and state equal protection clauses in its 1971 decision, which refused to dismiss the complaint in *Serrano v. Priest*. In short order, a number of other courts also adopted the standard of fiscal neutrality, including the Minnesota federal district court in its October 1971 decision upholding the validity of the claim in *Van Duzart v. Hatfield*. This round of litigation came to an abrupt halt in March 1973 when the U.S. Supreme Court, in *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez*,

reversed a lower court's decision in support of fiscal neutrality under the Fourteenth Amendment.

**Equal Protection and adequacy.** The next round of school finance litigation is occurring under the equal protection and education provisions of state constitutions. The *Serrano* case in California went to trial in 1974, and both the trial court and the California Supreme Court (in 1977) found that the school finance system violated the state equal protection clause under the principles of fiscal neutrality.

Since that time, legal theories for suits under state constitutions' education clauses also include the arguments that school finance systems must provide for minimum levels of pupil achievement, must ensure that districts have the minimum resources necessary to supply a basic education, must respond to differences among districts' tax burdens, costs, and needs, or cannot predominantly base the availability of funds on voters' willingness to approve taxes. Since the 1970s, challenges to school finance systems under state constitutional provisions have occurred in all but a handful of states, and more recent lawsuits are pending in many states, including states where earlier challenges were successful and states where earlier challenges were unsuccessful.

In 1993, the Minnesota Supreme Court reversed an earlier trial court decision and held Minnesota's school finance system constitutionally permissible. The ruling in *Skeen v. State of Minnesota* stemmed from a lawsuit filed in 1988 by 52 outer ring suburban and rural school districts representing 25 percent of the state's K-12 enrollment. The suit claimed that Minnesota's school finance system was unconstitutional because the finance system was not uniform and school districts received disparate amounts of government aid.

The plaintiff school districts challenged the constitutionality of the operating referendum and debt service levies that at the time of the suit, were unequalized levies based solely upon local property tax bases and some parts of general education revenue that varied among school districts, including training and experience revenue, and supplemental revenue. The Minnesota Supreme Court declared the issues in the case to be "whether the state's present system of education finance is sufficient to meet the state constitutional requirement that the legislature 'establish a general and uniform system of public schools' and provide sufficient financing to 'secure a thorough and efficient system of public schools throughout the state.'"

However, the court ruled that education in Minnesota is a fundamental right and that the system of education finance in place at that time satisfied that right. The court found that "all plaintiff [school] districts are provided with an adequate level of education which meets or exceeds the state's basic education requirements and ... are given sufficient funding to meet their basic needs." The court used the term "adequate" or "adequacy" to mean the measure of need that must be met and not some minimal floor. The court's ruling establishes the

minimum standard the state must meet in designing an education funding system that is constitutional.<sup>1</sup>

The state of Minnesota is currently in litigation over an adequacy case named *Cruz-Guzman*.

## Descriptive Information for Minnesota

Public elementary and secondary education is provided via a financial partnership between the state and local school districts and charter schools. These school districts and charter schools exhibit diversity in terms of enrollment, local property wealth, and expenditure levels, as shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Minnesota's public school enrollment has shown slow growth over the last decade but is expected to slowly decline for much of the next decade. Since 2008, two-thirds of this growth has occurred in charter school enrollment. Tables 3 and 4 display the state total enrollment history and projections for the period from 1959-60 to 2028-29.

The state and federal governments share in financial partnership with local districts and charter schools to fund elementary and secondary education. For the 2022-23 school year, the state provided approximately 66 percent of the total costs of elementary and secondary education. Local revenue sources (primarily property taxes and fees for services such as school lunch) provided approximately 28 percent of 2022-23 operating revenues, and the federal government provided approximately 6 percent.

The bulk of state support for elementary and secondary education is distributed to the districts through the general education revenue program, which provides money for the current operating expenditures of the districts. The remaining portion of the state's appropriation to local districts is provided through special purpose or categorical aids, such as special education aid and local property tax relief aids. The state programs that provide financial aid to Minnesota school districts are described in the following pages.

**Table 1: Characteristics of Minnesota Independent School Districts, 2021-22**

Data for school districts only, excludes charter schools\*

|  | Maximum | 95th Percentile | Mean  | Median | 5th Percentile | Minimum | State Total |
|--|---------|-----------------|-------|--------|----------------|---------|-------------|
| Average Daily Membership Served and Tuitioned Students | 37,875  | 9,191           | 2,388 | 905    | 183            | 75      | 796,733     |
| English Learning Students                              | 9,632   | 1,020           | 188   | 11     | 0              | 0       | 61,771      |
|  | 50%     | 18%             | 8%    | 1%     | 0%             | 0%      | 8%          |

<sup>1</sup> For further information on the *Skeen* decision, see *Skeen vs. State of Minnesota, The School Finance Lawsuit*, House Research Department, September 1993.

|  | Maximum  | 95th Percentile | Mean     | Median   | 5th Percentile | Minimum  | State Total      |
|--|----------|-----------------|----------|----------|----------------|----------|------------------|
| Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals  | 20,577   | 2,611           | 723      | 238      | 55             | 17       | 237,854          |
|  | 89%      | 61%             | 30%      | 29%      | 11%            | 4%       | 30%              |
| Students of Color  | 26,195   | 3,700           | 842      | 142      | 17             | 2        | 276,860          |
|  | 100%     | 65%             | 35%      | 15%      | 5%             | 2%       | 35%              |
| 2019 Adjusted Net Tax Capacity per Pupil Unit  | \$54,101 | \$25,367        | \$9,962  | \$9,625  | \$4,586        | \$0**    | \$8,575,101,746  |
| Total PK-12 Operating Expenditures per Pupil   | \$28,024 | \$20,128        | \$16,251 | \$14,326 | \$11,803       | \$10,758 | \$12,947,395,820 |
| <p>* Two districts, Franconia and Prinsburg, are nonoperating districts, and don't directly serve regular education students and are excluded from this data.</p> <p>** The Pine Point school district exists entirely within the Park Rapids school district and has no tax base.</p> <p>Sources: Minnesota Department of Education Profiles 2021-2022; Research Department, Minnesota House of Representatives</p> |          |                 |          |          |                |          |                  |

House Research Department

**Table 2: Characteristics of Minnesota Charter Schools, 2021-22**

|   | Maximum  | 95th Percentile | Mean     | Median   | 5th Percentile | Minimum | State Total     |
|---|----------|-----------------|----------|----------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| Average Daily Membership Served and Tuitioned Students  | 5,204    | 1,025           | 368      | 211      | 48             | 26      | 65,840          |
| English Learning Students   | 934      | 385             | 84       | 10       | 0              | 0       | 15,048          |
|   | 87%      | 73%             | 23%      | 4%       | 0%             | 0%      | 23%             |
| Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals   | 2,560    | 558             | 145      | 72       | 12             | 3       | 26,033          |
|   | 89%      | 85%             | 39%      | 34%      | 0%             | 0%      | 40%             |
| Students of Color   | 2,326    | 821             | 234      | 105      | 9              | 0       | 42,177          |
|   | 100%     | 100%            | 63%      | 56%      | 8%             | 0%      | 66%             |
| Total PK-12 Operating Expenditures per Pupil  | \$73,040 | \$26,569        | \$16,184 | \$16,554 | \$11,500       | \$9,168 | \$1,065,538,885 |
| Sources: Minnesota, Department of Education Profiles Data 2019-20; Research Department, MN House of Representatives |          |                 |          |          |                |         |                 |

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**Table 3: School Enrollment 1959-60 to 2026-29 by School Type**

| School Year | All Public School<br>(including Charter Students) |                                | Charter Schools          |                                | Traditional Nonpublic |                                | Homeschool |                                |
|-------------|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|
|             | Adjusted Avg. Daily Membership                    | Percent Change from Prior Year | Average Daily Membership | Percent Change from Prior Year | Enrollment            | Percent Change from Prior Year | Enrollment | Percent Change from Prior Year |
| 1960        | 671,682   | NA                             | —                        | —                              | 158,560               | NA                             | —          | —                              |
| 1961        | 692,136   | 3.0%                           | —                        | —                              | 163,253               | 3.0%                           | —          | —                              |
| 1962        | 713,461   | 3.1                            | —                        | —                              | 167,909               | 2.9                            | —          | —                              |
| 1963        | 739,735   | 3.7                            | —                        | —                              | 171,968               | 2.4                            | —          | —                              |
| 1964        | 768,089   | 3.8                            | —                        | —                              | 174,265               | 1.3                            | —          | —                              |
| 1965        | 794,304   | 3.4                            | —                        | —                              | 173,534               | -0.4                           | —          | —                              |
| 1966        | 818,255   | 3.0                            | —                        | —                              | 169,207               | -2.5                           | —          | —                              |
| 1967        | 844,554   | 3.2                            | —                        | —                              | 161,523               | -4.5                           | —          | —                              |
| 1968        | 871,510   | 3.2                            | —                        | —                              | 150,596               | -6.8                           | —          | —                              |
| 1969        | 899,597   | 3.2                            | —                        | —                              | 137,319               | -8.8                           | —          | —                              |
| 1970        | 914,847   | 1.7                            | —                        | —                              | 124,934               | -9.0                           | —          | —                              |
| 1971        | 921,957   | 0.8                            | —                        | —                              | 118,091               | -5.5                           | —          | —                              |
| 1972        | 914,018   | -0.9                           | —                        | —                              | 106,392               | -9.9                           | —          | —                              |
| 1973        | 903,778   | -1.1                           | —                        | —                              | 99,139                | -6.8                           | —          | —                              |
| 1974        | 893,465   | -1.1                           | —                        | —                              | 94,023                | -5.2                           | —          | —                              |
| 1975        | 884,648   | -1.0                           | —                        | —                              | 92,128                | -2.0                           | —          | —                              |
| 1976        | 874,961   | -1.1                           | —                        | —                              | 91,893                | -0.3                           | —          | —                              |
| 1977        | 856,964   | -2.0                           | —                        | —                              | 91,793                | -0.1                           | —          | —                              |
| 1978        | 831,250   | -3.0                           | —                        | —                              | 90,919                | -1.0                           | —          | —                              |
| 1979        | 803,312   | -3.4                           | —                        | —                              | 88,524                | -2.6                           | —          | —                              |
| 1980        | 772,101   | -3.9                           | —                        | —                              | 90,954                | 2.7                            | —          | —                              |
| 1981        | 751,373   | -2.7                           | —                        | —                              | 91,077                | 0.1                            | —          | —                              |
| 1982        | 729,105   | -3.0                           | —                        | —                              | 91,803                | 0.8                            | —          | —                              |
| 1983        | 710,972   | -2.5                           | —                        | —                              | 92,302                | 0.5                            | —          | —                              |
| 1984        | 700,167   | -1.5                           | —                        | —                              | 92,760                | 0.5                            | —          | —                              |
| 1985        | 695,777   | -0.6                           | —                        | —                              | 92,822                | 0.1                            | —          | —                              |
| 1986        | 699,191   | 0.5                            | —                        | —                              | 90,530                | -2.5                           | —          | —                              |

| School Year | All Public School<br>(including Charter Students) |                                | Charter Schools          |                                | Traditional Nonpublic |                                | Homeschool |                                |
|-------------|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|
|             | Adjusted Avg. Daily Membership                    | Percent Change from Prior Year | Average Daily Membership | Percent Change from Prior Year | Enrollment            | Percent Change from Prior Year | Enrollment | Percent Change from Prior Year |
| 1987        | 708,446   | 1.3                            | —                        | —                              | 87,208                | -3.7                           | —          | —                              |
| 1988        | 716,125   | 1.1                            | —                        | —                              | 85,043                | -2.5                           | 2,322      | NA                             |
| 1989        | 723,598   | 1.0                            | —                        | —                              | 82,165                | -3.4                           | 2,900      | 24.9%                          |
| 1990        | 733,338   | 1.3                            | —                        | —                              | 80,293                | -2.3                           | 3,538      | 22.0                           |
| 1991        | 750,865   | 2.4                            | —                        | —                              | 81,262                | 1.2                            | 4,418      | 24.9                           |
| 1992        | 767,786   | 2.3                            | —                        | —                              | 80,743                | -0.6                           | 5,086      | 15.1                           |
| 1993        | 785,072   | 2.3                            | 47                       | NA                             | 81,631                | 1.1                            | 6,149      | 20.9                           |
| 1994        | 799,285   | 1.8                            | 615                      | 1,208.5%                       | 81,697                | 0.1                            | 7,671      | 24.8                           |
| 1995        | 812,582   | 1.7                            | 1,046                    | 70.1                           | 83,435                | 2.1                            | 9,135      | 19.1                           |
| 1996        | 827,588   | 1.8                            | 1,494                    | 42.8                           | 84,278                | 1.0                            | 10,519     | 15.2                           |
| 1997        | 838,336   | 1.3                            | 2,138                    | 43.1                           | 83,955                | -0.4                           | 12,145     | 15.5                           |
| 1998        | 845,117   | 0.8                            | 3,292                    | 54.0                           | 85,122                | 1.4                            | 13,081     | 7.7                            |
| 1999        | 851,729   | 0.8                            | 4,991                    | 51.6                           | 85,988                | 1.0                            | 13,638     | 4.3                            |
| 2000        | 852,675   | 0.1                            | 7,526                    | 50.8                           | 88,502                | 2.9                            | 14,906     | 9.3                            |
| 2001        | 854,042   | 0.2                            | 9,199                    | 22.2                           | 89,680                | 1.3                            | 15,249     | 2.3                            |
| 2002        | 851,536   | -0.3                           | 10,170                   | 10.6                           | 84,538                | -5.7                           | 15,510     | 2.4                            |
| 2003        | 835,217   | -1.9                           | 11,998                   | 18.0                           | 89,944                | 6.4                            | 16,519     | 5.8                            |
| 2004        | 829,832   | -0.6                           | 13,948                   | 16.3                           | 86,513                | -3.8                           | 17,533     | 6.1                            |
| 2005        | 825,843   | -0.5                           | 17,121                   | 22.7                           | 86,956                | 0.5                            | 17,135     | -2.3                           |
| 2006        | 826,542   | 0.1                            | 20,306                   | 18.6                           | 82,258                | -5.4                           | 17,334     | 1.2                            |
| 2007        | 827,197   | 0.1                            | 23,588                   | 16.2                           | 79,200                | -3.7                           | 17,621     | 1.7                            |
| 2008        | 823,755   | -0.4                           | 27,753                   | 17.7                           | 81,598                | 3.0                            | 15,256     | -13.4                          |
| 2009        | 821,021   | -0.3                           | 31,687                   | 14.2                           | 79,793                | -2.2                           | 15,653     | 2.6                            |
| 2010        | 821,923   | 0.1                            | 34,463                   | 8.8                            | 77,121                | -3.3                           | 17,036     | 8.8                            |
| 2011        | 823,347   | 0.2                            | 36,087                   | 4.7                            | 74,384                | -3.5                           | 16,523     | -3.0                           |
| 2012        | 825,049   | 0.2                            | 37,958                   | 5.2                            | 72,458                | -2.6                           | 16,081     | -2.7                           |
| 2013        | 831,692   | 0.8                            | 40,856                   | 7.6                            | 70,715                | -2.4                           | 17,129     | 6.5                            |
| 2014        | 837,630   | 0.7                            | 43,237                   | 5.8                            | 68,521                | -3.1                           | 17,451     | 1.9                            |

| School Year | All Public School (including Charter Students) |                                | Charter Schools          |                                | Traditional Nonpublic |                                | Homeschool |                                |
|-------------|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|
|             | Adjusted Avg. Daily Membership                 | Percent Change from Prior Year | Average Daily Membership | Percent Change from Prior Year | Enrollment            | Percent Change from Prior Year | Enrollment | Percent Change from Prior Year |
| 2015        | 845,512  | 0.9                            | 47,439                   | 9.7                            | 67,992                | -0.8                           | 18,085     | 3.6                            |
| 2016        | 852,384  | 0.8                            | 50,390                   | 6.2                            | 66,188                | -2.7                           | 18,772     | 3.8                            |
| 2017        | 861,624  | 1.1                            | 53,582                   | 6.3                            | 67,614                | 2.2                            | 19,432     | 3.5                            |
| 2018        | 868,951  | 0.9                            | 56,060                   | 4.6                            | 65,785                | -2.7                           | 18,988     | -2.3                           |
| 2019        | 873,022  | 0.5                            | 58,904                   | 5.1                            | 65,638                | -0.2                           | 19,228     | 1.3                            |
| 2020        | 874,999  | 0.2                            | 61,813                   | 4.9                            | 65,657                | 0.0                            | 20,701     | 7.7                            |
| 2021        | 855,774  | -2.2                           | 64,618                   | 4.5                            | 66,138                | 0.7                            | 30,955     | 49.5                           |
| 2022        | 856,427  | 0.1                            | 65,728                   | 1.7                            | 69,971                | 5.8                            | 27,801     | -10.2                          |
| 2023        | 857,241  | 0.1                            | 67,705                   | 3.0                            | 72,478                | 3.5                            | 26,423     | -5.0                           |
| 2024        | 854,427  | -0.3                           | 70,643                   | 4.3                            | —                     | —                              | —          | —                              |
| 2025        | 850,991  | -0.4                           | 73,420                   | 3.9                            | —                     | —                              | —          | —                              |
| 2026        | 845,870  | -0.6                           | 76,308                   | 3.9                            | —                     | —                              | —          | —                              |
| 2027        | 840,596  | -0.6                           | 79,309                   | 3.9                            | —                     | —                              | —          | —                              |
| 2028        | 835,552  | -0.6                           | 82,402                   | 3.9                            | —                     | —                              | —          | —                              |
| 2029        | 830,539  | -0.6                           | 85,616                   | 3.9                            | —                     | —                              | —          | —                              |

Notes:

Adjusted average daily membership from 1960 to 1971 are fall enrollment counts.

For all public schools, a large portion of the enrollment decline shown between 2003 and 2004 results from the limit on average daily membership to not more than 1.0.

Adjusted average daily membership for public schools and average daily membership for charter schools from 2022 to 2029 are estimated.

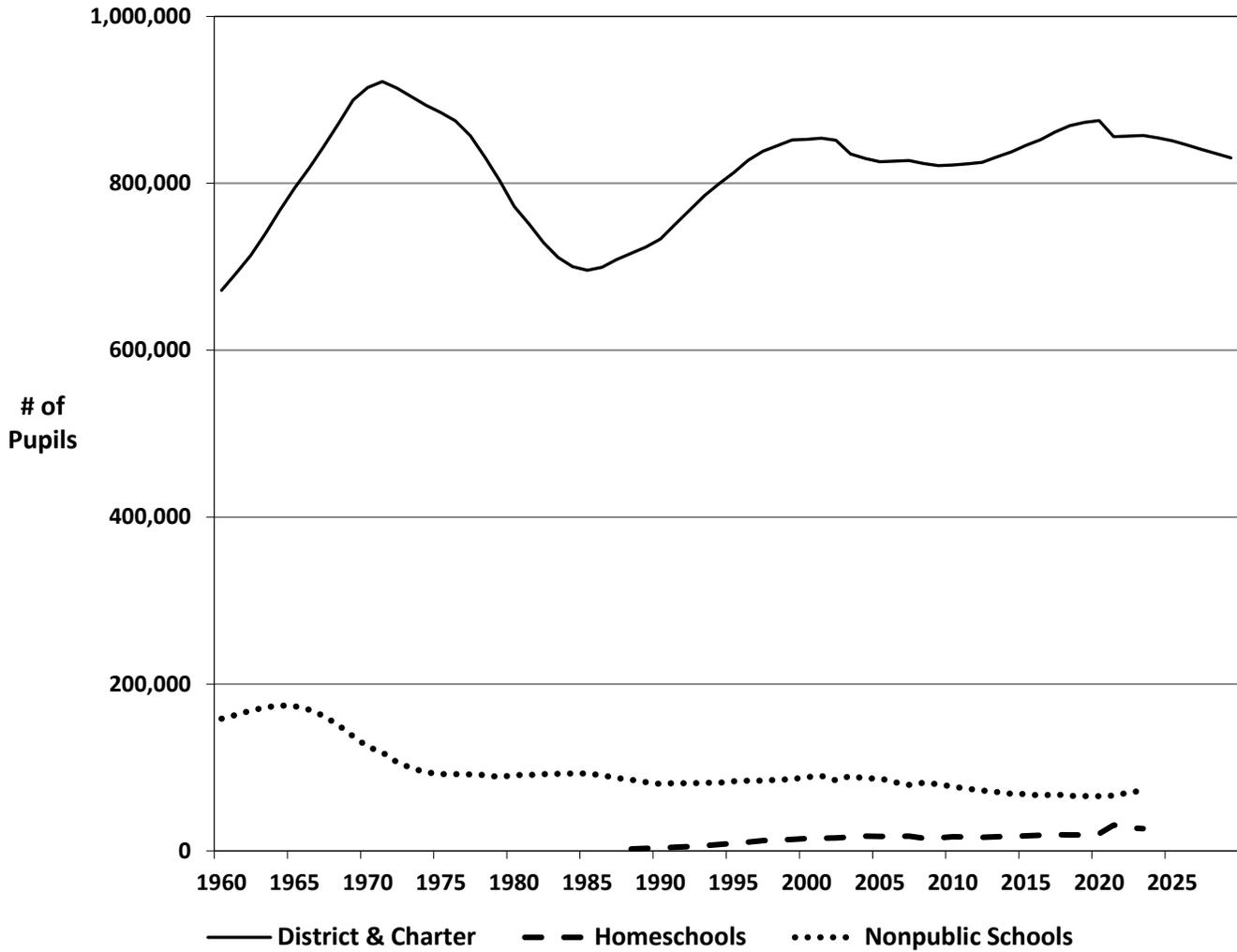
For nonpublic student enrollment for 2001-02 and 2006-07 school years, the Department of Education officials suspect significant under-reporting of nonpublic pupil count by nonpublic schools.

Homeschool enrollment for 2007 to 2023 is from Minnesota Department of Education Homeschool Enrollment by Compulsory Attendance Count. All ages compliant and noncompliant; 2012 to 2023.

Source: Pupil Unit Estimates, Minnesota Department of Education

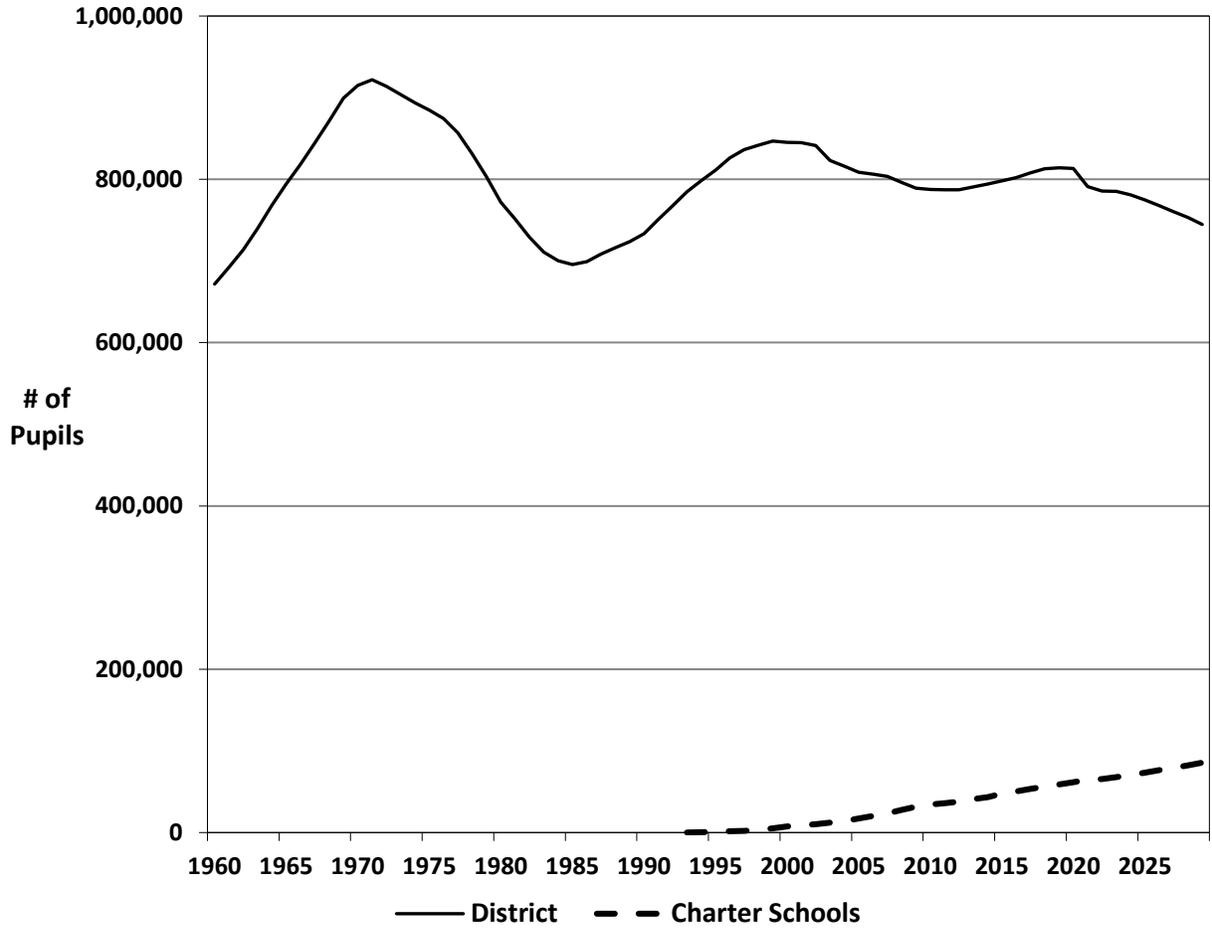
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**Table 4: Minnesota School Enrollment  
1960 to 2022 Actual; 2023 to 2029 Estimated**



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**Table 5: Students in Minnesota Public Schools  
1960 to 2029**



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## School Finance Terminology

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The following terms and concepts are essential to understand Minnesota's school finance program.

**Adjusted Marginal Cost Pupil Units (AMCPU):** The counts of pupils used for most school funding formulas through fiscal year 2014 and replaced by "adjusted pupil units" for fiscal year 2015 and later. The count is adjusted (meaning students actually served by the district), marginal (the greater of the current year's count, or 77 percent of current year's count and 23 percent of the previous year's count), and weighted by grade level (pupil units).

**Adjusted Net Tax Capacity (ANTC):** The net tax capacity of a school district as divided by the sales ratio. The purpose of the sales ratio adjustment is to neutralize the effect of different assessment practices among the taxing jurisdictions of the state.

**Adjusted Pupils Units:** Beginning in fiscal year 2015, adjusted pupil units, or adjusted weighted average daily membership, is the primary pupil count used in school-funding formulas. The count is weighted by grade level (.55 for half-day kindergarten, 1.0 for full-day kindergarten and elementary grades, and 1.2 for secondary grades) and "adjusted" to reflect students served.

**Aid Entitlement:** 100 percent of the state aid due a school district for a fiscal year, regardless of when the aid is actually received by the school district.

**Appropriation:** Amount of state aid paid to a school district during a fiscal year. The appropriation consists of a portion of the aid entitlement for the current year (for fiscal year 2024 this is 90 percent) and the remaining cleanup payments owed by the state to the school district for the previous fiscal year (10 percent).

**Average Daily Membership (ADM):** The sum for all pupils of the number of days in the district's school year that each pupil is enrolled, divided by the number of days the schools are in session.

**Categorical Aid:** Funds paid by the state to school districts and designated for specific purposes, such as transportation, special education for disabled children, and career and technical education. Categorical aids are relatively minor compared to general education revenue, the main school district funding stream.

**Elementary Sparsity Revenue:** Revenue available to small, sparsely populated school districts. Elementary sparsity revenue is part of general education revenue. To qualify for elementary sparsity revenue, a district must have an elementary school that is at least 19 miles from the next nearest elementary school and have an average of 20 or fewer students per elementary grade.

**Equalizing Factor:** For school funding formulas that are a mix of state aid and local property taxes, the "equalizing factor" is a way of calculating the local levy share. The equalizing factor is usually specified as a fixed number in statute, which, if a district's tax base per pupil is lower

than this amount, is used as the denominator to determine the local levy share. The equalizing factor is intended to partially equalize tax rates among school districts based on each district’s property tax base per pupil. The lower the district’s tax base per pupil, the lower the levy ratio, and the higher the state aid. Currently, many other school funding program formulas have statutorily fixed equalizing factors ranging from very generous to very small amounts of state aid.

**Fiscal Year:** A 12-month period between settlements of financial accounts. The fiscal year for the state and school districts runs from July 1 through June 30 and is identified by the calendar year in which it ends. For example, fiscal year 2024 runs from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. A fiscal year is interchangeable with a school year for school finance purposes. For example, fiscal year 2024 is equivalent to the 2023-24 school year.

**Formula Allowance:** The dollar amount per pupil unit used to calculate each district’s basic general education revenue—the “front end” of the formula. The formula allowance for fiscal year 2024 is \$7,138. This amount changes either because (1) the total funding is increasing or (2) existing separate formulas are “rolled in” to the general formula or funding for specific programs are “rolled out” of the general formula and into a separate formula.

**Table 6: General Education Formula Increases 1989 to 2025**  
(\$ per Pupil Unit)

| Fiscal Year | General Ed Formula Allowance | Statutory Dollar Increase in Formula | Formula Increase Adjusted for Roll-ins and Roll-outs & pupil weight changes | % Increase for Adjusted Formulas | Biennial Adjusted Formula Increases Over Previous Biennium |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|--|
| 2025        | \$7,281                      | \$143                                | \$143   | 2.0%                             | 6%   |
| 2024        | \$7,138                      | \$275                                | \$275   | 4.0%                             | —  |
| 2023        | \$6,863                      | \$135                                | \$135   | 2.0%                             | 4.45%  |
| 2022        | \$6,728                      | \$161                                | \$161   | 2.45%                            | —  |
| 2021        | \$6,567                      | \$129                                | \$129   | 2.0%                             | 4%   |
| 2020        | \$6,438                      | \$126                                | \$126   | 2.0%                             | —  |
| 2019        | \$6,312                      | \$124                                | \$124   | 2.0%                             | 4%   |
| 2018        | \$6,188                      | \$121                                | \$121   | 2.0%                             | —  |
| 2017        | \$6,067                      | \$119                                | \$119   | 2.0%                             | 4%   |
| 2016        | \$5,948                      | \$117                                | \$117   | 2.0%                             | —  |
| 2015        | \$5,831                      | \$529                                | \$105   | 2.0%                             | 3.5%   |
| 2014        | \$5,302                      | \$78                                 | \$78  | 1.5%                             | —  |
| 2013        | \$5,224                      | \$50                                 | \$50  | 1.0%                             | 2.0%   |

| Fiscal Year | General Ed Formula Allowance | Statutory Dollar Increase in Formula | Formula Increase Adjusted for Roll-ins and Roll-outs & pupil weight changes | % Increase for Adjusted Formulas | Biennial Adjusted Formula Increases Over Previous Biennium |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|--|
| 2012        | \$5,174                      | \$50                                 | \$50  | 1.0%                             | —  |
| 2011        | \$5,124                      | \$0                                  | \$0   | 0.0%                             | 0.0%   |
| 2010        | \$5,124                      | \$0                                  | \$0   | 0.0%                             | —  |
| 2009        | \$5,124                      | \$50                                 | \$50  | 1.0%                             | 3.0%   |
| 2008        | \$5,074                      | \$100                                | \$100   | 2.0%                             | —  |
| 2007        | \$4,974                      | \$181                                | \$191   | 4.0%                             | 8.1%   |
| 2006        | \$4,783                      | \$182                                | \$182   | 4.0%                             | —  |
| 2005        | \$4,601                      | \$0                                  | \$0   | 0.0%                             | 0.0%   |
| 2004        | \$4,601                      | \$0                                  | \$0   | 0.0%                             | —  |
| 2003        | \$4,601                      | \$533                                | \$104   | 2.6%                             | 5.3%   |
| 2002        | \$4,068                      | \$104                                | \$104   | 2.6%                             | —  |
| 2001        | \$3,964                      | \$224                                | \$157   | 4.2%                             | 9.2%   |
| 2000        | \$3,740                      | \$210                                | \$167   | 4.7%                             | —  |
| 1999        | \$3,530                      | -\$51                                | \$79  | 2.2%                             | 4.4%   |
| 1998        | \$3,581                      | \$76                                 | \$76  | 2.2%                             | —  |
| 1997        | \$3,505                      | \$300                                | \$0   | 0.0%                             | 1.8%   |
| 1996        | \$3,205                      | \$55                                 | \$55  | 1.7%                             | —  |
| 1995        | \$3,150                      | \$100                                | \$0   | 0.0%                             | 0.0%   |
| 1994        | \$3,050                      | \$0                                  | \$0   | 0.0%                             | —  |
| 1993        | \$3,050                      | \$0                                  | \$0   | 0.0%                             | 3.3%   |
| 1992        | \$3,050                      | \$97                                 | \$97  | 3.3%                             | —  |
| 1991        | \$2,953                      | \$115                                | \$115   | 4.1%                             | 7.2%   |
| 1990        | \$2,838                      | \$83                                 | \$83  | 3.0%                             | —  |
| 1989        | \$2,755                      | —                                    | —   | —                                | —  |

**Notes to Formula Adjustments**

In 2015: The \$529 increase included a pupil weight adjustment of \$424 to account for lower pupil weights and other changes to the general education program.

In 2003: The \$533 increase included a \$415 roll-in of referendum revenue and a \$14 roll-in of assurance of mastery revenue

In 2001: The \$224 increase was reduced by the \$67 roll-in of cooperation revenue

In 2000: The \$210 increase was reduced by the \$43 roll-in of graduation rule revenue

In 1999: The \$51 decrease was offset by the restoration of \$130 for training and experience revenue

In 1997: The \$300 increase was offset by reductions in training and experience and transportation funding

In 1995: For most school districts, the \$100 increase was offset by a corresponding reduction in referendum revenue

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**General Education Aid:** Funds paid by the state to school districts as part of the general education revenue program and permitted to be used for any operating expense.

**General Education Levy:** Portion of general education revenue received through the property tax. For fiscal years 2003 through 2012, there was no general education levy. A modified form of the general education levy was reinstated in fiscal year 2013 under the name “student achievement levy.” The 2015 Legislature repealed this levy beginning in fiscal year 2019.

**General Education Tax Rate:** The tax rate that when multiplied by the adjusted net tax capacity of all districts, raises the dollar value specified in statute. Prior to levies made in 1985, the legislature set the tax rate instead of the total dollar value that was to be raised. The general education tax rate equaled zero for fiscal years 2003 (taxes payable in 2002) through 2014. The general education tax rate (student achievement tax rate) was 0.30 percent for fiscal year 2017, 0.16 for fiscal year 2018, and was eliminated for fiscal year 2019 and later.

**General Education Revenue:** General education revenue is the primary formula for providing general operating funds to school districts and charter schools and is composed of basic general education revenue; extended time revenue; declining pupil revenue; local optional revenue; gifted and talented revenue; basic skills revenue, including EL and compensatory revenue; elementary and secondary sparsity revenue; transportation revenue; operating capital; equity revenue; small schools revenue; pension adjustment reserve; and transition revenue.

**Levy:** A tax imposed on property. The amount of property taxes that a school board may levy is limited by statute. Each autumn, the Minnesota Department of Education computes the exact amounts of the limits on the permitted levies for each district. For levies based on adjusted tax capacity, the previous year’s adjusted tax capacity value is used. Each year, school boards hold truth-in-taxation hearings, vote on how much of their maximum they want to levy, and “certify” that amount to the county auditor. Most districts certify the maximum levy possible. A levy certified in the late fall by the school board is collected by the county from the taxpayers in the calendar year beginning the following January. (See Table 84 on page 134 for an illustration of the relationship among the years for valuation, certification, collection, and use of levies.)

**Net Tax Capacity (NTC):** This value is derived by multiplying the taxable market value of each parcel by the appropriate class (use) rate for that parcel. Class rates for taxes payable in 2015 and later range from 0.45 percent on certain homesteads owned by disabled persons (residential homesteads with market values of less than \$500,000 are subject to a class rate of 1 percent) to 2 percent for most commercial/industrial property.

**Nonresident School District:** A district other than the student’s district of residence that provides educational services to the student (same as serving school district for funding purposes).

**Pupil Units:** A weighted count of pupils in ADM used in the calculation of state aid and local tax levies.

**Resident District:** The district where the student’s parent or guardian lives.

**Serving School District:** The district providing educational services to a student.

**Secondary Sparsity Revenue:** Revenue paid to small, sparsely populated school districts. The secondary sparsity revenue formula takes into account the secondary enrollment, the distance between high schools, and the geographic area of the district. Secondary sparsity revenue is a component of the general education revenue program.

**Tax Capacity Percentages (class rates):** Statutory classification percentages that are applied to market values to vary property tax by class of property.

**Tax Capacity Rate:** The rate arrived at by dividing each district's levy amount by the district's net tax capacity. Tax capacity rate replaces the term "mill rate."

**Transportation Sparsity Revenue:** Component of the general education revenue program used to provide additional revenue to school districts that have a relatively low ratio of pupils to the square mile area of the school district.

**Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS):** Rules and instructions adopted under legislative mandate to govern the methods by which school districts record financial transactions and inform the Department of Education and public about their finances.

The following is a list of acronyms that are commonly used when discussing education issues.

**Table 7: Education Acronyms**

| Acronym | Name                                       | Meaning/Use  |
|---------|--|--|
| ADM     | Average Daily Membership                   | Count of resident students attending public school   |
| ANTC    | Adjusted Net Tax Capacity                  | Taxable tax base adjusted by the sales ratio   |
| APU     | Adjusted Pupil Units                       | Weighted count of students actually served by a public school (adjusted average daily membership) used to compute most education revenue amounts   |
| EBD     | Emotional Behavioral Disorder              | Condition characterized by an established pattern of behavior that may include such things as severely aggressive or impulsive behaviors           |
| ECFE    | Early Childhood Family Education           | School district operated programs designed to provide parenting skills and early learning opportunities for children five years of age and younger |
| EL      | English Learner                            | Students who are not yet proficient in the English language  |
| ESSA    | Every Student Succeeds Act                 | 2015 federal law reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), replacing the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act                    |
| HSGI    | High School Graduation Incentive Program   | Alternative program for students who are not succeeding in a traditional academic setting  |
| IDEA    | Individual with Disabilities Education Act | Federal law governing many special education procedures  |

| Acronym | Name                                     | Meaning/Use   |
|---------|--|---|
| IEP     | Individualized Education Program         | Plan developed by school officials and student's parent or guardian to address educational needs of a special education pupil                       |
| K-12    | Kindergarten through Grade 12            | Grades generally served by public schools; shorthand for elementary and secondary education, sometimes also referred to as E-12 and PreK-12         |
| LD      | Specific Learning Disability             | Condition within the student affecting learning, relative to potential, manifested by interference with learning                                    |
| LRE     | Least Restrictive Environment            | Special education term that refers to the requirement that a special education student must be kept in the most mainstreamed program possible       |
| NTC     | Net Tax Capacity                         | Taxable tax base most levies are spread against   |
| PELRA   | Public Employee Labor Relations Act      | Laws governing collective bargaining for Minnesota's public employees   |
| PK      | Prekindergarten                          | Students not yet enrolled in kindergarten   |
| PSEO    | Postsecondary Enrollment Options Program | Choice program allowing certain 10th grade students and 11th and 12th grade students to attend postsecondary institutions                           |
| SR+     | School Readiness Plus                    | School readiness program for four-year-old students operated by school districts and charter schools (similar to VPK)                               |
| T&E     | Training and Experience                  | Former category of the general education funding program that generated additional revenue for additional levels of teacher training and experience |
| WADM    | Weighted Average Daily Membership        | Count of pupils formerly used in some education funding formulas  |
| VPK     | Voluntary Prekindergarten                | School readiness program for four-year-old students operated by school districts and charter schools  |

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# Property Tax System Terminology

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In order to understand education finance, it is important to be familiar with Minnesota's property tax terminology and its two types of property tax bases that are used to compute and spread school district levies.

## Tax Base Terms

**Market Value:** Each individual parcel of property is valued by an assessor. This value is referred to as estimated market value. Estimated market value is the value, as the name implies, that the property would bring in a sale on the open market.

**Taxable Market Value:** For homes with a value under \$413,800, state law excludes a portion of each home's market value for property tax purposes. For homes valued at \$76,000 or less, 40 percent of the value is excluded from taxable market value. As the value of the home increases, the exclusion is phased out. A home with a value in excess of \$413,800 receives no exclusion. Each property's taxable market value is its estimated market value less its homestead market value exclusion.

**Referendum Market Value:** Referendum market value is the taxable market value of all taxable property in the school district excluding two classes of property; seasonal recreational properties, and agricultural lands. School taxes for the local share of the operating referendum, local optional revenue, equity revenue, and transition revenue are computed and spread against referendum market value. All other school levies are calculated and spread on various versions of net tax capacity.

**Net Tax Capacity (NTC):** The legislature has established class rates for different types of property (e.g., homestead, commercial, residential, rental, etc.), and the assessor applies the appropriate class rate to the taxable market value of each parcel of property. The resulting value is called tax capacity or net tax capacity. Tax capacity is the value of the property that the property taxes will be levied against for all school funding formulas, except for the levy share of operating referendum revenue, local optional revenue, equity revenue, and transition revenue (which are levied against the referendum market value of the school district).

**Sales Ratio:** A sales ratio is a statistical measure prepared by the Department of Revenue that measures the difference between the actual sale prices of property and the assessor's market values on those properties. The purpose of the sales ratio is to neutralize the effect of different assessment practices among the taxing jurisdictions of the state. The sales ratio is divided into the taxable value (net tax capacity) to obtain the adjusted tax capacity of a school district.

**Adjusted Net Tax Capacity (ANTC):** School funding formulas that are spread on net tax capacity are generally calculated using adjusted net tax capacity. Adjusted net tax capacity is the net tax capacity of the district divided by its sales ratio.

## Calculating and Paying School Taxes

**Tax Rates:** The property taxes levied against each parcel of property are computed by the county auditor, who adds up the total dollars of property tax levied by each local unit of government and determines what rate of taxation needs to be applied to the tax capacity of the taxing jurisdictions in order to raise that dollar amount. The rate of taxation is called the tax rate. A net tax capacity tax rate is expressed as a percentage of taxable value. A 50 percent tax rate, therefore, raises \$50 for each \$100 of taxable value (tax capacity). A similar tax rate is calculated for tax levies spread on referendum market value.

**Tax Statement:** The property taxpayer receives a statement listing the total tax rate levied by each taxing jurisdiction (school district, county, and city or township) and the total dollar amount of taxes owed. A preliminary version of this statement, called the Notice of Proposed Property Taxes, is sent out in November each year. The final version is sent out the following spring.

**Payment of Property Taxes:** The taxpayer makes two payments to the county treasurer for the total taxes owed for all jurisdictions, and the county treasurer then forwards the remitted amounts to the appropriate taxing jurisdiction (city, county, or school district).

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## Counting Students

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Minnesota funds the majority of its K-12 programs on a rather involved count of the number of students attending each public school. For fiscal year 2015 and later, for most funding programs, the pupil count, known as adjusted pupil units, is used to determine school revenue amounts. This count does not include homeschool or traditional nonpublic students.

### Determining Pupil Units

There are three steps involved in calculating the student count, called adjusted pupil units, which are used in most of the K-12 funding formulas.

- 1) **Average Daily Membership (ADM):** Students are counted in average daily membership. Average daily membership is the count of resident students in the district for the full school year. A “resident” student means a student who lives in that school district and attends a school district, charter school, or other public K-12 education program. Students that are present for only part of the year are prorated for their time attending the school. Excused absences from school (for things such as illness, etc.) do not reduce a school district’s ADM.
- 2) **Adjusted Pupils or Adjusted Average Daily Membership (AADM):** The ADM student count is adjusted to reflect only the students actually served by the district. Each district’s pupil count is reduced by the number of students leaving the district to attend a charter school or through open enrollment and increased by the number of students entering the district from another district.
- 3) **Adjusted Pupil Units:** Each student is weighted by grade level according to the weights listed in Table 8. The different weights are intended to reflect differing educational costs across the grade levels.

### Other Pupil Counts

There are a variety of other counts used for select school finance formulas. The following is a brief list of these counts.

**Resident Pupil Units or Weighted Average Daily Membership (WADM):** For fiscal year 2015 and later, for purposes of calculating a school district’s operating referendum revenue aid and levy shares, resident pupil units or WADM are used. This count is the same as the adjusted pupil units except that it is based on resident pupils, instead of pupils served by the school district.

**Enrollees:** Student enrollment is based on the count of students as of October 1 of the school year. This count of students is used only for a few school formulas, where a site count is necessary, such as the alternative compensation revenue calculation. Enrollment counts are also used as the denominator for formulas such as compensatory revenue, where the

numerator is based on free and reduced lunch counts, which are taken as part of the October 1 census data.

### Pupil Weights

Pupils are weighted by grade level. The following table shows the weights by grade. Pupil units, called actual pupil units or weighted average daily membership (WADM), are equal to the number of full-time pupils times the appropriate pupil unit weight by grade.

**Table 8: Enrollment Weights by Grade**

| Fiscal Year(s) | Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Disabled Weight* | Voluntary Prekindergarten Weight | Half-day Kindergarten Weight | Full-day Kindergarten Weight | Grades 1-3 Weight | Grades 4-6 Weight | Secondary Weight |
|----------------|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 2017 and later | Hours served                                      | 0.60**                           | .550                         | 1.00                         | 1.00              | 1.00              | 1.20             |
| 2015 and 2016  | Hours served                                      | NA                               | .550                         | 1.00                         | 1.00              | 1.00              | 1.20             |
| 2008 to 2014   | Hours served                                      | NA                               | .612                         | .612                         | 1.115             | 1.06              | 1.30             |
| 2000 to 2007   | Hours served                                      | NA                               | .557                         | .557                         | 1.115             | 1.06              | 1.30             |
| 1995 to 1999   | Hours served                                      | NA                               | .530                         | .530                         | 1.06              | 1.06              | 1.30             |
| 1994           | Hours served                                      | NA                               | .515                         | .515                         | 1.03              | 1.03              | 1.30             |
| 1992 to 1993   | Hours served                                      | NA                               | .500                         | .500                         | 1.00              | 1.00              | 1.30             |
| 1990 to 1991   | Hours served                                      | NA                               | .500                         | .500                         | 1.00              | 1.00              | 1.35             |

\* The prekindergarten disabled pupil weight equals the ratio of the actual hours served to 825 times 1.25, limited to minimum of 0.28 and a maximum of 1.25. The kindergarten disabled weight equals the ratio of the actual hours served to 875, but not more than 1.0.

\*\* The voluntary prekindergarten weight applies only to specifically approved programs. The maximum weight is 0.60 regardless of the maximum hours of service. A program must provide at least 350 hours of service to receive the minimum weight of 0.412. The funding was first available for fiscal year 2017.

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For fiscal years 1994 to 2014, the additional kindergarten (above .50) and elementary pupil weights (above 1.0) provided reserved revenue that had to be set aside to reduce elementary class sizes. For fiscal year 2015 and later, a school must reserve \$299 per kindergarten pupil and \$459 per pupil for all other elementary grades for class size reduction efforts.

# General Education Revenue

Elementary and secondary schools receive the bulk of their general operating funds from the state through the general education revenue program. General education revenue is provided mainly through state aid payments, but within the general education program, there are equalized levies for operating capital, equity revenue, and transition revenue.

## Components of General Education Revenue

The general education revenue funding formula is the primary source of general operating funds for school districts. Statewide, approximately two-thirds of school districts' total revenue comes from the general education program. Each school district's general education revenue is the sum of the components shown in Table 9. The table shows each general education revenue component name, revenue amount, and the number of districts eligible for the revenue for that year.

**Table 9: General Education Revenue Components  
Excluding Referendum Revenue  
Estimated for Fiscal Year 2024**

| General Education Revenue Component |   | All Revenue (District and Charter) | Number of Eligible Districts | Charter School Revenue Only | Est. Number of Eligible Charters* |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1                                   | Basic Education Revenue (Formula Allowance) | \$6,648,471,000                    | 329/329                      | \$544,896,000               | 180/180                           |
| 2                                   | Extended Time Revenue                       | 58,231,000                         | 148/329                      | 111,000                     | 16/180                            |
| 3                                   | Gifted and Talented                         | 12,108,000                         | 329/329                      | 992,000                     | 180/180                           |
| 4                                   | Small Schools Revenue                       | 16,523,000                         | 163/329                      | 0                           | 0/180                             |
| 5                                   | Declining Enrollment Revenue                | 21,467,000                         | 189/329                      | 5,436,000                   | 48/180                            |
| 6                                   | Local Optional Revenue                      | 617,852,000                        | 328/329                      | 0                           | 0/180                             |
| 7a                                  | Basic Skills Revenue (compensatory)         | 806,721,000                        | 327/329                      | 131,179,000                 | 180/180                           |
| 7b                                  | Basic Skills Revenue (English learner)      | 105,505,000                        | 259/329                      | 22,674,000                  | 136/180                           |
| 8                                   | Sparsity Revenue (elementary and secondary) | 31,110,000                         | 104/329                      | 2,561,000                   | 180/180                           |
| 9                                   | Operating Capital Revenue                   | 212,908,000                        | 329/329                      | 17,450,000                  | 180/180                           |
| 10                                  | Transportation Sparsity Revenue             | 88,877,000                         | 317/329                      | 2,381,000                   | 73/180                            |
| 11                                  | Equity Revenue                              | 106,980,000                        | 329/329                      | 8,768,000                   | 180/180                           |
| 12                                  | Transition Revenue                          | 27,762,000                         | 198/329                      | 2,460,000                   | 35/180                            |

| General Education Revenue Component |  | All Revenue (District and Charter) | Number of Eligible Districts | Charter School Revenue Only | Est. Number of Eligible Charters* |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 13                                  | Pension Adjustment Revenue             | 84,255,000                         | 329/329                      | 7,052,000                   | 175/180                           |
| 14                                  | Options Adjustments                    | 2,579,000                          | 69/329                       | -2,094,000                  | 52/180                            |
|                                     | <b>Total General Education Revenue</b> | <b>\$9,722,749,000</b>             | <b>329/329</b>               | <b>\$743,864,000</b>        | <b>180/180</b>                    |

\* As of June 30, 2023, 180 charter schools and 329 school districts were reporting estimated pupils for the 2023-24 school year.

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Minnesota’s school districts and charter schools use general education revenue to pay for the operating expenses of the district including employee salaries, employee benefits, and supply costs.

General education revenue, except for the portion of revenue attributable to compensatory revenue, which must be passed through to each school site, is provided to school districts, and each local school board determines how to allocate that money among school sites and programs, subject to certain legislative restrictions.

### 1. Basic Education Revenue

Basic education revenue for each district equals the product of the formula allowance multiplied by the adjusted pupil units for the school year. The basic formula allowance is \$7,138 for fiscal year 2024 and \$7,281 for fiscal year 2025. For fiscal years 2026 and later, the basic formula allowance increases by the rate of inflation but is limited to a band of not less than a 2 percent increase over the previous year and not more than a 3 percent increase over the previous year.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subd. 2)

**Table 10: Basic Education Formula Allowances**

| School Year | Formula Allowance |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 2024-25     | \$7,281           |
| 2023-24     | 7,138             |
| 2022-23     | 6,863             |
| 2021-22     | 6,728             |
| 2020-21     | 6,567             |
| 2019-20     | 6,438             |

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## 2. Extended Time Revenue

Beginning in fiscal year 2004, school districts are prohibited from counting a student as more than 1.0 in average daily membership (ADM). Prior to this, a student could be counted in excess of 1.0 if the student was participating in a learning year program. A learning year program may include extended day, extended week, summer school programming, or an independent study program. The 1987 Legislature eliminated funding for summer school when it replaced the foundation aid program with the general education revenue program. During the 1990s, many school districts started using the learning year program as a method to fund summer school programs. The growth in learning year pupils was quite significant. The 2003 Legislature adopted a provision that limits a student's annual average daily membership to 1.0.

The extended time revenue program allows a school district to count a student who participates in extended programming for up to an additional 0.2 students in ADM for the time the student spends in extended day, extended week, summer school, or other additional programming authorized by the learning year program. This additional ADM counts only for purposes of generating extended time revenue. The extended time revenue allowance is \$5,117. For charter schools offering extended time services per pupil extended time revenue equals 25 percent of the district average amount for that year.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subd. 2a)

$$\text{School District Extended Time Revenue} = \$5,117 \times \text{the district's extended time adjusted pupil units}$$

## 3. Gifted and Talented Revenue

A school district receives \$13 per pupil unit for gifted and talented programming. The revenue must be reserved and spent only to:

- 1) identify gifted and talented students;
- 2) provide education programs for gifted and talented students; or
- 3) provide staff development to prepare teachers to teach gifted and talented students.

$$\text{Gifted and Talented Revenue} = \$13 \times \text{Adjusted Pupil Units}$$

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subd. 2b)

## 4. Small Schools Revenue

A school district (but not a charter school) that serves less than 960 pupil units is eligible for small schools revenue equal to \$544 times the district's adjusted pupil units, times the ratio of 960 less the district's adjusted pupil units to 960.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subd. 2c)

## 5. Declining Enrollment Revenue

A district's declining enrollment revenue equals the greater of zero or 28 percent of the formula allowance for that year and the difference between adjusted pupil units for the current year and the adjusted pupil units for the previous year.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subd. 2d)

## 6. Local Optional Revenue

A school district's local optional revenue equals \$724 per pupil unit. Local optional revenue is available to school districts only and is not available to charter schools.

Local optional revenue consists of two tiers, the first tier of \$300 per pupil, is equalized at \$880,000 per pupil (the same equalizing factor that existed when this tier was included in operating referendum revenue). The second tier, \$424 per pupil, is equalized at \$510,000 per pupil for fiscal year 2024 and later. For fiscal year 2021 and later, there is no longer any connection between local optional revenue and operating referendum revenue.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.10, subd. 2d; 126C.17)

## 7. Basic Skills Revenue

Basic skills revenue consists of compensatory revenue and English learner (EL) revenue.

**Compensatory Revenue.** The vast majority of basic skills revenue is generated by the compensatory revenue formula. Compensatory revenue is site-based revenue. The revenue is calculated based on the characteristics of each school site, and at least 50 percent of the revenue must be distributed to qualifying programs at each site. Compensatory revenue must be used to meet the educational needs of pupils whose progress toward meeting state or local content or performance standards is below the level that is appropriate for learners of their age.

Eligible uses of compensatory revenue include the following:

- providing remedial instruction in reading, math, and other core curriculum;
- adding teachers and teacher aides to provide more individualized instruction;
- lengthening the school day, week, or year (including summer school);
- operating programs to reduce truancy; providing counseling, guidance, and social work services; and coordinating services from other governmental agencies;
- providing bilingual and bicultural programs for English learner students;
- providing early education programs, parent training programs, and home visiting and other outreach efforts;
- enabling transition programs for special education students until the age of 22; and

- using professional development for teachers on meeting the needs of EL students, using assessment and tools, reducing the use of exclusionary discipline, and training for tutors and staff in extended day programs.

Compensatory revenue must be reserved in a separate account, and each district must produce an annual report describing how compensatory revenue has been spent at each site within the district.

The compensatory revenue increases as the number of compensatory pupil units goes up, which is driven by the number of free and reduced lunch students as well as the percentage of such students at the school site. A higher percentage concentration of free and reduced price lunch students leads to a higher count of compensatory pupil units.

**Compensatory Pupil Units.** Compensatory revenue is provided to school sites through the compensatory revenue component of the general education formula based on the number of students at the site eligible for free or reduced price meals. The formula is often referred to as a concentration formula because as the concentration of students eligible for free or reduced price meals increases, the compensatory revenue per compensatory pupil also increases.

Compensatory pupils are counted and calculated at the site where the students are being educated. A pupil is counted as a compensatory pupil if the pupil is eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Eligibility for free and reduced-price meals is set by the federal government at 130 percent and 185 percent of the federal poverty guidelines, respectively (for fiscal year 2024, these percentages limited yearly income for a family of four to not more than \$39,000 and \$55,500). The compensatory pupil count is conducted during the fall at each school site. In addition to parent-reported income data, school districts may also qualify students through “direct match” with income information held by the state for participants in certain public assistance programs medical assistance (MA) and SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program).

Compensatory pupil units are calculated for each site as follows:

- 1) Calculate the building concentration factor, which is equal to the ratio of the number of pupils eligible for free lunch plus half of the number of pupils eligible for reduced price meals to the school site’s total enrollment
- 2) Calculate a building weighting factor equal to the lesser of:
  - (a) 1; or
  - (b) the building’s concentration factor divided by .80
- 3) Multiply the compensation pupils calculated in step (1) by the weighting factor calculated in step (2) by .60

The formula that generates compensatory revenue is a concentration formula based on each school building’s count of students that are eligible for free or reduced price meals.

$$\text{Compensatory Pupil Units} = \left( \begin{matrix} \text{Free Lunch} \\ \text{Students} \end{matrix} + \begin{matrix} (.5 \times \text{Reduced Lunch} \\ \text{Students}) \end{matrix} \right) \times .6 \times \begin{matrix} \text{the lesser of:} \\ (1) \text{ one; or} \\ (2) \text{ (free lunch students + (.5 x} \\ \text{reduced lunch students)/building} \\ \text{ADM)/.8} \end{matrix}$$

$$\text{Compensatory Revenue} = (\text{Basic Formula Allowance} - \$839) \times \text{Compensatory Pupil Units}$$

(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.05, subd. 3; 126C.10, subd. 3; 126C.15)

The following table displays some characteristics of several selected school buildings and the resulting compensatory revenue.

**Table 11: Compensatory Revenue Characteristics for Selected School Buildings for the 2023-24 School Year**

| Dist. No.                  | District Name | Building Name | Fall 2022 School Enrollment | Pupils Eligible for Free or Reduced Meals | % of Enrollees Eligible | Compensatory Revenue | Compensatory Revenue/ Enrollee |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1                          | Minneapolis   | Bethune       | 276                         | 247                                       | 89%                     | \$917,000            | \$3,321                        |
| 1                          | Minneapolis   | Barton        | 485                         | 158                                       | 33                      | 209,000              | 431                            |
| 38                         | Red Lake      | Elementary    | 489                         | 440                                       | 90                      | 1,644,000            | 3,362                          |
| 264                        | Herman        | Elementary    | 52                          | 31  | 60                      | 66,000               | 1,273                          |
| 273                        | Edina         | South View    | 987                         | 217                                       | 22                      | 197,000              | 200                            |
| 282                        | St. Anthony   | Sr. High      | 705                         | 230                                       | 33                      | 283,000              | 401                            |
| 284                        | Wayzata       | Kimberly Lane | 527                         | 45  | 9                       | 13,000               | 25                             |
| 625                        | St. Paul      | Adams         | 496                         | 215                                       | 43                      | 358,000              | 723                            |
| 625                        | St. Paul      | Vento         | 544                         | 496                                       | 91                      | 1,825,000            | 3,356                          |
| 709                        | Duluth        | East          | 1,494                       | 340                                       | 23                      | 289,000              | 194                            |
| 709                        | Duluth        | Myers-Wilkins | 341                         | 300                                       | 88                      | 1,096,000            | 3,214                          |
| 833                        | S. Wash.      | East Ridge    | 2,021                       | 299                                       | 15                      | 162,000              | 80                             |
| <b>State Average/Total</b> |               |               | <b>869,055</b>              | <b>377,471</b>                            | <b>43%</b>              | <b>\$799,300,000</b> | <b>\$920</b>                   |

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**English Learner (EL) Revenue.** Districts receive EL revenue to provide instruction to students with limited English skills. Programs may include bilingual programs or English-as-a-second-language (ESL) programs. Bilingual education programs provide curriculum instruction to students in their native language. ESL program students are taught to read, write, listen, and speak in English. The state has provided funding for EL programs since 1980. In the early

2000s, the maximum number of years that a student could qualify for EL funding was reduced from seven to five years. This limitation was increased to six years for fiscal years 2015 and 2016 and restored to seven years for fiscal year 2017 and later.

There are two parts to the EL portion of basic skills revenue: the first part or basic formula is a set amount per EL pupil; the second part of the EL formula is a concentration formula. A school district with at least one student eligible for EL services has a statutorily assigned minimum EL pupil count of 20.

$$\text{Basic EL Revenue} = \$1,228 \times \text{district's EL Pupil Units}$$

$$\text{EL Concentration Pupils} = \text{EL pupils} \times \text{the lesser of:}$$

- (1) 1; or
- (2) (EL pupils/ADM)/.115

$$\text{EL Concentration Revenue} = \$436 \times \text{the district's EL concentration pupils}$$

For four years only, fiscal years 2022 through 2025, an additional \$2 million per year is distributed proportionately across all districts eligible for EL revenue.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.58-124D.65; 126C.10, subd. 3)

**Table 12: English Learner Revenue Characteristics for Selected School Districts 2023-24 School Year**

| Dist. No. | District Name                    | FY 24 Pupils Served (AADM) | Est. FY 24 English Learners | % English Learner | Total English Learner Revenue | English Learner Revenue per Pupil |
|-----------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|           | <b>Totals</b>                    | <b>851,298</b>             | <b>64,336</b>               | <b>7.6%</b>       | <b>\$105,505,000</b>          | <b>\$124</b>                      |
|           | <b>Mpls &amp; St. Paul</b>       | 58,546                     | 11,100                      | 19.0%             | 18,470,000                    | 315                               |
|           | <b>Inner Ring Suburbs</b>        | 85,316                     | 7,643                       | 9.0%              | 12,071,000                    | 141                               |
|           | <b>Outer Ring Suburbs</b>        | 268,387                    | 14,087                      | 5.2%              | 21,153,000                    | 79                                |
|           | <b>Greater MN &gt;2,000</b>      | 187,850                    | 10,490                      | 5.6%              | 16,713,000                    | 89                                |
|           | <b>Greater MN 1,000 to 2,000</b> | 85,728                     | 2,159                       | 2.4%              | 3,773,000                     | 42                                |
|           | <b>Greater MN &lt;1,000</b>      | 85,728                     | 1,809                       | 2.1%              | 4,300,000                     | 50                                |
|           | <b>Charters</b>                  | 70,816                     | 13,122                      | 18.5%             | 22,674,000                    | 320                               |
| 4269      | Quantum Steam Academy            | 130                        | 130                         | 100.0%            | 216,000                       | 1,694                             |
| 4178      | Lincoln International            | 160                        | 120                         | 75.0%             | 200,000                       | 1,248                             |

| Dist. No. | District Name          | FY 24 Pupils Served (AADM) | Est. FY 24 English Learners | % English Learner | Total English Learner Revenue | English Learner Revenue per Pupil |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 4073      | Academia Cesar Chavez  | 544                        | 306                         | 56.3%             | 509,000                       | 936                               |
| 518       | Worthington            | 3,345                      | 1,335                       | 39.9%             | 2,221,000                     | 664                               |
| 13        | Columbia Heights       | 3,242                      | 875                         | 27.0%             | 1,456,000                     | 449                               |
| 625       | St. Paul               | 31,542                     | 7,600                       | 24.1%             | 12,646,000                    | 401                               |
| 742       | St. Cloud              | 9,097                      | 2,050                       | 22.5%             | 3,411,000                     | 375                               |
| 347       | Willmar                | 3,984                      | 803                         | 20.2%             | 1,336,000                     | 335                               |
| 241       | Albert Lea             | 3,371                      | 288                         | 8.5%              | 450,000                       | 134                               |
| 4098      | Nova Classical Academy | 1,042                      | 30                          | 2.9%              | 40,000                        | 38                                |
| 284       | Wayzata                | 11,923                     | 280                         | 2.3%              | 369,000                       | 31                                |

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## 8. Sparsity Revenue

**Secondary Sparsity Revenue.** Secondary sparsity revenue provides additional revenue to geographically large districts that have relatively few secondary pupils. The formula measures sparsity and isolation of the district and then provides additional revenue to the district using an assumption about how many pupil units are necessary to run an acceptable secondary program. The formula assumes that a district with 400 secondary pupils in average daily attendance can provide an acceptable secondary program. Therefore, a district with one high school, no matter how few pupils per square mile it has, will not receive any sparsity aid if the district has a secondary average daily membership (SADM) in excess of 400. In addition, the requirement of large geographic size ensures funding for districts that have few pupils due to geographic isolation and not due to a school board’s reluctance to provide cooperative programming with a neighboring school district.

Secondary sparsity revenue is computed as follows:

$$\text{Isolation Index} = \begin{matrix} \text{the greater of zero or the lesser of:} \\ \text{(a) 1.5; or} \\ \text{(b)(i) } (\sqrt{.55 \times \text{sq. mile attendance area}}), \text{ plus} \\ \text{(ii) miles to next nearest high school, minus} \\ \text{(iii) 23,} \\ \text{(iv) all divided by 10} \end{matrix}$$

$$\text{Secondary Sparsity Revenue} = \frac{\text{Sparsity Formula Allowance}^2}{\text{Adjusted Pupil Units}} \times \frac{(400 - \text{SADM})}{(400 + \text{SADM})} \times \text{Isolation Index}$$

The isolation index is a numerical representation of the distance from the corner of the district to the secondary school of the district (assuming a nearly square district with the school in the center of the district which would represent the furthest a student would travel to the resident secondary school) and the miles to the next nearest high school.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subds. 6 and 7)

**Elementary Sparsity Revenue.** A school district qualifies for elementary sparsity revenue if it has an elementary school that is located 19 or more miles from the next nearest elementary school and has fewer than 20 pupils per elementary grade. As with secondary sparsity revenue, the more elementary pupils in average daily membership (EADM) attending the school, the lower the elementary sparsity revenue per pupil.

$$\text{Elementary Sparsity Revenue} = \frac{\text{Sparsity Formula Allowance}}{\text{EADM}} \times \left( \frac{140 - \text{EADM}}{140 + \text{EADM}} \right)$$

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subds. 6 and 8)

Table 15 (page 36) displays characteristics of the sparsest and densest districts in the state.

**Sparsity Guarantee.** A school district that closes a school facility is eligible for at least as much sparsity revenue as it received in the previous school year. A district that loses sparsity revenue because of a neighboring district's decision to relocate a school is eligible for at least as much sparsity revenue as it received in the previous school year.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subd. 8a)

## 9. Operating Capital Revenue

Operating capital revenue replaced two former capital formulas known as equipment revenue and facilities revenue and moved the revenue stream to each district's general fund. The 2023 Legislature added a "supplies" category to operating capital, with funding equal to \$2 per pupil unit for the costs associated with menstrual products and stocking opiate antagonists.

Operating capital revenue must be reserved and used for equipment, facility, and supplies needs. A school board may spend other general fund money for operating capital expenses, but general fund money provided by the operating capital revenue component must be reserved and spent only for eligible equipment, facilities, and supplies needs.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subds. 13, 14, 15, and 16)

<sup>2</sup> The sparsity allowance is the basic formula allowance less \$530.

**Revenue Computation.** Operating capital revenue equals the sum of: (1) \$2 per pupil unit for supplies; (2) \$79 per pupil unit (formerly limited for equipment); and (3) the product of \$109 per pupil unit and the district's average building age index (formerly limited for facility needs). The age index is called the maintenance cost index (MCI) and is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Maintenance Cost Index (MCI)} = \frac{\text{Weighted square footage of buildings}}{\text{Unweighted square footage of buildings}}$$

The weighted square footage of each building is equal to the building's square footage times the lesser of:

- (a) 1.50; or
- (b) the sum of 1.0 + (the age of each building or addition /100)

Operating capital revenue is provided through an equalized aid and levy and is computed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Operating Capital Revenue} &= [\$2 + \$79 + (\text{MCI} \times \$109)] \times \text{Adjusted Pupil Units} \\ \text{Operating Capital Levy} &= \text{Operating Capital Revenue} \times \text{the lesser of:} \\ &\quad (1) \text{ one; or} \\ &\quad (2) (\text{ANTC/Adjusted Pupil Units})/\$22,912 \\ \text{Operating Capital Aid} &= \text{Operating Capital Revenue} - \text{Operating Capital Levy} \end{aligned}$$

**Eligible Uses.** Eligible uses of operating capital revenue include the following:

- acquiring land for school purposes
- acquiring or constructing buildings for school purposes
- renting or leasing buildings, including the costs of building repair or improvement that are part of a lease agreement
- improving and repairing school sites and buildings, and equipping or reequipping school buildings with permanent attached fixtures
- using the revenue for a surplus school building that is used substantially for a public nonschool purpose
- eliminating barriers or increasing access to school buildings for individuals with a disability
- bringing school buildings into compliance with the uniform fire code adopted according to chapter 299F
- removing asbestos from school buildings, encapsulating asbestos, or making asbestos-related repairs
- cleaning and disposing of polychlorinated biphenyls found in school buildings

- cleaning, removing, disposing of, and making repairs related to storing heating fuel or transportation fuels such as alcohol, gasoline, fuel oil, and special fuel, as defined in section 296.01
- performing energy audits for school buildings and for modifying buildings if the audit indicates the cost of the modification can be recovered within ten years
- improving buildings that are leased according to section 123.36, subdivision 10
- paying special assessments levied against school property but not paying assessments for service charges
- paying principal and interest on state loans for energy conservation according to section 216C.37 or loans made under the northeast Minnesota Economic Protection Trust Fund Act according to sections 298.292 to 298.298
- purchasing or leasing interactive telecommunications equipment
- paying principal and interest payments on certain debt obligations
- paying capital expenditure equipment-related assessments of any entity formed under a cooperative agreement between two or more districts
- purchasing or leasing computers and related materials, copying machines, telecommunications equipment, and other noninstructional equipment
- purchasing or leasing assistive technology or equipment for instructional programs
- purchasing textbooks
- purchasing and replacing library books
- purchasing or leasing vehicles
- purchasing or leasing telecommunications equipment; computers hardware, software, and any associated annual licensing fees; and related equipment for integrated information management systems
- paying personnel costs directly related to the acquisition, operation, and maintenance of telecommunications systems, computers, related equipment, and network and applications software
- paying the costs directly associated with closing a school facility, including moving and storage costs
- paying the costs of supplies and equipment for menstrual products
- paying the costs of opiate antagonists

## 10. Transportation Sparsity Revenue

A compromise agreement reached during the 1995 Special Session and affirmed by the 1997 Legislature led to the elimination of the basic transportation funding formulas. In their place, \$170 was added to the basic formula allowance; a new component called transportation sparsity revenue was added to the general education revenue program; and a portion of transition revenue was designed to soften the impact of the funding changes. Transportation sparsity revenue may be used for any general operating purpose. A district is not required to use transportation sparsity revenue for pupil transportation expenses. Beginning in fiscal year 2018, transportation sparsity revenue includes an adjustment based on each district's actual unreimbursed transportation costs incurred during the previous year. The 2023 Legislature

increased this adjustment from 18.2 percent to 35 percent of each district's unreimbursed transportation costs.

Transportation sparsity revenue is computed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Transportation Revenue} &= (1) \text{ Transportation Sparsity Allowance} \times \text{Adjusted Pupil Units} \\ &+ (2) \text{ 35\% of the districts' unreimbursed costs of to and from school transportation} \end{aligned}$$

The following steps are necessary to compute a district's transportation sparsity allowance:

$$\text{Density Index} = \frac{\text{square mile area of the district}}{\text{Adjusted Pupil Units}} \quad \left. \vphantom{\frac{\text{square mile area of the district}}{\text{Adjusted Pupil Units}}} \right\} \text{ but not less than .005 or more than .2}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Sparsity Index} &= \text{the greater of:} \\ &\quad (a) \text{ .2; or} \\ &\quad (b) \frac{\text{square mile of the district}}{\text{Adjusted Pupil Units}} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Transportation Sparsity Allowance} &= \frac{\text{(Basic Formula Allowance)} \times .141}{\text{Allowance}} \times (\text{Sparsity Index}^{26/100}) \times (\text{Density Index}^{13/100}) - \frac{\text{(Basic Formula Allowance)} \times .0466}{\text{Allowance}} \end{aligned}$$

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subds. 17 and 18)

## 11. Equity Revenue

The equity revenue formula consists of three parts: basic equity revenue; low referendum equity revenue; and a supplemental equity amount equal to \$50 per pupil unit. Equity revenue is designed to provide additional revenue to districts with lower amounts of referendum revenue. To calculate equity revenue, the state is divided into two regions: a seven-county metro region and a greater Minnesota (nonmetro) region. Equity revenue is calculated separately for districts within each of the two regions.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subds. 24 to 30)

**Basic Equity Revenue.** Basic equity revenue equals the product of: (1) 125 percent; (2) \$14 plus the product of \$80 and the district's equity index; and (3) the district's adjusted pupil units for that year. A school district equity index equals one minus the ratio of the sum of the district's per pupil basic formula allowance, local optional revenue, and referendum revenue to the per pupil amount for the district at the 95th percentile in that region. School districts located in cities of the first class (Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Duluth) as of July 1, 1999, do not receive basic equity revenue.

For fiscal year 2024, the 5th and 95th percentiles for the equity regions are estimated as follows:

**Table 13: Equity Revenue Percentiles**  
Fiscal Year 2024

|              | 5th     | 95th    |
|--------------|---------|---------|
| <b>Rural</b> | \$7,506 | \$9,584 |
| <b>Metro</b> | \$7,517 | \$9,686 |

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**Low Referendum Revenue.** A school district that has per pupil referendum revenue less than 10 percent of the statewide average amount of per pupil referendum revenue (\$1,031 for fiscal year 2024) receives an additional equity amount equal to the lesser of \$100,000 or the difference between 10 percent of the statewide average referendum revenue and the district's current amount of referendum revenue.

**Supplemental Equity Revenue.** All school districts receive supplemental equity revenue equal to \$50 per pupil unit.

**Equity Aid and Levy.** A district's total equity revenue is equalized on referendum market value using an equalizing factor of \$510,000.

## 12. Transition Revenue

Transition revenue provides school districts with a partial grandfather or hold-harmless due to the 2003 Legislature's changes to general education revenue. Transition revenue guarantees a school district the lesser of (a) its fiscal year 2003 general education revenue per pupil or (b) the amount of revenue per pupil that the district would have received during the 2004 fiscal year under the old definitions of general education revenue. The difference between the actual fiscal year 2004 revenue and the guaranteed amount is the new transition revenue. Beginning in fiscal year 2015, transition revenue is adjusted for a number of changes to the general education revenue program.

This revenue was provided entirely in state aid for fiscal year 2004 and is an equalized aid and levy for later years. Transition revenue is provided through an equalized aid and levy based on a referendum market value equalizing factor of \$510,000.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subds. 31, 32, 33)

## 13. Pension Adjustment Revenue

School districts receive general education revenue pension adjustment revenue to compensate for some past legislative changes to the employer contribution rates to the public employee retirement systems—Public Employee Retirement Association (PERA) for nonlicensed staff and Teacher Retirement Association (TRA) for licensed teachers. There are two parts to this

revenue: (1) a fixed amount based on past contribution rate changes; and (2) beginning in fiscal year 2019, an amount equal to the TRA employer contribution rate increases approved by the 2018 and 2023 Legislatures. The amount equals the difference between the rate for the current year and the rate for fiscal year 2018, times the district’s covered payroll (teacher salaries) for the previous fiscal year.

Employer TRA contribution rate increases are 0.21 percent over the previous year for fiscal years 2019 to 2023 and 0.20 percent for fiscal year 2024 when the TRA employer contribution rate reaches 8.75 percent of covered payroll. Beginning in fiscal year 2026, the employer rate will increase by another 0.75 percent. See page 123 for additional information on Minnesota’s teacher retirement system.

$$\text{FY 24 Pension Adjustment Revenue} = \text{2015 Grandfather Amount} + \left( .0125 \times \text{FY 23 Covered Teacher Payroll} \right)$$

**Table 14: Pension Adjustment Aid Entitlement**

| Fiscal Year | Pension Adjustment Aid | % of Payroll |
|-------------|------------------------|--------------|
| 2025        | \$83,848,000           | 1.25%        |
| 2024        | 84,255,000             | 1.25         |
| 2023        | 70,098,000             | 1.05         |
| 2022        | 56,646,000             | 0.84         |
| 2021        | 43,162,000             | 0.63         |
| 2020        | 32,228,000             | 0.42         |

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.10, subd. 38; 127A.50)

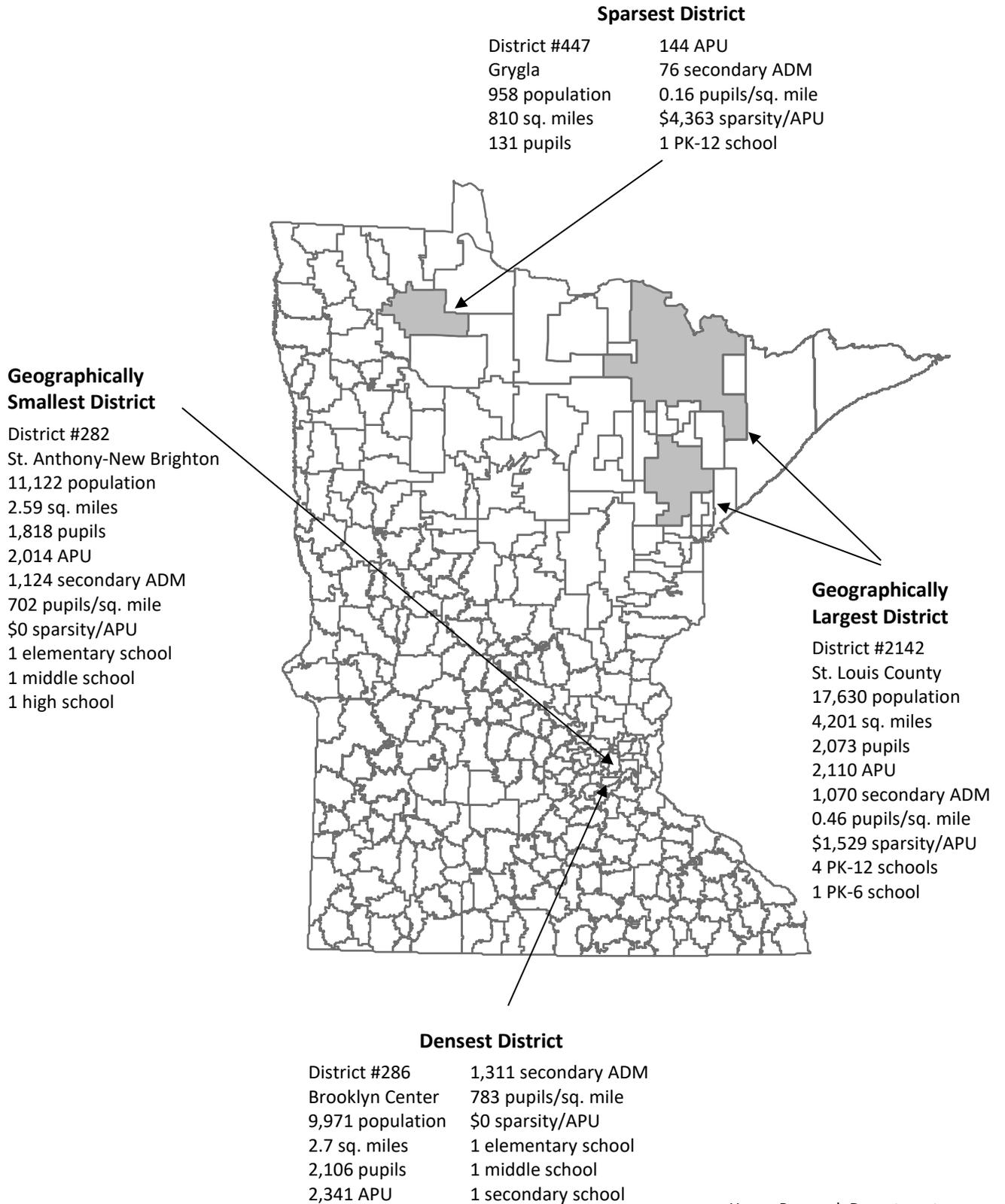
## 14. Options Adjustments

A school district’s general education revenue is adjusted by three “options” adjustments, based on enrollment changes made under student movement programs. A district’s general education revenue is:

- 1) reduced by the amount of referendum aid attributable to resident pupils who are open-enrolled or attend a charter school and increased by the referendum aid amounts for nonresident students enrolled in the school;
- 2) reduced by certain aid payments for resident pupils who attend the Minnesota Academies for the Deaf or Blind; and
- 3) increased by an aid amount equal to the transportation portion of each charter school pupil whom the resident school district transports.

(Minn. Stat. § 127A.47)

**Table 15: Characteristics of Largest and Smallest School Districts**  
Fiscal Year 2024



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## Reserved Revenue

School districts are required to reserve a portion of their general education revenue for certain purposes. The reserved amounts and purposes are as follows.

**Staff development.** School districts must reserve 2 percent of their basic general education revenue (\$142.76 per pupil unit for fiscal year 2024) for staff development purposes. A school board and its teacher union may mutually agree to waive this requirement. This staff development reserve was legislatively suspended for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 and was legislatively suspended again for fiscal years 2010 through 2013.

**Class size reduction.** A portion of each district's general education revenue must be reserved to reduce class sizes in the early elementary grades. The reserved revenue for class size reduction equals the sum of \$299 times the number of kindergarten students (measured by adjusted average daily membership) and \$459 times the adjusted average daily membership in grades 1 to 6.

The reserved revenue must be used to reduce kindergarten, and first through third grade class sizes to a ratio of 17 students to one classroom teacher. Once the district achieves a class size of 17:1 in grades kindergarten through 3, the district must use the remaining reserved revenue (if any) to reduce class sizes in subsequent elementary grades.

In fiscal year 2024, school districts are expected to reserve \$192 million for class size reduction.

**Table 16: Revenue Reserved for Class Size Reduction**

| Fiscal Year | Formula Allowance                                 | Reserved Revenue |
|-------------|---|------------------|
| 2025        | \$299 per pupil for K;<br>\$459 per pupil for 1-6 | \$191,226,000    |
| 2024        | \$299 per pupil for K;<br>\$459 per pupil for 1-6 | 191,699,000      |
| 2023        | \$299 per pupil for K;<br>\$459 per pupil for 1-6 | 191,125,000      |
| 2022        | \$299 per pupil for K;<br>\$459 per pupil for 1-6 | 190,378,000      |
| 2021        | \$299 per pupil for K;<br>\$459 per pupil for 1-6 | 190,624,000      |
| 2020        | \$299 per pupil for K;<br>\$459 per pupil for 1-6 | 198,192,000      |

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**Operating capital revenue.** For purposes of eligible operating capital expenditures (see page 30 for details), a district must reserve an amount equal to its operating capital revenue.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 122A.61; 126C.12)

## Aid and Levy Calculations

School districts receive the vast majority of general education revenue from state aid payments (charter schools receive their general education revenue entirely in state aid). The mix of aid and levy is designed to equalize local tax burdens. A school finance program that provides the same amount of total revenue per pupil unit to each district and requires the same tax rate of local effort is said to be fully equalized. Under an equalized system, the higher a district's property wealth per pupil unit, the lower the amount of education aid the district receives from the state for that program and the higher the amount of revenue provided through the local district's property tax.

**Operating Capital Levy and Aid.** A district's operating capital is provided through an equalized aid and levy (for the decade prior to fiscal year 2005, the full amount of operating capital was provided through state aid). The operating capital equalizing factor has changed a fair amount in the last decade. This levy has often changed to balance out other levy changes in the annual K-12 bills. The equalizing factor equals \$22,912 for fiscal year 2022 and later.

**Equity Levy and Aid.** A district's equity revenue is equalized on referendum market value using an equalizing factor of \$510,000 for fiscal year 2024 and \$587,224 for fiscal year 2025. This revenue is calculated and spread on referendum market value—so the levy is not spread on agricultural lands or seasonal recreational property. Prior to fiscal year 2005, a district's equity revenue was provided entirely in state aid.

**Transition Levy and Aid.** A district's transition revenue is equalized on referendum market value using an equalizing factor of \$510,000.

**Table 17: General Education Program Aid Entitlement and Levy**

|                                | Fiscal Year     |                 |                 |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                | 2022            | 2023            | 2024            | 2025            |
| <b>Basic General Education</b> |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| <b>Aid</b>                     | \$6,375,515,000 | \$6,519,425,000 | \$6,648,471,000 | \$6,760,136,000 |
| <b>Levy</b>                    | 0               | 0               | 0               | 0               |
| <b>Operating Capital</b>       |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| <b>Aid</b>                     | 130,366,000     | 126,575,000     | 119,265,000     | 104,616,000     |
| <b>Levy</b>                    | 84,447,000      | 88,719,000      | 93,643,000      | 107,593,000     |
| <b>Equity</b>                  |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| <b>Aid</b>                     | 17,790,000      | 16,255,000      | 14,438,000      | 11,750,000      |
| <b>Levy</b>                    | 92,565,000      | 92,238,000      | 92,542,000      | 94,998,000      |
| <b>Transition</b>              |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| <b>Aid</b>                     | 4,065,000       | 3,860,000       | 3,650,000       | 3,324,000       |

|             | Fiscal Year |            |            |            |
|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
|             | 2022        | 2023       | 2024       | 2025       |
| <b>Levy</b> | 25,266,000  | 25,346,000 | 24,112,000 | 24,004,000 |

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## Referendum Revenue

The referendum revenue program, often referred to as the operating referendum levy or the excess levy referendum, is a mechanism that allows a school district to obtain voter approval to increase its revenue beyond the limits set in statute. Because of the exceptional growth in the referendum levy in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the legislature made several changes to the program including: equalizing a portion of the revenue; capping the total amount of per pupil revenue a district may have; limiting the length of time that new referendums may run (currently no longer than ten years); and requiring referendums approved after November 1, 1992, to be spread on referendum market value instead of tax capacity.

The 2001 Legislature reduced the referendum levy beginning in fiscal year 2003. Each district’s referendum revenue was reduced by \$415 per pupil unit. (A district with less than \$415 per pupil in referendum authority lost the full amount of its authority.) At the same time the referendum was reduced, the basic formula allowance for all districts was increased by \$415 per pupil unit. As a result, referendum revenue was reduced by approximately \$200 million. Since that time, referendum revenue has increased substantially as a result of subsequent elections. The 2013 Legislature made a number of significant changes to referendum revenue beginning in fiscal year 2015. These changes included:

- 1) changing the allowance from an amount per resident pupil unit to an amount per adjusted pupil unit (the fiscal year 2015 conversion will keep the total dollar amount of authority the same);
- 2) allowing a district to implement the first \$300 per pupil of referendum authority by board action;
- 3) creating a new category of revenue called location equity revenue and allowing a board to choose to convert referendum authority to location equity revenue;
- 4) dividing the equalization aid into three tiers and increasing the equalization of the first tier; and
- 5) modifying the referendum revenue cap and eliminating the grandfather cap.

The 2019 Legislature switched the first \$300 per pupil (the board-approved amount) from operating referendum revenue to local optional revenue beginning in fiscal year 2021. This shift is revenue neutral but returns all referendum revenue to voter-approved authority.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.17)

**Referendum Revenue Cap.** A school district eligible for sparsity revenue is not subject to a cap on referendum revenue (104 school districts are eligible for sparsity revenue during the 2023-

24 school year). For other districts, the estimated referendum revenue cap is \$2,111 for fiscal year 2024.

**Referendum Revenue Equalization.** A school district's referendum revenue consists of two equalized tiers. The first tier of equalization aid is the amount up to \$460 per adjusted pupil. This tier carries an equalizing factor of \$576,000 per pupil. The second tier is the per pupil amount up to 25 percent of the basic formula allowance. This tier is equalized at \$290,000 per pupil. Referendum revenue for fiscal year 2024 is computed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Total Referendum Revenue} &= \text{Adjusted Pupil Units} \times \text{Referendum Allowance} \\
 \text{Tier 1 Revenue} &= \text{the lesser of:} \\
 &\quad (1) \$460 \text{ per adjusted pupil unit; or} \\
 &\quad (2) \text{ the district's Total Referendum Revenue} \\
 \text{Tier 1 Equalization Levy} &= \text{Tier 1 Revenue} \times \text{the lesser of:} \\
 &\quad (1) 1; \text{ or} \\
 &\quad (2) \frac{\text{district referendum market value per pupil unit}}{\$576,000} \\
 \text{Tier 1 Equalization Aid} &= \text{Tier 1 Revenue} - \text{Tier 1 Equalized Levy} \\
 \text{Tier 2 Revenue} &= (1) \text{ the lesser of:} \\
 &\quad (i) \text{ the district's referendum revenue; or} \\
 &\quad (ii) \text{ an amount equal to 25 percent of the basic formula allowance} \\
 &\quad \quad \text{times the district's resident pupil units less,} \\
 &\quad (2) \text{ its tier 1 referendum revenue} \\
 \text{Tier 2 Equalization Levy} &= \text{Tier 2 Revenue} \times \text{the lesser of:} \\
 &\quad (1) 1; \text{ or} \\
 &\quad (2) \frac{\text{district's market value per pupil unit}}{\$290,000} \\
 \text{Tier 2 Equalization Aid} &= \text{Tier 2 Revenue} - \text{Tier 2 Equalized Levy} \\
 \text{Total Referendum Equalization Aid} &= \text{Tier 1 Equalization Aid} + \text{Tier 2 Equalization Aid} \\
 \text{Total Referendum Levy} &= \text{Total Referendum Revenue} - \text{Total Referendum Equalization Aid}
 \end{aligned}$$

**Referendum Tax Base Replacement Aid.** Referendum tax base replacement aid was implemented by the 2001 Legislature as a mechanism designed to compensate school districts for the loss of agricultural land and cabin tax base. Tax base replacement aid is a frozen dollar amount based on fiscal year 2003 characteristics. Any referendum equalization aid earned by the school district is first offset by referendum tax base replacement aid. The remaining

equalization aid, if any, is the amount used when computing the referendum aid accompanying charter schools and open enrollment pupils.

**Election Requirements.** A district’s general levy can be increased with the approval of the voters at a referendum called by the school board. The election must be held during the November election only, unless the election is held by mail ballot or upon approval of the Commissioner of Education, if the district is in statutory operating debt. If the election is conducted by mail ballot, it must be in accordance with state election law, and each taxpayer must receive notice of the election and of the proposed tax increase at least 20 days before the referendum.

**Onetime Board Renewal.** A school board may renew an existing referendum at the same per pupil dollar allowance and for the same time term (most referenda are approved for a term of ten years). The onetime board renewal must occur after a school board meeting where public testimony on the proposed renewal is considered.

**Referendum Market Value.** Unlike most other school district levies, referendum levies are spread on referendum market value instead of net tax capacity. Referendum market value is the market value of all property within the school district with two exceptions. First, all seasonal recreational property (cabins) and farmland are excluded from referendum market value. Second, any property with a class rate of less than 1.0 percent is taxed at its market value times its class rate.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.17)

**Table 18: Referendum Revenue Allowances and Equalizing Factors**

| Fiscal Year | Referendum Cap Per Pupil | First-tier Allowance Per Pupil | First-tier Equalizing Factor | Second-tier Allowance Per Pupil | Second-tier Equalizing Factor | Third-tier Allowance Per Pupil | Third-tier Equalizing Factor |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2025*       | \$2,151                  | \$460                          | \$567,000                    | >460                            | \$290,000                     | NA                             | NA                           |
| 2024*       | 2,111                    | 460                            | 567,000                      | >460                            | 290,000                       | NA                             | NA                           |
| 2023        | 2,055                    | \$460                          | 567,000                      | >460                            | 290,000                       | NA                             | NA                           |
| 2022        | 1,928                    | 460                            | 567,000                      | >460                            | 290,000                       | NA                             | NA                           |
| 2021        | 1,780                    | 460                            | 567,000                      | >460                            | 290,000                       | NA                             | NA                           |
| 2020        | 2,005                    | 300                            | 880,000                      | 460                             | 510,000                       | > \$760                        | \$290,000                    |

\* Estimated

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**Table 19: Referendum Revenue Amounts**

| Fiscal Year | Referendum Aid Entitlement | Referendum Levy |
|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 2025        | \$17,216,000               | \$906,741,000   |
| 2024        | 22,598,000                 | 858,803,000     |
| 2023        | 24,166,000                 | 826,435,000     |
| 2022        | 29,175,000                 | 740,262,000     |
| 2021        | 29,917,000                 | 686,368,000     |
| 2020        | 130,907,000                | 796,657,000     |

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## Permanent School Fund Income

The Permanent School Fund (PSF) of Minnesota consists of the proceeds of the lands granted to the state by the federal government for the use of schools, proceeds from swamplands granted to the state, and cash and investments credited to the fund. While much of the initial land granted to the state has been sold, the state Department of Natural Resources is responsible for managing about 2.5 million acres of school trust land. The net proceeds from the land management activities (timber sales, minerals activities, lease revenue, etc.) annually are added to the principal of the fund.

The state holds the land and accumulated revenues from the land in trust for the benefit of public schools in Minnesota. The State Board of Investment is responsible for investing the principal of the fund, subject to direction from the Constitution and the legislature. The interest and dividends arising from the fund are required by the Constitution to be distributed to the state's school districts according to the method described in statute.

Prior to fiscal year 2010, the earnings from the PSF were simply offset against each district's general education aid.

Beginning in 2010, the offset was eliminated and school districts began receiving income from the PSF as additional state aid. The aid payments are distributed to schools through a formula that provides two semiannual payments of aid to schools based on each school's count of pupils. The PSF payments to schools are based on pupils served, and payments go to both traditional school districts and charter schools.

**Table 20: Permanent School Fund Endowment and Income**

| Fiscal Year | Endowment Fund Balance | Payment to Schools | Payment per Pupil |
|-------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 2025*       | \$1,862,887,000        | \$40,307,000       | \$47.50           |
| 2024*       | 1,843,771,000          | 39,895,000         | 46.86             |
| 2023        | 1,824,656,000          | 38,765,000         | 45.64             |
| 2022        | 1,713,214,000          | 35,567,000         | 41.89             |
| 2021        | 1,939,972,000          | 35,326,941         | 41.54             |
| 2020        | 1,621,486,000          | 39,090,000         | 45.04             |
| * Estimated |                        |                    |                   |

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 127A.30-127A.34)

## Other General Fund Programs

**Shared Time Foundation Aid.** Districts receive a proportionate amount of general education aid for nonpublic school pupils who attend public school programs for part of the school day. For nonpublic students without an IEP, the public school district may determine which classes, if any, into which the nonpublic student may enroll. For fiscal year 2024, the state estimates there will be about 557 shared time pupil units.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.01, subds. 6-8; 126C.19)

**County Apportionment Aid Reduction.** General education aid is reduced by an amount equal to the school district's share of county apportionment funds (miscellaneous fines and fees, collected by counties and apportioned to school districts). A school district receives no added revenue from county apportionment payments. Instead, the district's general education aid is reduced by the amount of the county apportionment payment. For fiscal year 2024, county apportionment payments reduces general education aid by roughly \$44 million.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 127A.34; 126C.21, subd. 3)

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# School Transportation

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## School Transportation Background

The 1995 Legislature made substantial changes to the pupil transportation funding programs. Categorical funding programs were replaced with an across-the-board increase in the general education formula allowance of \$170 per pupil unit, and the remaining categorical transportation formulas were reduced in size and scope.

The previous categorical pupil transportation funding formulas provided varying amounts of revenue for each of three different categories of transportation services: regular services, nonregular services, and excess cost services. As a result, the distinction between required pupil transportation services (state-mandated services) and authorized pupil transportation services, where additional funding was generated if the service was provided, was somewhat blurred. The 1995 legislative changes attempted to clarify the state mandate as well as eliminate a series of formulas that were seen by some as creating disincentives for cost efficiency in pupil transportation.

A school district may provide pupil transportation services by operating its own fleet of school buses, contracting with a private vendor of transportation services, or mixing district-operated and contracted services.<sup>3</sup>

## Required Transportation

The state's basic pupil transportation mandate requires a school board to provide transportation to and from school, or to provide board and lodging for all pupils (regardless of age) who live **two** miles or more from schools. A school board is required to provide equal transportation for nonpublic school children (a more detailed description of nonpublic pupil transportation can be found on page 105).

A school board is also required to:

- provide certain transportation services for disabled children;
- provide transportation for a nonresident open enrollment pupil from the nonresident (serving) district's border to the school attended; and
- provide transportation services for resident pupils attending a charter school that is located within the district if the charter school has declined to provide transportation services to its students.

The statute grants school boards sole discretion, control, and management over:

- scheduling of routes;

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<sup>3</sup> More information about pupil transportation may be found in the House Research publication, *School Transportation Regulation*, July 2023.

- establishing location of bus stops;
- manner and method of transportation;
- control and discipline of school children; and
- “any other matter related thereto.”

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.03, subd. 8; 124D.10, subd. 16; 123B.84-123B.88)

## **Fees for Transportation Services**

A school district may charge fees for some but not all transportation services in accordance with the state’s general fee policy regarding public school education. Several categories of fees for transportation services are specifically authorized, and fees are specifically prohibited for certain other services.

### **A school district may charge a fee for:**

- transportation to and from extracurricular activities, where attendance is optional;
- transportation of pupils to and from school for pupils living within two miles from school as well as all other transportation services not required by law, if a district charging fees for transportation of pupils establishes guidelines to ensure that no pupil is denied transportation solely because of inability to pay; and
- transportation to and from postsecondary institutions for pupils enrolled under the postsecondary enrollment options program under section 123B.88, subdivision 22. Fees collected for this service must be reasonable and must be used to reduce the cost of operating the route. Families who qualify for mileage reimbursement under section 124D.09, subdivision 22, may use their state mileage reimbursement to pay this fee.

A school board may waive any fee if any pupil or the pupil’s parent or guardian is unable to pay it.

### **A school district is prohibited from charging a fee for:**

- field trips that are required as a part of a basic education program or course; and
- transportation to and from school for pupils living two miles or more from school.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 123B.34-123B.37)

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## Capital Finance

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School districts must finance both ongoing capital needs, such as equipment purchases, repairs, and maintenance, as well as major building construction projects. Major building projects are financed at the local level, with some small assistance through state-paid debt service equalization aid. Districts borrow money through the sale of bonds and levy an annual tax to repay the money over a period of years. Smaller remodeling projects, equipment purchases, and other ongoing capital needs are normally financed by capital revenue programs.

Beginning with the 1996-97 school year, two of the largest capital funding formulas—the equipment formula and the facilities formula—were moved from the capital fund to a reserved account in the general fund. The purpose of this change was to allow districts greater discretion in the use of operating money for capital needs. The new formulas, named operating capital revenue, are a component of the general education revenue program. School districts may now use general fund operating revenue for capital programs, but operating capital revenue must be used for specified capital purposes and may not be used for general operating purposes.

This section explains the financing methods available to districts to obtain funds for ongoing capital needs and major construction projects.

**Review and Comment on Construction Projects.** When a new school building is constructed or when an existing facility is substantially remodeled, a district incurs a substantial financial obligation that must be met immediately. School districts issue bonds to obtain the funds necessary to pay the contractors. The district then pays back the bonds over a period of years with money raised from the debt service levy and any debt service aid received from the state. Because of the importance and cost of major construction projects, the Department of Education provides a review and comment on each major project. Any project that requires an expenditure of more than \$2,000,000, except for certain deferred maintenance projects, must be submitted by the district to the commissioner for review and comment, unless the school district has an outstanding capital loan, in which case the project must be submitted for review and comment for any expenditure in excess of \$500,000.

The commissioner may give the project a positive, unfavorable, or negative review and comment. If the project receives a positive review and comment, the district may hold a referendum to authorize the sale of bonds; upon approval of a simple majority of the voters, the project may proceed. If the commissioner submits an unfavorable review and comment, the local school board must reconsider the project. If the local school board decides to continue with the project, the referendum to authorize the sale of bonds must receive the approval of at least 60 percent of the voters. If the commissioner submits a negative review and comment, the school board cannot proceed with the project.

The findings of the commissioner's review and comment must be published in the legal newspaper of the district prior to a referendum on the construction project.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 123B.70; 123B.71)

## Debt Service Revenue

Minnesota's local school districts have generally financed the construction of new school buildings through the sale of bonds. The bonds are repaid with revenue raised from the local district's property tax receipts. The total amount of building bonds issued by the district determines the yearly debt service that the district must pay; and the amount of bonds issued is, of course, directly related to the district's building needs. The tax rate that the district levies in order to make its debt service payments depends both on the amount of debt and the size of the district's property tax base. The larger the debt, and the smaller the property tax base, the greater the district's tax rate for debt service needs.

## Debt Service Equalization Aid

The debt service equalization aid program provides state aid to local school districts to help repay the bonds issued to finance construction. The amount of a school district's debt service that the state will pay depends on two factors: the district's total amount of annual debt service and the district's taxable property tax base (net tax capacity) per pupil.

**Debt service equalization aid is available for a school district's qualifying debt service.** Debt service amounts that qualify for debt equalization are general debt service amounts for land acquisition, construction costs, and capital energy loans. Net debt is the sum of these amounts reduced by any excess balance that the district has in its debt redemption account and must be for facilities that:

- receive a positive review and comment from the Commissioner of Education;
- are comparable in size and quality to facilities in other districts; and
- have been reviewed by all neighboring school districts.

The debt service revenue is divided into tiers. The first tier applies to the portion of a school district's debt that is below 15.74 percent of the district's adjusted net tax capacity. The first tier must be provided entirely through the local levy. The second tier applies to the portion of debt revenue between 15.74 percent and 26.24 percent of adjusted net tax capacity. This tier is equalized at a relatively low level. The remaining debt revenue makes up the third tier.

The equalizing factors for each of the tiers are as follows:

**Table 21: Debt Service Equalizing Factors**

| Fiscal Year | 1st Tier    | 2nd Tier<br>Greater of \$4,430 or 55.33% of average tax base per pupil | 3rd Tier<br>Greater of \$8,000 or 100% of average tax base per pupil |
|-------------|-------------|--|--|
| 2025*       | Unequalized | \$7,147  | \$12,918   |
| 2024        | Unequalized | 6,105  | 11,033   |
| 2023        | Unequalized | 5,637  | 10,188   |
| 2022        | Unequalized | 5,366  | 9,699  |
| 2021        | Unequalized | 5,060  | 9,146  |
| 2020        | Unequalized | 4,814  | 8,700  |
| * Estimated |             |  |  |

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The following example shows the calculation of debt service equalization aid for a hypothetical district for fiscal year 2024.

**Table 22: Debt Service Equalization Aid Calculation for a Hypothetical District**

|   |  |                   |              |
|---|--|-------------------|--------------|
| a | Debt revenue (amount needed to make annual bond payment) | —                 | \$10,000,000 |
| b | Initial unequalized tax rate                             | (a)/(d)           | 40.0%        |
| c | Pupil units used for debt calculation                    | —                 | 5,000        |
| d | Tax base (adjusted net tax capacity)                     | —                 | \$25,000,000 |
| e | Tax base/per pupil unit                                  | (d)/(c)           | \$5,000      |
| f | Tier 1 (unequalized; has no equalizing factor)           | —                 | —            |
| g | Tier 2 equalizing factor for FY 24                       | —                 | \$6,105      |
| h | Tier 3 equalizing factor for FY 24                       | —                 | \$11,033     |
| i | Tier 1: 15.74% paid locally                              | (d) x .1574       | \$3,935,000  |
| j | Tier 2: 15.74% to 26.24% equalized at \$6,105            | (d) x .105        | \$2,625,000  |
| k | Tier 2 aid percentage                                    | 1 – (l)           | 18.10%       |
| l | Tier 2 levy percentage                                   | (e)/(g)           | 81.90%       |
| m | Tier 2 aid   | (k) x (j)         | \$475,123    |
| n | Tier 2 levy  | (l) x (j)         | \$2,149,877  |
| o | Tier 3: Remaining debt above 26.24% at enhanced rate     | (a) – ((i) + (j)) | \$3,440,000  |
| p | Tier 3 aid percentage                                    | 1 – (q)           | 54.68%       |
| q | Tier 3 levy percentage                                   | (e)/(h)           | 45.32%       |
| r | Tier 3 aid   | (p) x (o)         | \$1,881,041  |

|   |                                    |           |             |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| s | Tier 3 levy                        | (q) x (o) | \$1,559,008 |
| t | Total annual aid                   | (m) + (q) | \$2,356,164 |
| u | Total annual levy                  | (a) – (t) | \$7,643,837 |
| v | Total net equalized tax rate       | (u)/(d)   | 30.58%      |
| w | Percent of debt revenue from state | (t)/(a)   | 23.56%      |

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 123B.53; 123B.55)

### Natural Disaster Debt Service Equalization

A school district that has sustained more than \$500,000 in damage to its facilities because of a natural disaster is eligible for enhanced debt service equalization. All facilities debt service in excess of 10 percent of ANTC is equalized at 300 percent of the statewide average amount of ANTC per pupil (\$30,564 for fiscal year 2023). Currently, only two school districts (Rushford-Peterson and Moose Lake) qualify for enhanced debt service equalization aid under this program.

(Minn. Stat. § 123B.535)

**Table 23: Total Statewide Debt Service Amounts; Regular and Enhanced Equalization Aid**

| School Year | Debt Service Aid Entitlement | Net Debt Service Fund Levy Certified |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2024-25     | \$21,351,000                 | \$1,188,659,000                      |
| 2023-24     | 24,511,000                   | 1,048,789,000                        |
| 2022-23     | 21,297,000                   | 1,043,149,000                        |
| 2021-22     | 21,939,000                   | 1,110,113,000                        |
| 2020-21     | 25,398,000                   | 1,107,409,000                        |
| 2019-20     | 20,684,000                   | 998,302,000                          |

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### School Building Bond Agricultural Credit

The 2017 Legislature created a new tax credit to reduce the property tax impact of school building projects on agricultural properties. Beginning with school taxes payable in 2018, the school building bond agricultural credit reduces the school taxes paid by agricultural property. The credit applies to existing debt levies and to debt levies attributable to any newly authorized school bond issues.

The tax credit applies to all property classified as agricultural (identified as class 2a, 2b, and 2c, property under Minnesota Statutes, section 273.13, subdivision 23) excluding the house,

garage, and surrounding one acre of land of an agricultural homestead. The credit is set at 70 percent for taxes payable in 2023 and later.

As with other property tax credits, the state replaces the local levy lost through the credit to the school district with state aid through an open and standing appropriation.

**Table 24: School Building Bond Agricultural Credit**

| Fiscal Year | Payable Year | Ag Credit Entitlement | Total Est. School Debt | Initial % of Debt Levy Paid by Ag Lands | Ag Credit Percent of Eligible Debt |
|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| 2025*       | 2024         | \$99,169,000          | \$1,188,659,000        | 12.0%                                   | 70%                                |
| 2024        | 2023         | 87,977,000            | 1,048,789,000          | 11.9                                    | 70                                 |
| 2023        | 2022         | 70,870,000            | 1,043,149,000          | 11.3                                    | 60                                 |
| 2022        | 2021         | 62,672,000            | 1,110,198,000          | 10.1                                    | 55                                 |
| 2021        | 2020         | 57,040,000            | 1,107,419,000          | 9.8                                     | 50                                 |
| 2020        | 2019         | 40,137,000            | 998,123,000            | 10.1                                    | 40                                 |

\* Estimated

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 273.1387; 273.1392)

### Capital Project Referendum

A school district may conduct an election to approve funds for certain capital projects. When approved by the voters, a school district may levy the amount approved by the voters for the designated capital projects for a period of time not to exceed ten years. Proceeds of the levy must be placed in a special account and used only for the approved purposes, which include facilities repairs and equipment purchases.

(Minn. Stat. § 123B.63)

**Table 25: Capital Project Levy**

| Fiscal Year | Capital Project Levy Certified | Number of Districts |
|-------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2025*       | \$165,929,000                  | 59                  |
| 2024        | 158,203,000                    | 59                  |
| 2023        | 148,190,000                    | 58                  |
| 2022        | 129,583,000                    | 55                  |
| 2021        | 121,354,000                    | 53                  |

| Fiscal Year | Capital Project Levy Certified | Number of Districts |
|-------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2020        | 113,308,000                    | 51                  |
| * Estimated |                                |                     |

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## Maximum Effort School Aid Law

Some districts find it difficult or impossible to finance construction projects through conventional bond sales because the district property tax base is too small to support the repayment of bonds necessary to finance the school's construction. These districts may qualify for state assistance under the Maximum Effort School Aid Law. Under this program, the state borrows money via a state general obligation bond sale and grants or lends the proceeds to a qualifying school district through a capital loan for new construction projects. The maximum effort capital loan program was first enacted in 1959, and over time, the qualifying criteria for school districts has narrowed significantly. Initially, most school districts receiving a capital loan were fast-growing suburban districts that were able to repay the capital loan over time as the districts' tax bases matured. Over the last 30 years, most of the loan recipients have been awarded to low property value districts with very limited likelihood of having their tax bases grow to a level sufficient to begin repaying the loans. The recent program changes, including the option for a school to receive a grant instead of a loan, reflect this reality. In the program's current form, a school district is eligible for a capital grant or loan only if its net debt tax rate, after any state-paid debt service equalization aid, is more than 41.98 percent of ANTC.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.62-126C.72)

**Capital Grant or Loan.** The process to obtain a capital grant or loan follows.

- 1) A school district that intends to apply for a capital grant or loan must submit the project proposal to the Commissioner of Education for review and comment by July 1. Capital grants or loans may not be used to pay for swimming pools, ice arenas, athletic facilities, day care centers, bus garages, or heating system improvements.
- 2) The commissioner must prepare a review and comment of the proposed project. In order to grant a positive review and comment, the commissioner must determine that all of the following conditions have been met:
  - no adequate facilities currently exist
  - no form of cooperation with other districts would provide the needed facilities
  - the facilities are comparable to facilities recently constructed in other districts of similar enrollment
  - the facilities are comparable to facilities recently constructed in other districts that are financed without a capital grant or loan
  - the district is projected to have adequate funds to support a quality education program during the next five years

- the current facility poses a health and safety threat and cannot be brought into compliance with code
  - the district has made an effort to adequately maintain the existing facility
  - the district has shared its plans and received comments from neighboring school districts
- 3) The school board of a district that wants a capital grant or loan must adopt a resolution that describes the project and submit an application for a capital grant or loan to the commissioner by November 1.
  - 4) The commissioner makes a recommendation for each capital grant or loan to the education committees of the legislature by February 1.
  - 5) Each capital grant or loan must be approved in law.
  - 6) A district must conduct a successful referendum on the project before February 1.

If the capital grant or loan is approved, the district must issue bonds up to the amount of: (1) the district's net debt limit, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 475.53, or (2) 637 percent of ANTC, whichever is less. The amount of the capital grant or loan the district is eligible for is the difference between the total cost of the project and the amount of the local bond issue.

The district's repayment of the loan is determined by one of several formulas, depending upon when the loan was obtained. For districts obtaining loans approved by the commissioner after January 1, 1990, the district must levy the greater of:

- 1) 29.39 percent of ANTC; or
- 2) the amount needed to pay the annual principal on the local bond issue. Beginning July 1, 2020, interest assessments are no longer added to the outstanding capital loan balance.

In any year, if 29.39 percent of ANTC is the greater amount, the difference between (1) and (2) is applied to repayment of the state loan. If the amount needed for local debt service is the greater amount, no payment is required on the state loan in that year. Maximum effort capital loans are forgiven if they are not paid within 50 years of issue.

**Early Repayment.** A special law that passed in 2011 and was amended in 2016 allows school districts with outstanding maximum effort capital loans to refinance those loans and pay back only the outstanding principal amount to the state. Any outstanding interest is then forgiven. The law initially only applied to school districts that received maximum effort capital loans prior to January 1, 1997, and required the districts to refinance the loan and repay the outstanding principal on the capital loan to the state prior to July 1, 2012. Six districts took advantage of this opportunity and repaid \$42.3 million to the state; those same districts had a total of \$73.6 million of outstanding interest forgiven (note that some of these districts would have had their outstanding interest forgiven at the end of the loan period under the general law).

In 2016, the legislature extended the early repayment offer to school districts with outstanding maximum effort capital loan balances for loans issued prior to January 1, 2007. Because the

legislation also eliminated the authority for all maximum effort school districts to issue one-day bonds, it is expected that most of the remaining capital loan districts will refinance their existing debt and repay the outstanding loan principal owed to the state. The legislation contains a new replacement aid of \$2.2 million per year for five years to compensate some of the maximum effort capital loan districts for a portion of the expected foregone revenue from one-day bond sales.

**Remaining Capital Loans.** As of July 1, 2022, after the opportunities for early repayment, only two school districts, Red Lake and Nett Lake, have outstanding capital loans.

**Funding.** Capital loans are initially funded by the sale of state general obligation bonds. In addition to the bond proceeds, supplemental appropriations by the legislature are often necessary to make principal and interest payments because repayments of loans by districts occur at a slower rate than that needed to meet the state's obligations to its bondholders.

**Table 26: Maximum Effort Bond Sales**  
Most Recent Bond Sales Approved

| Year Authorized | Amount of Bonds Authorized | Approved Project Recipient |
|-----------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2018            | \$14,000,000               | Red Lake Schools           |
| 2014            | 5,491,000                  | Red Lake Schools           |
| 2006            | 10,700,000                 | Nett Lake Schools          |
| 2005            | 18,000,000                 | Red Lake Schools           |
| 2002            | 12,400,000                 | Red Lake Schools           |
| 2001            | 19,000,000                 | East Central Schools       |

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## Bonds for Certain Capital Facilities

A district may issue general obligation bonds without voter approval for certain capital projects. The bonds must be repaid within 15 years of issuance with the district's annual operating capital revenue.

(Minn. Stat. § 123B.62, subd. 9)

## Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue

The 2015 Legislature created a new program to support facilities maintenance needs for school districts, charter schools, and cooperatives, including intermediate school districts. The program, Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue, is a per pupil, formula-driven revenue source that replaces health and safety revenue, alternative facilities revenue, and deferred maintenance revenue beginning with the 2016-17 school year.

## Qualifications and Revenue Uses

To qualify for Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue (LTFMR), a school district or cooperative unit must develop a ten-year facilities plan and submit that plan to the Commissioner of Education. The plan must be updated annually, and every two years the updated plan must be forwarded to the Commissioner of Education. LTFMR must be reserved and may only be used for deferred maintenance projects, increasing facility accessibility, and health and safety purposes. LTFMR may not be used for the construction of new facilities, for the purchase of portable classrooms, to finance lease purchase agreements, for energy-efficiency projects, or for violence prevention and facility security, ergonomics, or emergency communications devices.

A district may sell and issue general obligation bonds without voter approval to fund qualifying LTFMR projects and may use the annual revenue received under the program to repay the bonds.

## Revenue Calculation

LTFMR is primarily provided through a per pupil allowance. For school districts, the per pupil allowance is \$380. To determine the initial revenue, multiply: (i) the district's pupil units; (ii) the allowance for that year; and (iii) the lesser of one, or the ratio of the district's average building age to 35.

A school district may add to its per pupil amount the costs for health and safety for indoor air quality projects, asbestos abatement projects, and fire alarm and suppression where the cost of any of these projects at any site exceeds \$100,000. If this amount is less than the amount the district would have received under the former alternative facilities and health and safety formulas, the district is grandfathered in at the higher level of revenue. Districts may add to their revenue amount the proportional share of any qualifying costs allocated from any cooperatives to which the district belongs.

For charter schools, the LTFMR per pupil allowance is \$132. A charter school's LTFMR is provided entirely in state aid. A charter school is not required to submit a ten-year plan in order to receive LTFMR.

## Equalized Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue, Levy, and Aid

A school district's equalized alternative facilities revenue equals the lesser of the per pupil formula amount for that year or the actual amount of the initial revenue.

Equalized Revenue for FY 24 = lesser of: (1) initial LTFMR, or  
(2) \$380 x pupil units

Equalized Levy = Initial Revenue – greater of: (1) the lesser of: (a) the initial revenue, or  
(b) the district's alternative facilities aid for FY 15; or

(2) equalized revenue x the greater of:

(a) zero, or

(b) district ANTC/pupil unit

1.23 x (statewide ANTC/pupil unit)

$$\text{Equalized Aid} = \text{Equalized Revenue} - \text{Equalized Levy}$$

$$\text{Total LTFMR Levy} = \text{Equalized Levy} + \text{Unequalized Levy}$$

The calculation of the equalized levy is made in such a way that no district will receive less aid under the LTFMR program than it formerly received under the alternative facilities program.

**Table 27: Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue; Appropriation and Levy**

| Fiscal Year | LTFM General Fund Aid | LTFM General Fund Equalized Levy | LTFM General Fund Unequalized Levy | LTFM Bond Fund Aid | Net LTFM Bond Fund Levy | Total            |
|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 2025*       | \$107,894,000         | \$92,176,000                     | \$225,698,000                      | \$57,038,000       | \$329,724,000           | \$812,530,000.00 |
| 2024        | 108,045,000           | 87,473,000                       | 214,715,000                        | 47,585,000         | 239,576,000             | 697,396,024      |
| 2023        | 61,385,000            | 105,983,000                      | 177,872,000                        | 47,585,000         | 191,991,000             | 584,816,000      |
| 2022        | 60,389,000            | 115,003,000                      | 163,992,000                        | 47,585,000         | 191,991,000             | 578,960,000      |
| 2021        | 60,628,000            | 120,679,000                      | 119,782,000                        | 45,127,000         | 179,670,000             | 525,886,000      |
| 2020        | 61,948,000            | 129,133,000                      | 110,673,000                        | 41,430,000         | 143,072,000             | 486,256,000      |
| * Estimated |                       |                                  |                                    |                    |                         |                  |

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(Minn. Stat. § 123B.595)

### Disabled Access and Fire Safety Levy

A district that has insufficient money in its capital expenditure fund to either remove architectural access barriers from a building, or to make fire safety modifications required by the fire inspector, may submit an application to the commissioner for approval of levy authority of up to \$300,000 spread over an eight-year period. For disabled access projects, the commissioner develops criteria to determine the cost effectiveness of removing barriers in consultation with the council on disabilities. The commissioner must approve or disapprove an application within 60 days of receiving it. While most districts have used their full authority under this program, two districts (Centennial and Maple Lake) exercised a portion of this authority for taxes payable in 2023, and 36 districts have the full remaining levy authority as these districts have not yet started to levy under the program.

The state has also provided state bond proceeds to help small school districts remove accessibility barriers: \$1 million was approved in 1993, \$4 million was approved in 1994, \$2 million was approved in 1996, and \$1 million was approved in 1998.

(Minn. Stat. § 123B.58)

## Building Lease Levy

The leased facilities levy authority allows districts to levy to pay rent on leased facilities. The levy authority has been modified many times in the last two decades. The allowable purposes of the levy were narrowed and then expanded. Currently, upon the commissioner’s approval, districts may levy for leased facilities when the leased facility would be economically advantageous. The lease levy must not exceed the lesser of the lease costs or \$212 per pupil unit, except that a school district that is a member of an intermediate school district or other cooperative unit may levy an additional \$65 per pupil unit for space in intermediate facilities. The facilities must be used for instructional purposes.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.40, subds. 1, 2, and 6)

**Table 28: Building Lease Levy Amounts**

| Fiscal Year | Total Levy    |
|-------------|---------------|
| 2025*       | \$102,600,000 |
| 2024        | 99,318,000    |
| 2023        | 98,425,000    |
| 2022        | 95,638,000    |
| 2021        | 85,868,000    |
| 2020        | 84,989,000    |
| * Estimated |               |

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## Telecommunications/Internet Access Aid

School districts, charter schools, and nonpublic schools are eligible for state aid to pay for a portion of their telecommunications and Internet access costs. The telecommunications/Internet access aid program grants school districts and charter schools that belong to a telecommunication cluster state aid equal to 90 percent of the schools’ unreimbursed telecommunications costs; if the district or charter school is not a member of a telecommunications cluster, the aid equals 90 percent of the unreimbursed cost exceeding \$16 per pupil unit.

School districts are required to provide telecommunications and Internet access to nonpublic schools (excluding a homeschool) located within the district’s boundaries through a

reimbursement equal to 90 percent of the nonpublic school's unreimbursed costs exceeding \$10 per pupil unit. The school district receives additional telecommunications/Internet access aid from the state for this purpose.

In order to qualify for the aid, school districts and charter schools must submit their actual telecommunications and Internet access costs to the Commissioner of Education and file applications for federal Internet funds (commonly referred to as e-rate funds). The aid amount is prorated to the state appropriations cap, which substantially reduces each school district's aid payment.

**Table 29: Telecommunications/Internet Access Aid**

| Fiscal Year | Aid         |
|-------------|-------------|
| 2025        | \$3,750,000 |
| 2024        | 3,750,000   |
| 2023        | 3,750,000   |
| 2022        | 3,750,000   |
| 2021        | 3,750,000   |
| 2020        | 3,750,000   |

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(Minn. Stat. § 125B.26)

# Special Education

## Special Education Mandate

Local school districts are required by state law to provide appropriate and necessary special education to children with disabilities from birth through 21 years of age. Children with disabilities are defined in statute to include children who have a hearing impairment, visual disability, speech or language impairment, physical disability, mental disability, emotional/behavioral disorder, specific learning disability, deaf/blind disability, or other health impairment. The definition of a child with a disability also includes every child under age five who needs special instruction and services, as determined by state standards, because the child has a substantial delay or an identifiable and known physical or mental condition. The mandate for service does not include pupils with short-term or temporary physical or emotional disabilities.

Special instruction and services for children with disabilities must be based on the assessment and individualized education program (IEP). The statutes and rules specify school district responsibilities for program decisions for children with disabilities and for the education of children who are placed outside the district where their parents reside. Districts are required to provide special education on a shared time basis to pupils enrolled in nonpublic schools.

As of December 1, 2022, a total of 158,047 students, or 18.5 percent, received some special education services.<sup>4</sup>

(Minn. Stat. §§ 125A.01-125A.03; 125A.08)

**Table 30: Special Education Unduplicated Child Count by Disability Category (All Ages) as of December 1, 2022**

| Category  | Count  |
|---|--------|
| Speech Language Impaired                              | 25,759 |
| Developmentally Cognitive Disability, Mild-Moderate   | 5,371  |
| Developmentally Cognitive Disability, Severe-Profound | 1,670  |
| Severely Multiple Impaired                            | 1,626  |
| Physically Impaired                                   | 1,583  |
| Hearing Impaired                                      | 2,470  |
| Blind/Visually Impaired                               | 470    |
| Specific Learning Disabilities                        | 38,622 |
| Emotional Behavior Disorder                           | 16,211 |

<sup>4</sup> This percentage is based on the December 2022 unduplicated child count (birth through age 21) conducted by the Department of Education.

| Category   | Count          |
|--|----------------|
| Deaf/Blind   | 118            |
| Other Health Impaired  | 19,928         |
| Autism Spectrum Disorder   | 24,342         |
| Traumatic Brain Injury   | 390            |
| Early Childhood/Developmentally Delayed                            | 19,487         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>158,047</b> |
| Source: Minnesota Department of Education unduplicated child count |                |

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## Special Education Funding Formulas

School districts receive state aid and some federal aid to pay for special education services. If these funds are insufficient to pay for the costs of the programs, districts must rely on their other undesignated general fund revenue.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 125A.75-125A.79)

## Special Education Revenue

Minnesota's special education formula is a multistep hybrid formula. The formula combines a cost-reimbursement formula with a modified "census style" of funding, provides a floor of funding based on fiscal year 2016 funding amounts, and authorizes serving school districts and charter schools to bill a portion of their unfunded special education costs attributable to nonresident students back to the student's resident school district. The partial costs are based on the salaries paid to special education teachers and other essential personnel. The census amounts are set in statute and provide differing levels of reimbursement based on the district's characteristics and the students' category of disability.

**Initial Aid.** For fiscal year 2021 and later, a district's initial special education revenue is the sum of its special education-related pupil transportation services, and the **least** of:

- 1) 50 percent of the district's nonfederal expenditures for the previous year, including fringe benefits;
- 2) 62 percent of the district's special education expenditures under the old special education formulas, which excluded fringe benefits; or
- 3) 56 percent of the sum of:
  - a) the district's average daily membership times the sum of:
    - i. \$460;
    - ii. \$405 times the district's percent eligible for free and reduced-price meals; and
    - iii. .008 times the district's average daily membership;

- b) \$13,300 times the count of students with autism spectrum disorder, developmental delay, or severely multiply impaired;
- c) \$19,100 times the count of students who are deaf/hard of hearing or have an emotional behavioral disorder; and
- d) \$25,200 times the count of students who are developmentally cognitive mild-moderate, developmentally cognitive severe-profound, physically impaired, visually impaired, or deafblind.

**Excess Cost Aid.** Excess cost aid provides additional special education funding for districts that have extremely high levels of unreimbursed special education expenses. A district's special education excess cost aid equals the greater of: (1) 56 percent of the difference between the district's unreimbursed nonfederal special education expenditures and 7.0 percent of the district's general revenue; or (2) 62 percent of the difference between the district's unreimbursed "old formula" special education expenditures and 2.5 percent of the district's general revenue.

**Tuition adjustments.** State and federal special education revenue amounts are insufficient to cover school district special education costs. Under Minnesota's special education formulas, charter schools and school districts charge back to the student's resident school district a portion of the unreimbursed special education costs. This amount is called the "tuition adjustment." For fiscal year 2021 and later, 80 percent of the unreimbursed special education costs are billed back to the resident district. For charter schools only, for fiscal years 2021 and later, the state will pay an additional 10 percentage points of the charter school's unreimbursed costs (bringing to 90 percent, the total amount of the charter school's unreimbursed special education costs that are ultimately reimbursed).

**Cross Subsidy Aid.** A school district's special education cross subsidy is the difference between the amount the district spends on qualifying special education services and the sum of the state and federal special education revenue and the general education revenue generated by special education students served primarily outside of the regular classroom for that year. The cross subsidy aid is based on the previous year's cross subsidy. A school district's special education cross subsidy aid equals 6.43 percent of its cross subsidy for fiscal year 2023, 44 percent of the cross subsidy for fiscal years 2024 to 2026, and 50 percent of the cross subsidy for fiscal years 2027 and later.

**Special Education Aid.** A district's special education aid is the sum of its initial aid, excess cost aid, and tuition adjustments all constrained by the special education limits. This amount is then increased by the amount of the district's cross subsidy aid.

**Special Education Aid Limits.** A district's initial special education aid, excess cost aid, and tuition adjustments are subject to several caps and floors. First, for fiscal year 2024, the special education aid cannot exceed the greater of: (1) 56 percent of the district's nonfederal special education expenditures plus 100 percent of its special education transportation costs plus its current year tuition adjustment; or (2) the sum of its 2016 special education revenue adjusted for changes in enrollment and adjusted upward by 4.6 percent per year for fiscal years 2016 to 2020, by 4.4 percent for fiscal year 2021, 4.2 percent for fiscal year 2022, 4.0 percent for fiscal

year 2023, and 3.8 percent for fiscal year 2024, plus \$220 times its average daily membership. Further, the district's special education aid cannot be less than the lesser of: (1) 90 percent of its nonfederal special education expenditures, plus 100 percent of its special education transportation costs, plus its current year tuition adjustment; or (2) its 2016 special education revenue adjusted for changes in enrollment and adjusted by 4.6 percent for fiscal years 2016 to 2020, and decreasing by 0.2 percent for each subsequent fiscal year. This has the effect of pulling school districts more consistently toward 56 percent of each district's nonfederal special education expenditures (excluding special education pupil transportation costs which are 100 percent funded).

(Minn. Stat. §§ 125A.76-125A.79)

## **Special Education; Separate Sites and Programs**

Beginning in fiscal year 2024, a cooperative unit, including an intermediate school district, education district, service cooperative, or other joint powers organization providing special education services to a student for at least 50 percent of the school day, is eligible for a separate sites and program aid equal to \$1,689 times the pupil units served by that program.

## **Home-based Travel Aid**

The state pays 50 percent of the expenditures on necessary travel of essential personnel to provide home-based services to children with a disability who are under five years old.

## **Aid for Children with Disabilities (Special Pupil Aid)**

Some disabled children don't have a resident district because their parents' rights have been terminated, or their custodial parent or guardian lives outside Minnesota or is an inmate or resident of a state correctional facility. In these cases, the state pays to the serving school district 100 percent of the costs of instruction and services, less the general education basic revenue allowance and any other aid earned on their behalf.

## **Court-placed Special Education Revenue**

When a school district serves a child from another state who was placed by a court in Minnesota and when the school district responsible for providing services for that student is unable to collect tuition from the resident state or school district, the school district may request reimbursement from the state for the unreimbursed special education costs.

## **Out-of-State Tuition for Special Education Students**

When a court places a Minnesota child in a care and treatment facility in another state and when the resident school district receives a bill for services from the out-of-state provider, the Minnesota district may seek reimbursement for the unfunded services.

**Table 31: Special Education Appropriations**

| Fiscal Year | Regular Special Education Aid | Special Education; Separate Sites and Programs | Home-based Services Travel Aid | Special Pupil Aid; No District of Residence | Court-placed Aid | Out-of-State Tuition |
|-------------|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------|----------------------|
| 2025        | \$2,434,933,000               | \$5,083,000                                    | \$348,000                      | \$1,888,000                                 | \$27,000         | \$250,000            |
| 2024        | 2,271,000,000                 | 4,378,000                                      | 334,000                        | 1,674,000                                   | 26,000           | 250,000              |
| 2023        | 1,885,422,000                 | --   | 384,000                        | 1,887,000                                   | 25,000           | 250,000              |
| 2022        | 1,744,588,000                 | --   | 341,000                        | 1,674,000                                   | 0                | 250,000              |
| 2021        | 1,725,490,000                 | --   | 237,000                        | 1,644,000                                   | 0                | 250,000              |
| 2020        | 1,585,929,000                 | --   | 284,000                        | 1,489,000                                   | 0                | 250,000              |

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## American Indian Programs

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Minnesota has a variety of programs in place to provide funds for American Indian students and American Indian education programs.

### American Indian Education Aid

The American Indian education aid program provides state aid to all school districts, charter schools, and Tribal contract schools operating an American Indian education program and serving more than 20 American Indian students.

To qualify for American Indian education aid, the qualifying school must develop and submit a plan to the Indian education director at the Minnesota Department of Education. American Indian education aid equals the greater of the district's previous grant amount under the American Indian education grant program or the sum of \$40,000 plus \$500 for the 21st and each subsequent enrolled American Indian student. For fiscal year 2024, 150 school districts, four Tribal schools, and 18 charter schools qualify for aid.

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.81)

### Native Language Revitalization Grants to Schools

Beginning in 2024, a school district or charter school may annually apply to the commissioner of education for a grant to support language courses in Dakota, Anishinaabe, or another language indigenous to the United States or Canada. The grant may be used for the costs of teachers, program supplies, and curricular resources.

### American Indian Teacher Preparation Grants

The Commissioner of Education makes joint grants to pairs of school districts and postsecondary institutions to assist American Indians in becoming teachers. Grants under this program are statutorily prescribed to: University of Minnesota at Duluth and the Duluth school district; Bemidji State University and the Red Lake school district; Minnesota State Moorhead and a school district located within the White Earth Reservation; and Augsburg College and the Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts. Grant money may be used for programs operated by the paired institutions and student scholarships. Student scholarships must be coordinated with the American Indian Scholarship program under Minnesota Statutes, section 136A.126.

(Minn. Stat. § 122A.63)

### Tribal Contract School Aid

The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) oversees Tribal contract K-12 schools and Tribal colleges and universities and is part of the federal Department of the Interior. The BIE provides federal funding for Minnesota's four K-12 Tribal contract schools including: Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School in Bena (Leech Lake Tribe); Circle of Life School in White Earth (White Earth Tribe); Fond du Lac

Ojibwe School in Cloquet (Fond du Lac Tribe); and Nay-Ah-Shing School in Onamia (Mille Lacs Tribe). These schools are located on reservations, operated by the Tribes, and are designed to provide Indian students with educational services that are responsive to the needs and desires of the Indian communities.

Minnesota pays a supplementary state school aid, called Tribal Contract School Aid, to the four Tribal contract schools. The Tribal contract schools must generally comply with Minnesota's education statutes, and state aid must supplement, not replace, funds provided by the federal government. The state aid is for operating purposes, not facilities needs.

The Tribal Contract School Aid provides state education aid based on the Tribal school's pupil count, after offsetting the federal aid received by the school. Tribal Contract School Aid is calculated as follows:

- 1) Add the sum of: (i) the product of the general education formula allowance and the school's weighted average daily membership (WADM); and (ii) the school's compensatory revenue;
- 2) Subtract from (1) the amount of federal money allocated through the Indian School Equalization Program;
- 3) Divide the result in (2) by the school's Weighted Average Daily Membership (WADM);
- 4) Multiply the school's combined weighted pupil count (pupils plus free or reduced lunch eligible pupil units) by the lesser of (3) 51.17% of the basic formula allowance (\$3,653 for fiscal year 2024).

Tribal contract schools that receive state aid are also eligible for early childhood family education revenue. The revenue equals 1.5 times the statewide average expenditure per ECFE participant times the number of Tribal contract school participants (children and adults).

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.83)

**Table 32: Tribal Contract School Estimated Enrollment and Initial Estimated Aid for FY 24**

| School Name/#  | Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School (#1115) | Fond Du Lac Ojibwe School (#1094)* | Circle of Life Survival School (#1435) | Nay Ah Shing School (#1480) | Statewide Totals |
|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Avg. Daily Membership (ADM)  | 209                              | 175                                | 127                                    | 134                         | 645              |
| Grade-weighted ADM   | 229                              | 193                                | 139                                    | 138                         | 699              |
| Free/Reduced Lunch pupil units   | 76                               | 100                                | 86                                     | 0                           | 262              |
| Total funding pupil units  | 305                              | 293                                | 225                                    | 138                         | 960              |
| Est. Federal Funds (Indian School Equalization Program)  | \$783,000                        | \$820,000                          | \$1,256,000                            | \$921,000                   | \$3,780,000      |
| Est. State Aid   | \$1,113,000                      | \$1,069,000                        | \$301,000                              | \$41,000                    | \$2,523,000      |
| State Aid per ADM pupil  | \$5,320                          | \$6,112                            | \$2,372                                | \$305                       | \$3,910          |
| * In some years, Fond Du Lac chooses to have their students counted by the Cloquet school district and enters into a tuition agreement to transfer the funds from Cloquet to the Fond Du Lac school. |                                  |                                    |  |                             |                  |

House Research Department

**Table 33: Appropriations for American Indian Programs**

| Fiscal Year | American Indian Education Aid | Tribal Contract School Aid | American Indian Teacher Preparation Grants | Native Language Revitalization Grants | Early Childhood at Tribal Contract Schools |
|-------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| 2025        | \$19,266,000                  | \$2,804,000                | \$600,000                                  | \$7,500,000                           | \$68,000                                   |
| 2024        | 17,949,000                    | 2,585,000                  | 2,210,000                                  | 7,500,000                             | 68,000                                     |
| 2023        | 11,889,000                    | 3,167,000                  | 600,000                                    | --                                    | 68,000                                     |
| 2022        | 11,295,000                    | 2,808,000                  | 600,000                                    | --                                    | 68,000                                     |
| 2021        | 10,814,000                    | 2,161,000                  | 460,000                                    | --                                    | 68,000                                     |
| 2020        | 8,710,000                     | 1,254,000                  | 460,000                                    | --                                    | 68,000                                     |

House Research Department

# Community, Early Childhood, and Adult Education

## Community Education

Community education programs are intended to maximize the community's use of public schools and to expand the involvement of community members who have skills and knowledge to share. Districts establishing a community education program must provide for a citizens' advisory council to advise the school administration on how best to use school facilities and community resources. Fees may be charged for community education programs.

Districts with a community education program may also prepare a youth development plan to improve coordination of agencies that address the needs and develop the resources of youth in the community. A participating district may also offer a youth service program to provide meaningful opportunities for community involvement and citizenship.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.18-124D.21)

**Community Education Revenue.** Community education programs are funded through a partially equalized aid and levy. Districts that prepare a youth service program and a youth development plan are eligible for additional revenue. Districts that establish youth after-school enrichment programs are authorized to levy an additional amount.

The basic community education revenue allowance is \$5.42 for years prior to fiscal year 2025 and \$6.35 for fiscal years 2025 and later. Community education revenue, aid, and levy for fiscal year 2024 are computed as follows:

|                                       |   |  |   |                          |   |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Total Community Education Revenue     | = | General Community Education Revenue  | + | Youth Service Revenue    | + | Youth After-School Enrichment Revenue |
| General Community Education Revenue   | = | \$5.42, times the greater of:<br>(a) 1,335; or<br>(b) population of the district   |   |                          |   |                                       |
| Youth Service Revenue                 | = | \$1.00, times the greater of<br>(a) 1,335; or<br>(b) population of the district  |   |                          |   |                                       |
| Youth After-School Enrichment Revenue | = | (1) \$1.85, times the greater of:<br>(a) 1,335; or<br>(b) population of the district not to exceed 10,000;<br>plus<br>(2) \$0.43, times the population of the district in excess of 10,000 |   |                          |   |                                       |
| Community Education Levy              | = | .0094 times ANTC   |   |                          |   |                                       |
| Community Education Aid               | = | Total Community Education Revenue  | - | Community Education Levy |   |                                       |

The amount of community education aid a district receives is reduced for any district that levies less than the maximum for community education, in proportion to the amount of the underlevy.

**Table 34: Community Education Revenue**

| School Year | Tax Rate | Basic Community Education Revenue per Capita | Youth Service Revenue per Capita | After-School Enrichment Revenue per Capita* | Minimum Revenue per District | Appropriations | Levy         | Number of Participating Districts |
|-------------|----------|--|----------------------------------|---|------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2024-25**   | .375%    | \$6.35                                       | \$1.00                           | \$1.85 + 0.43                               | \$12,282                     | \$8,030,000    | \$38,920,000 | N/A                               |
| 2023-24     | .940     | 5.42   | 1.00                             | 1.85 + 0.43                                 | 11,040                       | 98,000         | 41,580,000   | 325/329                           |
| 2022-23     | .940     | 5.42   | 1.00                             | 1.85 + 0.43                                 | 11,040                       | 175,000        | 41,544,000   | 324/329                           |
| 2021-22     | .940     | 5.42   | 1.00                             | 1.85 + 0.43                                 | 11,040                       | 180,000        | 40,634,000   | 324/329                           |
| 2020-21     | .940     | 5.42   | 1.00                             | 1.85 + 0.43                                 | 11,040                       | 236,000        | 40,380,000   | 328/330                           |
| 2019-20     | .940     | 5.42   | 1.00                             | 1.85 + 0.43                                 | 11,040                       | 321,000        | 39,989,000   | 329/331                           |

\* After-school enrichment revenue per capita equals \$1.85 times the district's first 10,000 residents, plus 43 cents per capita for each resident in excess of 10,000.

\*\* Estimated

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**Programs for Adults with Disabilities.** Districts with an approved program may offer programs for adults with disabilities as part of their community education programs. These programs may include outreach activities to identify adults needing service, classes specifically for adults with disabilities, services enabling the adults to participate in community education, and activities to increase public awareness and enhance the role of people with disabilities in the community.

Prior to fiscal year 2025, 77 school districts were eligible for the Adults with Disabilities program revenue. State aid was provided to districts with approval for educational programs for adults with disabilities. State aid equaled the lesser of \$30,000 or one-half of the actual program expenditures. The remainder of a district's program revenue was composed of funds from other public or private sources, or an optional levy not to exceed \$30,000 or one-half of the approved program budget.

Beginning in fiscal year 2025, all school districts are eligible for Adults with Disabilities revenue. The revenue equals 34 cents times the per capita population of the school district. The program is an equalized aid and levy with the tax rate for fiscal year 2025 set at .00006 times the district's adjusted net tax capacity.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.19, subds. 7, 8; 124D.56)

**Table 35: Programs for Adults with Disabilities**

| Fiscal Year | Appropriations | Levy      | Number of Programs |
|-------------|----------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 2025*       | \$1,782,000    | \$666,000 | 77                 |
| 2024        | 710,000        | 669,000   | 77                 |
| 2023        | 710,000        | 669,000   | 77                 |
| 2022        | 710,000        | 667,000   | 77                 |
| 2021        | 710,000        | 670,000   | 77                 |
| 2020        | 710,000        | 670,000   | 77                 |

\* Estimated

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### Early Childhood Family Education

Districts that provide community education programs may also establish early childhood family education programs (ECFE) for children from birth to kindergarten, for their parents, and for expectant parents. These programs include parent education to promote children’s learning and development. All ECFE programming must require substantial parental involvement.

Districts must appoint an advisory council to assist in planning and implementing ECFE programs. Districts are encouraged to coordinate ECFE programs with their special education and vocational education programs, as well as with other public or nonprofit agencies providing similar services.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.13; 124D.135)

**Early Childhood Family Education Revenue.** ECFE programs are funded through state aid, local levy, and participant fees. The formula for calculating ECFE revenue is based on the district’s population of young children (under the age of five), not the number of children actually served.

The ECFE allowance equals 2.3 percent of the general education basic formula allowance (\$164.16 for fiscal year 2024). ECFE revenue for fiscal year 2024 is calculated as follows:

$$\text{ECFE Revenue} = \$164.16, \text{ times the greater of:} \\ \text{(a) 150; or} \\ \text{(b) number of district residents under 5 years old}$$

$$\text{ECFE Levy} = \text{the commissioner must establish a tax rate for ECFE revenue that, when multiplied by each district’s adjusted net tax capacity, raises } \$22,135,000 \text{ statewide (.00246993 for 2024)}$$

$$\text{ECFE Aid} = \text{ECFE Revenue} - \text{ECFE Levy}$$

Home-visiting Revenue = \$3.00 times the number of district residents under 5 years old

The amount of ECFE aid is reduced for any district that levies less than the maximum early childhood levy allowed to the district, in proportion to the amount of the underlevy.

Since fiscal year 2000, districts are required to charge fees for ECFE programs, but may waive fees for participants who are unable to pay. Districts may also obtain funds from other sources to support early childhood programs. Districts must maintain ECFE funds in a separate account.

**Table 36: Early Childhood Family Education Revenue**

| School Year | ECFE Tax Rate | ECFE Formula Allowance | Appropriations | Levy         | Number of Participating Districts |
|-------------|---------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2024-25*    | .199926%      | \$167.44               | \$39,108,000   | \$22,135,000 | 319/329                           |
| 2023-24     | .246993       | 164.16                 | 37,497,000     | 23,168,000   | 319/329                           |
| 2022-23     | .24789        | 157.85                 | 35,126,000     | 22,172,000   | 322/329                           |
| 2021-22     | .258580       | 154.74                 | 34,158,000     | 21,958,000   | 322/329                           |
| 2020-21     | .276411       | 151.04                 | 33,188,000     | 22,115,000   | 324/330                           |
| 2019-20     | .291619       | 148.07                 | 32,000,000     | 21,924,000   | 329/331                           |

\* Estimated

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**Early Childhood Home-visiting Program.** A school district participating in a collaborative agreement to provide education services and social services through a home-visiting program is eligible for revenue equal to \$3.00 times the number of district residents under the age of five. The revenue is provided through an equalized aid and levy with the equalizing factor set at \$17,250.

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.13)

**Table 37: Early Childhood Home-visiting Program**

| School Year | Allowance per Child Age 4 or Younger | Appropriation | Levy      | Number of Participating Districts |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 2025*       | \$3.00                               | \$391,000     | \$783,000 | 278                               |
| 2024        | 3.00                                 | 309,000       | 674,000   | 278                               |
| 2023        | 3.00                                 | 426,000       | 638,000   | 277                               |
| 2022        | 3.00                                 | 455,000       | 608,000   | 276                               |
| 2021        | 3.00                                 | 481,000       | 577,000   | 277                               |

| School Year | Allowance per Child Age 4 or Younger | Appropriation | Levy    | Number of Participating Districts |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 2020        | 3.00                                 | 516,000       | 539,000 | 278                               |
| * Estimated |                                      |               |         |                                   |

House Research Department

## Voluntary Prekindergarten/School Readiness Program

Beginning in fiscal year 2017, about \$25 million per year is appropriated through the regular school aid formulas to Minnesota’s school districts and charter schools to fund voluntary prekindergarten programs providing at least 350 hours of annual service to children who are four years old by September 1 in the calendar year in which the school year commences. The Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Program divides the state into four regions: (1) Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts; (2) suburban school districts; (3) greater Minnesota school districts; and (4) charter schools. Within each region, each school site is prioritized based on its percent of free and reduced lunch eligible kindergarten students at that site. Sites may be prioritized by the distance from early learning sites that have three- or four-star ratings from Parent Aware. The statewide appropriation is split among the four regions based on each region’s proportionate share of kindergarten pupils, and the initial “VPK” program serves about 3,160 students per year.

In 2017, the school readiness plus (SRP) program was enacted, and in most ways, the SRP program mirrors the VPK program. The funding for SRP was approved on a two-year basis until the 2023 Legislature made the program permanent. The SRP program serves another 4,000 students per year and has an estimated appropriations cost of about \$28 million per year. About a dozen school sites receiving SRP funding choose to follow the school readiness plus program requirements while all of the remaining sites follow the rules of the VPK program. For fiscal year 2025, a reserve account of \$50 million was appropriated and is expected to fund at least 3,000 additional VPK/SRP seats. Beginning in fiscal year 2026, the VPK/SRP program will serve 12,360 students per year.

School district and charter school VPK programs are funded by including the prekindergarten pupils in the regular pupil weighting system and incorporating that count in all parts of Minnesota’s school finance system. For fiscal year 2017 and later, a prekindergarten pupil who attends a VPK/SRP program at a qualifying site generates a pupil weight of 0.6 if that student receives at least 510 hours of instruction during the year. This is the maximum weight allowed to any individual prekindergarten pupil without a disability. A qualifying site must offer at least 350 hours of instruction during the year. A prekindergarten pupil receiving 350 hours of annual instruction generates a pupil weight of 0.412. For programs offering between 350 and 510 hours of instruction, the voluntary prekindergarten weight equals the ratio of the actual hours of instruction to 850. On average, the funding (state aid and local levy) for each VPK student amounts to roughly \$10,000.

VPK programs may be offered in conjunction with other early learning programs; however, students in a VPK program do not qualify for other early learning program funding during the period of time that the student is enrolled in a voluntary prekindergarten program. A school must separately apply for voluntary prekindergarten funding for each qualifying school site. The VPK program must employ qualified instructors, but the instructors need not be licensed teachers. Class sizes must be limited to no more than ten students to each adult, and no more than 20 students for each qualified instructor.

**Table 38 VPK/SRP Students Served**

| School Year | Initial VPK Students | Added VPK/SRP Students | Onetime Added Students | Total VPK/SRP Students | Combined Pupil Units |
|-------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| 2024-25     | 3,160                | 4,000                  | 3,000*                 | 10,160**               | 5,800**              |
| 2023-24     | 3,160                | 4,000                  | –                      | 7,160                  | 3,972**              |
| 2022-23     | 3,160                | 4,000                  | –                      | 7,160                  | 3,972                |
| 2021-22     | 3,160                | 4,000                  | –                      | 7,160                  | 3,489                |
| 2020-21     | 3,160                | 4,000                  | –                      | 7,160                  | 3,402                |
| 2019-20     | 3,160                | 4,000                  | –                      | 7,160                  | 3,576                |

\*The 2023 Legislature appropriated \$50 million for additional VPK/SRP students for fiscal year 2025. The 2024 Legislature must act to allocate the money, which is expected to fund seats for at least 3,000 additional students.

\*\* Estimated

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(Minn. Stat. § 124D.151; Laws 2017, 1st Spec. Sess. ch. 5, art. 8, § 9)

### School Readiness

A school district or group of school districts may establish a school readiness program to enable children to enter school with the necessary skills and behavior to succeed. A child may participate in a school readiness program if the child is at least three years old and has had a developmental screening. Children under the age of three-and-one-half years can be enrolled if the district determines that serving young children makes the program more effective.

Districts may establish a sliding fee for school readiness programs. Fees must be waived for participants who are unable to pay. The state also provides state school readiness aid. School readiness aid is calculated as follows:

- (1) the number of eligible 4-year-olds in the district on October 1 of the previous school year
- x the ratio of 50% of the total aid to the total number of eligible 4-year-olds in the state on October 1 of the previous school year; plus

- (2) the number of students enrolled in the district from families eligible for free and reduced lunch for the second previous school year
- $$\times \frac{\text{the ratio of 50\% of the total aid to the total number of students in the state eligible for free and reduced lunch for the second previous school year}}{\text{the ratio of 50\% of the total aid to the total number of students in the state eligible for free and reduced lunch for the second previous school year}}$$

Districts must place school readiness aid in a reserve account within the community service fund.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.15; 124D.16)

**Table 39: School Readiness Aid**

| Fiscal Year | Appropriations |
|-------------|----------------|
| 2025        | \$33,683,000   |
| 2024        | 33,683,000     |
| 2023        | 33,683,000     |
| 2022        | 33,683,000     |
| 2021        | 33,683,000     |
| 2020        | 33,683,000     |

House Research Department

### Early Learning Scholarship Program

Minnesota children age four years old and younger may first qualify for an Early Learning Scholarship. The maximum annual scholarship amounts are established by the commissioner according to a schedule depending on the program provider’s Parent Aware ranking. The current maximum scholarship for fiscal year 2024 is \$15,000 per child. The Early Learning Scholarship may be used at an eligible public or private early learning program. For fiscal year 2023, roughly \$70 million was expected to be awarded in scholarships to about 12,500 participants (not all children receive the maximum scholarship amount). An Early Learning Scholarship may be used in combination with other publicly funded programs (e.g., child care assistance payments, school readiness programs, voluntary prekindergarten programs, etc.).

### Child Eligibility

A child who is not yet five years old on September 1 of the current school year and not yet enrolled in kindergarten is eligible for an Early Learning Scholarship if the child’s family meets at least one of three conditions:

- 1) income—the family income is less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level income for fiscal year 2024, and for fiscal year 2025 and later, (i) equal to or less than 47 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size at the initial eligibility determination, and equal to or less than 67 percent of the state median income at any subsequent eligibility determination, and (ii) beginning July 1, 2025,

85 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size if at least one of the child’s parents is working or attending a job training or education program or if the child is receiving or needs to receive protective services (Minnesota’s state median income for a family of four was \$125,645 for federal fiscal year 2023);

- 2) support program participation—the family documents participation in a qualifying federal school meals program, Head Start, the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); or
- 3) the child is referred as in need of child protection services or is in foster care.

**Scholarship Amounts**

A child’s maximum scholarship amount is set by the Commissioner of Education and varies depending on the provider’s rating under the Parent Aware quality rating improvement system. The goal is to set the maximum scholarship rate equal to the 75th percentile of the child care market rate survey amount.

**Table 40: Early Learning Scholarships; Maximum Scholarship Amount for FY 24**

| Parent Aware Ranking           | Scholarship Amount for Center-based, School District, and Head Start Programs | Scholarship Amounts for Licensed Family Child Care |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Four Stars                     | \$15,000  | \$12,000   |
| Three Stars                    | 9,000   | 9,000  |
| One and Two Stars              | 6,000   | 6,000  |
| Signed Participation Agreement | 5,000   | 5,000  |

House Research Department

**Pathway I and Pathway II Options**

MDE has developed two pathways for scholarships. Pathway I scholarships are awarded directly to the families of eligible children. Pathway I scholarships may be used at any Parent Aware-rated program, or a program that has signed a participation agreement. Pathway II scholarships are awarded to qualifying four-star rated programs on behalf of qualifying children.

MDE divides the annual appropriation for scholarships among economic development regions based on the region’s levels of poverty, number of schools identified as “priority schools” under the state’s accountability system, and number of current scholarship recipients. Since fiscal year 2018, the amount of scholarship money that MDE can designate for Pathway II scholarships has been capped—the amount cannot exceed the amount that was designated for fiscal year 2017, which was about \$28 million.

In fiscal year 2022, 6,096 Pathway I scholarships were awarded to qualifying families and 5,535 Pathway II scholarship spaces were awarded directly to eligible providers. In fiscal year 2022, about 60 percent of the scholarship money was awarded through the Pathway I option and the other 40 percent was awarded through the Pathway II option.

**Program Provider Eligibility**

A Minnesota public or private early learning program that has a Parent Aware rating may qualify as an Early Learning Scholarship program provider. These providers include public programs such as school district early education programs and Head Start centers, and private programs such as child care centers and licensed family child care providers.

**Program Administration**

The MDE contracts with organizations in each economic development region of the state to administer Pathway I scholarships (several of the grant administrators are community action programs). A family that wishes to receive a Pathway I Early Learning Scholarship may apply through the regional administering agency. The MDE administers many aspects of Pathway II scholarships, but MDE contracts with one organization to provide statewide administration of Pathway II scholarships for child care programs.

**Table 41: Early Learning Scholarship Appropriations**

| Fiscal Year | Appropriation |
|-------------|---------------|
| 2025        | \$196,738,000 |
| 2024        | 196,737,000   |
| 2023        | 70,709,000    |
| 2022        | 70,709,000    |
| 2021        | 70,709,000    |
| 2020        | 75,209,000    |

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.142 and 124D.165)

**Health and Developmental Screening**

School districts are required to provide developmental screening for children before they start school, targeting children who are between three and five years old. A screening program must include:

- a developmental assessment;
- a hearing and vision screening or referral;
- an immunization review and referral;
- child’s height and weight; and

- an identification of risk factors that may influence learning and referral.

Optional screening components include:

- nutritional, physical, and dental assessments;
- review of family circumstances that affect development; and
- laboratory tests, blood tests, and health history.

All students must be screened prior to enrollment in a public school unless the child’s parent provides a signed statement of conscientiously held beliefs against screening. A student may be screened by a school district, or by a public or private health care provider.

Beginning in fiscal year 2024, a district receives \$98 for each three-year-old screened, \$65 for each four-year-old screened, \$52 for each five- or six-year-old screened before enrolling in kindergarten, and \$39 for all other students screened within the first 30 days of kindergarten enrollment. The district may transfer money from the general fund to make up the difference between state aid and the cost of the program.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.16-121A.19)

**Table 42: Developmental Screening Aid**

| Fiscal Year | Appropriations |
|-------------|----------------|
| 2025        | \$4,375,000    |
| 2024        | 4,350,000      |
| 2023        | 3,583,000      |
| 2022        | 3,655,000      |
| 2021        | 3,608,000      |
| 2020        | 3,608,000      |

House Research Department

## Head Start

Head Start is primarily a federally funded program designed to provide a comprehensive family-oriented program that improves school readiness and social competence of children from low-income families. State funds were first appropriated for Head Start programs in fiscal year 1989.

Head Start funds do not flow to school districts but instead to the 35 community organizations that are Minnesota’s Head Start grantees. In Minnesota, the most common type of grantee is a community action program.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 119A.50-119A.53)

**Table 43: Head Start Revenue**

| Fiscal Year | State Aid    | Federal Funds for Head Start (including Early Head Start) |
|-------------|--------------|---|
| 2025        | \$35,100,000 | NA  |
| 2024        | 35,100,000   | NA  |
| 2023        | 25,100,000   | \$170,310,000   |
| 2022        | 25,100,000   | 148,160,000*  |
| 2021        | 25,100,000   | 141,696,000*  |
| 2020        | 25,100,000   | 149,436,000*  |

\* Does not include onetime COVID-19 related funding.

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### School-age Care

A school district may offer a school-age care program for children in kindergarten through grade six. The program must provide supervised activities during nonschool hours. Programs are primarily funded through participant fees on a sliding-fee scale based on family income. This program was formerly called the extended day program. About one-half of the Minnesota’s school districts participate in the school-age care program.

Districts with school-age care programs receive school-age care revenue for the additional costs of providing services to children with disabilities or children experiencing temporary family or related problems. School-age care aid and levy are calculated as follows:

$$\text{School-age Care Revenue} = \text{Program costs approved by the Department of Education}$$

$$\text{School-age Care Levy} = \text{School-age Care Revenue} \times \begin{matrix} \text{the lesser of:} \\ \text{(1) one; or} \\ \text{(2) } \underline{\text{ANTC/pupil units}} \\ \text{\$2,318} \end{matrix}$$

$$\text{School-age Care Aid} = \text{School-age Care Revenue} - \text{School-age Care Levy}$$

**Table 44: School-age Care Program**

| Fiscal Year | Aid     | Levy         |
|-------------|---------|--------------|
| 2025*       | \$1,000 | \$30,854,000 |
| 2024        | 0       | 22,595,000   |
| 2023        | 1,000   | 21,880,000   |
| 2022        | 0       | 20,403,000   |
| 2021        | 1,000   | 19,759,000   |
| 2020        | 0       | 18,578,000   |
| * Estimated |         |              |

House Research Department

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.13; 124D.22)

## Adult Basic Education

Adult basic education (ABE) programs provide academic instruction for persons who are not subject to the state’s compulsory instruction law and do not otherwise attend school. The purpose of the instruction is to enable students to obtain high school diplomas or equivalency certificates.

The Commissioner of Education must approve a district’s ABE program. The commissioner may also contract with private nonprofit organizations to provide these programs.

A district or an organization offering an ABE program may charge a sliding fee to program participants.

School districts may use funds from the community education levy and state community education aid for ABE programs. In addition, ABE programs are funded with state aid and federal funds. The total amount of funding from all sources must be used to provide adult education programs.

**Adult Basic Education Revenue.** Minnesota’s ABE funding formula keys off a statewide revenue amount set in statute and is allocated among the state’s ABE programs based on contact hours, population, the enrollment of English learner students, and the number of adults age 25 or older with no diploma residing in a district.

The statewide ABE revenue amount is set in statute as \$52,759,000 for fiscal year 2024. This amount is subject to an annual growth factor. The growth factor for fiscal year 2025 and later equals the lesser of:

- 1) 3 percent per year; or

- 2) the greater of the annual growth in the general education basic formula allowance or the statewide average growth over the last ten years in the number of contact hours.

The program also caps an individual ABE program's annual growth. For years prior to fiscal year 2008, the individual program growth was capped at 8 percent per year. For fiscal year 2008 only, an individual program's growth was entirely uncapped. For fiscal year 2009 and later, an annual cap of 11 percent is imposed on an individual program's growth. For each individual program, the total adult basic aid must not exceed \$30 per prior year contact hour.

For fiscal year 2024, state aid to ABE programs is equal to:

|                             |   |  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Initial State Total ABE Aid | = | \$52,759,000   |
| ABE Basic Population Aid    | = | the greater of:<br>(1) \$3,844; or<br>(2) \$1.73 times the population of the district  |
| Remaining ABE Revenue       | = | State Total ABE Aid – ABE Basic Population Aid   |
| ABE Program Revenue         | = | (1) ABE Basic Population Aid; plus<br>(2) 84% times Remaining ABE Revenue, times the ratio of contact hours for students participating in the program during the first prior program year to the state total contact hours during the first prior program year; plus<br>(3) 8% times Remaining ABE Revenue, times the ratio of the enrollment of English learner students during the second prior program year to the state total enrollment of English learner students during the second prior program year; plus<br>(4) 8% times Remaining ABE Revenue, times the ratio of the latest federal census count of the number of adults age 25 or older with no diploma residing in the district during the current program year to the state total number of adults age 25 or older with no diploma residing in all participating districts |

Three percent of state total ABE aid must be set aside for ABE supplemental service grants.

Each recipient's ABE aid must be proportionately reduced if the appropriation is insufficient to meet the formula amounts.

**Minnesota High School Equivalency Test Fees.** Minnesota's ABE programs also serve as testing centers for high school equivalency exams. High school equivalency tests, like the general education development (GED), qualify students for a high school equivalency certificate and are available to Minnesota residents over age 19 whether or not the students have taken a refresher course. The state reimburses testing centers for a portion of the costs of administering the GED. For fiscal years 2023 to 2027, subject to the availability of funds, the

state aid reimburses the testing center 100 percent of the testing fee for an individual taking the full battery of high school equivalency tests (the GED has four separate tests which are referred to as the “battery” of tests). For fiscal year 2028 and later, the state reimbursement reverts to not more than the lesser of \$40 per person or 60 percent of the test costs.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.52; 124D.53; 124D.531; 124D.55)

**Table 45: Adult Basic Education Programs**

| Fiscal Year  | ABE Appropriations | High School Equivalency Test Reimbursement Appropriation |
|--|--------------------|--|
| 2025*  | \$53,717,000       | \$125,000  |
| 2024   | 52,663,000         | 615,000**  |
| 2023   | 51,760,000         | 125,000  |
| 2022   | 51,764,000         | 125,000  |
| 2021   | 51,613,000         | 125,000  |
| 2020   | 50,048,000         | 245,000  |
| * Estimated  |                    |  |
| ** Fiscal year 2024 appropriation carries forward for four years |                    |  |

House Research Department

## Cooperative Programs

Minnesota's school districts and students participate in a variety of cooperative programs. The programs are of two general types: programs that are provided by groups of school districts and programs that allow student movement.

### School District Cooperative Programs

School districts belong to a variety of group organizations in order to both provide expanded educational opportunities for students and to provide support of administrative functions. Membership in most group structures (cooperatives) is voluntary.

**Consolidation Transition Revenue.** School districts that have reorganized after June 30, 1994, are eligible for consolidation transition revenue. (Consolidation transition revenue replaced cooperation and combination revenue.) Consolidation transition aid is equal to \$200 per pupil in the first year of consolidation and \$100 per pupil in the year after consolidation. Aid is based on a maximum of 1,500 pupils. The revenue must be used to offer early retirement incentives, reduce operating debt, enhance learning opportunities, and for other costs of reorganization. If the aid is insufficient to cover early retirement costs, the district may levy for the additional amount over a three-year period. For consolidations that include one or more districts that have received consolidation transition revenue or cooperation and combination revenue within the previous six years, the basis for calculating aid is the number of pupils in only those districts that have not previously reorganized. If all of the reorganizing districts have received aid within six years, consolidation transition revenue is based on one-fourth of the pupils in the newly created district.

From 1990 until July 1, 2001, more than 150 school districts consolidated using this program or its predecessor, the Cooperation and Combination Program. Since July 1, 2001, only 21 school districts have consolidated.

(Minn. Stat. § 123A.485)

**Table 46: Consolidation Transition Revenue**

| Fiscal Year | Appropriation |
|-------------|---------------|
| 2025        | \$290,000     |
| 2024        | 187,000       |
| 2023        | 372,000       |
| 2022        | 309,000       |
| 2021        | 270,000       |
| 2020        | 0             |

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## Student Movement Programs

Students in Minnesota schools can choose from a variety of programs that offer alternative or expanded educational opportunities. Often these programs are referred to as “choice” programs. These programs include Open Enrollment, the Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Program, Area Learning Center Programs, the Graduation Incentives Program, and Charter School programs. Funding for these programs is as follows (charter schools and PSEO are discussed in separate sections).

**Open Enrollment Funding.** Minnesota’s Open Enrollment program allows students to attend school in districts other than the student’s resident district. A resident district may not prevent a student from leaving the student’s home district, but the potential serving school district is not required to accept nonresident students once the serving district has accepted students equal to 1 percent of its total enrollment. General education revenue automatically follows the pupil from the resident district to the district providing instruction (the serving school district) because the general education program funding is based on students served, not resident students.

Transportation of an open enrollment pupil is the responsibility of the nonresident (serving) district from the nonresident district’s border to the school attended (the resident district has no transportation responsibilities for an open enrollment pupil).

(Minn. Stat. § 127A.47, subd. 7)

**Graduation Incentives Program Funding.** The Graduation Incentives Program (previously the High School Graduation Incentives Program and renamed the Education Options Program for one year only) allows certain eligible pupils to receive instruction in a variety of alternative settings. A pupil may attend:

- a program approved by the Commissioner of Education or an area learning center;
- a postsecondary institution under the PSEO program;
- any public elementary or secondary education program;
- a nonprofit, nonpublic, and nonsectarian school that has contracted with the district of residence to provide educational services; or
- an adult basic education program operated under the community education program (for pupils ages 17 to 21).

A district may contract with any nonprofit, nonpublic school to provide nonsectarian educational services for certain students who are eligible for the Graduation Incentives Program.

The method of funding students participating in the Graduation Incentive Program depends on the type of program providing educational services. Revenue distribution for students in an area learning center, a public school, an adult basic education course, or in a board-approved program is the same as the funding for open enrollment students. Funding for education option students in PSEO is the same as for other PSEO students. For Graduation Incentives

Program students who receive educational services from a private organization under a contract with a school district, the basic revenue is allocated to both the contracting district and the private organization. The Department of Education pays 90 percent of the revenue generated by an education options student to the private provider and 10 percent to the contracting district. The share of basic revenue is reduced proportionately for part-time students who receive services from a private organization under contract. During the term of the contract, state aid is placed into an account that is reserved for the site providing the alternative education.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.68; 127A.47, subd. 7)

**Area Learning Center Program Funding.** An area learning center may be established by a school district by itself or in cooperation with a cooperative organization, or other public and private organizations. Area learning centers often operate alternative high schools, summer school programs, and other cooperative activities and serve both resident and nonresident pupils. All area learning centers outside first-class cities must serve at least two school districts. Revenue for nonresident students is transferred from the student's resident district to the district operating the area learning center in the same way revenue is transferred for open enrollment students.

(Minn. Stat. § 123A.08)

**Early Graduation Incentives Programs.** For fiscal years 2012 and 2013 only, the early graduation incentives program allowed an 11th or 12th grade student who graduated early to apply to the state for an early graduation achievement scholarship. The scholarship equaled \$2,500 if the student graduated one semester early, \$5,000 if the student graduated two semesters early, and \$7,500 if the student graduated three semesters early. The qualifying student could use the scholarship at any accredited postsecondary institution located anywhere in the United States. The same incentive was awarded as cash to a qualifying early-graduating student who enters the military. This program was repealed by the 2013 Legislature.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 120B.08; 120B.081)

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## Dual Enrollment Programs

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Minnesota's extensive dual enrollment programs<sup>5</sup> (programs that allow a student to receive high school and college course credit for the same class) have evolved over the last 35 years since the postsecondary enrollment options (PSEO) program was first passed by the legislature in 1985. While there is not universal agreement on the terminology, it may be easiest to classify dual enrollment programs as one of three different types: traditional PSEO; courses according to an agreement; and early middle college programs. The following is a brief description of each type of program, a list of student eligibility, and a summary of how the program is funded.

### Traditional PSEO

Under the traditional PSEO program, an eligible student leaves the high school and takes a college course taught by a member of the college faculty on the campus of a qualifying postsecondary institution (PSI). In some cases, the student may take the college course online directly from the PSI.

**Student Eligibility.** All 11th and 12th grade Minnesota pupils (public, nonpublic, and homeschool students), and some Minnesota pupils in 10th grade who have achieved proficiency on the 8th grade Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) and first enroll in a career and technical course at the PSI, may apply to a PSI in order to participate in the traditional PSEO program. A student may participate part-time or full-time in the traditional PSEO program. A public high school may not prohibit a student from participating in the traditional PSEO program.

**Qualifying PSI.** A qualifying PSI means: a Minnesota public postsecondary institution (University of Minnesota or Minnesota State (formerly MnSCU) institution); a private, residential, two- or four-year, liberal arts, degree-granting college or university with a physical presence in Minnesota (e.g., Bethel University); a nonprofit two-year trade and technical school granting an associate degree (e.g., Dunwoody); or an accredited opportunities industrial center (e.g., Summit Academy OIC). A qualifying PSI sets its own admission requirements for high school students, may choose to limit the number of PSEO students who may enroll in its programs, and may limit the course offerings available to the high school students.

**PSEO Funding.** Under the traditional PSEO program, for a full-time student, 88 percent of the basic general education revenue is paid by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) directly from the state to the PSI. The public school district in turn counts the student as 0.12 pupils in average daily membership across all school funding formulas. The remaining money

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<sup>5</sup> For a more detailed description of dual enrollment programs, see the MDE document "Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Reference Guide" updated August 2019, on MDE's website: [https://education.mn.gov/mdeprod/idcplg?IdcService=GET\\_FILE&dDocName=MDE058445&RevisionSelectionMethod=latestReleased&Rendition=primary](https://education.mn.gov/mdeprod/idcplg?IdcService=GET_FILE&dDocName=MDE058445&RevisionSelectionMethod=latestReleased&Rendition=primary).

that would otherwise follow the student (88 percent of all school funding formulas other than the basic general education revenue) is “saved” by the state. For nonpublic pupils, there is no residual payment to the school district of residence—the state simply pays 88 percent of the basic general education revenue directly to the PSI. For each part-time PSEO pupil, the district receives a proportionate share of the total school revenue attributable to that pupil, based on the amount of time that the PSEO pupil attends the high school. The state basic formula payment to the PSI is converted from the general education basic formula allowance to a standard rate per credit hour. For fiscal year 2024, this equals \$179.01 for each quarter credit hour ( $[88\% \times (\$7,138 - \$425) \times 1.2]/45$ ) and \$268.52 for each semester hour ( $[88\% \times (\$7,138 - \$425) \times 1.2]/30$ ). The payment to the PSI may not exceed the lesser of the actual tuition at the college or the standard rate per credit hour.

**Program Participation.** For fiscal year 2021, 7,862 public school pupils, 1,273 nonpublic pupils, and 1,797 homeschool pupils attended classes at a PSI taking a total of 181,863 credits, and the state aid payments directly to the PSIs through the traditional PSEO funding formula amounted to \$39.319 million.

## Courses According to Agreement

An alternative form of PSEO occurs when the school district and the PSI enter into a contract for services for a dual enrollment course. In 1992, the legislature specifically authorized school districts and PSIs to provide PSEO courses taught in the high school. These programs are sometimes referred to as concurrent enrollment programs or by the program name of the institution offering the course (e.g., College in the Schools—University of Minnesota; Seniors to Sophomores (S2S)—St. Cloud State; Program for Advanced College Credit—St. Mary’s University, etc.). Instructors in these programs are most often high school teachers specially trained by the sponsoring postsecondary institution to teach the course using curriculum developed by faculty at the PSI. A contract for a course according to an agreement may be for a concurrent enrollment course offered at the high school or for a course the student attends on the college campus (this option has become more prevalent in the last few years because more funding is generated by the student as a concurrent enrollment student than under the traditional PSEO program).

**Student Eligibility.** In addition to 11th and 12th grade students and 10th grade students who have taken a career and technical course, public school 9th and 10th grade pupils may participate in a qualifying world language course or another concurrent enrollment course subject to space limitations and the agreement with the partnering PSI.

**Funding.** Under a concurrent enrollment course or other PSEO course offered through an agreement with a partnering institution, the funding for a participating student is the same as for any other high school student at the school and the aid amounts are paid by MDE directly from the state to the school district. Additionally, if the course qualifies as a concurrent enrollment course, the public school will receive additional aid under the concurrent enrollment aid formula. The contract with the PSI determines how much revenue the school district pays to the PSI for the teacher training, curriculum, and support, and the contract also specifies whether the course will be taught by a college instructor or a high school teacher.

**Program Participation.** For fiscal year 2021, 33,160 students participated in the concurrent enrollment program taking a total of 79,236 college credit-bearing courses.

## Early Middle College Program

The 2014 Legislature established the early middle college program as an option under PSEO. Across the states, early middle college programs may have one of several different forms but they are most often targeted to students who are in the academic “middle” and may not otherwise view college as a viable option. Minnesota’s explicit addition of early middle college programs to the PSEO program is intended to increase participation in PSEO for underserved students. Unlike Minnesota’s traditional PSEO and concurrent enrollment programs, under some circumstances, an early middle college program may allow a student to take developmental coursework as part of the dual enrollment curriculum.

**Student Eligibility.** An 11th or 12th grade student who qualifies for the graduation incentives program and who is enrolled in a state-approved alternative program, including an alternative learning center (ALC), alternative learning program (ALP), or contract alternative program may participate in PSEO through an early middle college program.

**Funding.** Some early middle college programs are funded through the traditional PSEO model while other early middle college programs are provided under contract and are funded as courses according to an agreement.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.09; 124D.091)

**Table 47: Concurrent Enrollment Aid**

| Fiscal Year | Concurrent Enrollment Aid | Statutory Aid Per Pupil | Proration Factor | Participating Pupils | # of Participating School Districts and Charters |
|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------------|--|
| 2025        | \$4,000,000               | \$150                   | NA               | NA                   | NA   |
| 2024        | 4,000,000                 | 150                     | NA               | NA                   | NA   |
| 2023        | 4,000,000                 | 150                     | NA               | NA                   | NA   |
| 2022        | 4,000,000                 | 150                     | 35.28%           | NA                   | NA   |
| 2021        | 4,000,000                 | 150                     | 33.65            | 33,156               | 335  |
| 2020        | 4,000,000                 | 150                     | 34.95            | 32,905               | 327  |

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## Charter Schools

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As of July 15, 2023, there were 180 charter schools operating in Minnesota serving an estimated 70,816 pupils. Charter schools are eligible for general education revenue, special education revenue, building lease revenue, start-up grants, and certain other school district revenue.

**General Education Revenue.** A charter school earns general education revenue on a per pupil unit basis just as though it were a school district except for approximately \$333 per pupil unit (4.66 percent of the basic formula allowance) for transportation expenses, which the charter school receives only if it provides transportation services. The general education revenue paid to a charter school is paid entirely through state aid. Operating capital revenue received by the charter school may be used for any purpose.

**Referendum Revenue.** A charter school receives only the aid portion of each enrolling student's referendum revenue based on the student's resident district referendum aid amount.

**Special Education Revenue.** A charter school receives special education revenue as though it were a school district. In addition, a charter school bills back to a disabled student's resident school district certain eligible unreimbursed special education costs and 90 percent of the unreimbursed costs are covered through these tuition billbacks.

For years prior to 2015, the charter school billed back to the resident school district 100 percent of eligible unreimbursed costs. For fiscal years 2015 through 2019, for most charter schools, the charter school billed back to the resident school district 90 percent of the eligible unreimbursed costs. For fiscal year 2020, the charter school billed back to the resident school district 85 percent of the eligible unreimbursed costs, and the state directly paid 5 percent of the eligible unreimbursed costs to the charter school. For fiscal year 2021 and later, the charter school bills back to the resident school district 80 percent of the eligible unreimbursed costs, and the state directly pays 10 percent of the eligible unreimbursed costs to the charter school.

However, if at least 70 percent of the charter school's student population qualifies for special education services, the full 100 percent of the eligible unreimbursed costs are billed back to the resident district.

**Transportation Revenue.** A charter school is eligible for an additional amount of general education revenue of approximately \$333 per pupil unit if it elects to provide transportation services. In the alternative, a charter school may choose to have the school district in which it is located provide transportation services. In this case, the charter school does not receive any transportation funding, and the school district must provide transportation services to the charter school attendees in the same manner as it provides transportation to its resident students and students entering the school district under the enrollment options (open enrollment) program.

**Building Lease Aid.** A charter school is eligible for building lease aid equal to the lesser of \$1,314 per pupil or 90 percent of the charter school's lease costs.

**Integration Revenue.** Prior to fiscal year 2004, a charter school was eligible for the aid portion of integration revenue for enrolled students who are residents of a district that is eligible for integration revenue if the enrollment of the pupil in the charter school contributes to integration or desegregation purposes. This aid was separately appropriated and was prorated if the appropriation was insufficient. This revenue was eliminated for fiscal year 2004 and later.

**Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue.** A charter school is eligible for long-term facilities maintenance aid equal to \$132 per pupil.

**Other Aid, Grants, Revenue.** A charter school is eligible to receive other aids, grants, and revenue according to the school funding formulas as though it were a school district, unless the receipt of the revenue would require a local property tax levy. A charter school may receive money from any source for capital facilities needs. Any unexpended capital facilities revenue must be reserved and must be expended only for future capital facilities purposes.

**Federal Aid.** A charter school is eligible for any federal aid received by the state as if the charter school were a school district. A new charter school may apply for federal start-up grants.

**Use of State Money.** A charter school may not use state aid to purchase land or buildings.

**Property Tax Status of Charter Schools.** The 2010 Legislature clarified the property tax status of charter schools. Property that is leased to a charter school is exempt from taxation if: (1) the lease is for at least one year; (2) the property is owned by a school, political subdivision, church, or nonprofit; (3) the property is used for instructional and administrative purposes; and (4) the charter school has exclusive use of the facility or has a shared use agreement with a school, church, or political subdivision.

**Table 48: Charter School General Education, Special Education, and Building Lease Aid**

| Fiscal Year | General Education Aid Entitlement* | Special Education Direct Aid* | Building Lease Aid Appropriation |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2025        | \$770,548,000                      | \$293,024,000                 | \$98,166,000                     |
| 2024        | 732,178,000                        | 265,090,000                   | 94,320,000                       |
| 2023        | 685,857,000                        | 242,845,000                   | 95,819,000                       |
| 2022        | 641,198,000                        | 215,173,000                   | 89,868,000                       |
| 2021        | 597,663,000                        | 180,098,000                   | 83,778,000                       |
| 2020        | 557,776,000                        | 178,951,000                   | 85,332,000                       |

\* General education aid and special education aid paid to charter schools are subsumed within the regular appropriations for general education and special education aid.

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 124E.01-124E.26; 272.02, subd. 42)

# School Desegregation and Integration

Minnesota funds a variety of programs designed to promote integration within and among its school districts.

## Integration Revenue

The 2011 Legislature set in motion a process to repeal and replace Minnesota’s integration funding program. A task force formed, convened meetings, and developed and submitted a report to the 2012 Legislature. The 2013 Legislature responded to the report by creating a new funding program called Achievement and Integration for Minnesota (AIM), first effective for the 2013-14 school year. The new program’s language declares the purposes of the law to “pursue racial and economic integration and increase student academic achievement, create equitable educational opportunities, and reduce academic disparities based on students’ diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds in Minnesota public schools.”

School districts that file integration plans with the Department of Education are eligible for AIM revenue. During the 2023-24 school year, 175 school districts are implementing integration plans and are receiving AIM revenue. AIM revenue is provided through a mix of aid and levy, with 70 percent of the revenue provided in state aid and the remaining 30 percent provided through the local levy or other local resources.

Each qualifying district’s AIM revenue equals the sum of: (1) \$350 times the district’s adjusted pupil units times the ratio of the district’s number of students of color to its total enrollment, and (2) the greater of zero or 0.66 times the difference between the district’s integration revenue for fiscal year 2013 and its AIM revenue under clause (1). Additionally, a district may qualify for incentive revenue equal to an additional \$10 per pupil unit.

**Table 49: Achievement and Integration Maximum Revenue for Fiscal Year 2024**  
Selected District Characteristics

| District # | District Name    | FY 24<br>Adjusted<br>Pupil<br>Units | Percent<br>Students<br>of Color | Estimated FY 24<br>AIM Revenue | AIM<br>Revenue<br>Per Pupil | AIM<br>Aid<br>Per<br>Pupil | AIM<br>Levy<br>Per<br>Pupil |
|------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 13         | Columbia Heights | 3,567                               | 84.4%                           | \$1,092,000                    | 306                         | 214                        | 92                          |
| 625        | St. Paul         | 34,539                              | 78.3                            | 14,910,000                     | 432                         | 302                        | 130                         |
| 518        | Worthington      | 3,702                               | 74.2                            | 1,002,000                      | 271                         | 189                        | 81                          |
| 1          | Minneapolis      | 29,493                              | 61.5                            | 13,134,000                     | 445                         | 312                        | 134                         |
| 535        | Rochester        | 18,674                              | 45.4                            | 3,300,000                      | 177                         | 124                        | 53                          |
| 284        | Wayzata          | 13,029                              | 40.2                            | 2,288,000                      | 176                         | 123                        | 53                          |
| 11         | Anoka            | 38,230                              | 39.9                            | 7,778,000                      | 185                         | 129                        | 55                          |
| 709        | Duluth           | 8,790                               | 22.7                            | 1,707,000                      | 194                         | 136                        | 58                          |

| District #                          | District Name           | FY 24 Adjusted Pupil Units | Percent Students of Color | Estimated FY 24 AIM Revenue | AIM Revenue Per Pupil | AIM Aid Per Pupil | AIM Levy Per Pupil |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 276                                 | Minnetonka              | 12,295                     | 21.1                      | 0                           | 0                     | 0                 | 0                  |
| 885                                 | St. Michael-Albertville | 7,289                      | 14.7                      | 0                           | 0                     | 0                 | 0                  |
| <b>State Total (Districts Only)</b> |                         | <b>855,082</b>             | <b>34.7%</b>              | <b>\$119,480,000</b>        | <b>\$140</b>          | <b>\$98</b>       | <b>\$42</b>        |

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For fiscal years 2001 to 2013, formula amounts for different types of districts were specified in statute by type of district.

**Table 50: Integration Revenue Allowances Per Pupil Fiscal Years 2001 to 2013**

| Fiscal Year | Minneapolis       | St. Paul | Duluth | Eligible District with More than 15% Students of Color | Other Eligible Districts | % of Revenue Paid in State Aid |
|-------------|-------------------|----------|--------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2004 – 2013 | \$445 + \$35 levy | \$445    | \$206  | \$129  | \$92                     | 77%                            |
| 2003        | 446 + 35 levy     | 446      | 207    | 130  | 93                       | 63                             |
| 2002        | 446               | 446      | 207    | 130  | 93                       | 78                             |
| 2001        | 536               | 446      | 207    | 130  | 93                       | 78                             |

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.861 and 124D.862)

**Table 51: Estimated Appropriations and Levies for Integration Activities Based on 100% Aid Entitlement; Amounts for Aid Fiscal Year**

| Fiscal Year/<br>Payable Year | Minneapolis |             | St. Paul     |             | Duluth      |           | Other Districts |              | Total        |              |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                              | Aid         | Levy        | Aid          | Levy        | Aid         | Levy      | Aid             | Levy         | Aid          | Levy         |
| 2025/2024                    | \$9,147,000 | \$3,920,000 | \$10,554,000 | \$4,523,000 | \$1,210,000 | \$519,000 | \$64,932,000    | \$27,828,000 | \$85,843,000 | \$36,790,000 |
| 2024/2023                    | 9,193,000   | 3,940,000   | 10,437,000   | 4,473,000   | 1,195,000   | 512,000   | 62,811,000      | 26,919,000   | 83,636,000   | 35,844,000   |
| 2023/2022                    | 9,463,000   | 4,056,000   | 11,234,000   | 4,814,000   | 1,193,000   | 511,000   | 63,384,000      | 30,979,000   | 85,274,000   | 36,546,000   |
| 2022/2021                    | 9,709,000   | 4,161,000   | 11,396,000   | 4,884,000   | 1,211,000   | 519,000   | 61,517,000      | 26,407,000   | 83,933,000   | 35,971,000   |
| 2021/2020                    | 10,152,000  | 4,351,000   | 11,188,000   | 4,795,000   | 1,236,000   | 530,000   | 63,795,000      | 27,310,000   | 86,301,000   | 36,986,000   |
| 2020/2019                    | 10,441,000  | 4,475,000   | 11,321,000   | 4,852,000   | 1,214,000   | 520,000   | 58,197,000      | 24,941,000   | 81,173,000   | 34,788,000   |

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### Interdistrict Desegregation Transportation

School districts are reimbursed in the form of grants for the costs incurred providing pupil transportation services to students who participate in interdistrict desegregation and integrations efforts, such as The Choice is Yours Program or other interdistrict integration programs.

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.87)

**Table 52: Appropriations for Interdistrict Desegregation Grants**

| Fiscal Year | Interdistrict Integration Transportation |
|-------------|--|
| 2025        | \$16,609,000                             |
| 2024        | 14,992,000                               |
| 2023        | 10,974,000                               |
| 2022        | 9,900,000                                |
| 2021        | 15,367,000                               |
| 2020        | 14,231,000                               |

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### Teacher Supply Programs

The Minnesota Legislature provides ongoing K-12 funding to expand the ranks of teachers currently underrepresented in Minnesota’s K-12 teacher workforce. These programs include the Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color grant program, Grow Your Own programs, mentoring and retention bonuses, the teacher recruitment and marketing program, special education and support staff pipeline programs, and residency programs.

**Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color grant program.** The Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color (CUGMEC) grant program was first funded in 1998 and called Collaborative Urban Educator (CUE) program. The CUE program provided grant funding to higher education institutions to expand the pool of underrepresented teachers. Specific teacher preparation programs, each with a different focus, located at Concordia, Hamline, St. Thomas, and Augsburg, were specifically named in the annual appropriations as grant recipients until 2017 when the program was modified. Under the program's current design, the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) awards competitive grants each year to applicant teacher preparation programs. For fiscal year 2022, ten Minnesota postsecondary institutions received grants to help support underrepresented students in their teacher preparation programs.

(Minn. Stat. § 122A.635)

**Grow Your Own programs.** The Grow Your Own program was first systematically funded by the 2017 Legislature. Grow Your Own programs are typically designed to help nonlicensed school staff, parents, and other interested community members become licensed teachers in the sponsoring school districts. Some of Minnesota's Grow Your Own programs predated the state's formal statutory program. Minnesota's Grow Your Own program awards two types of grants: grants for programs for adults wishing to become teachers, and grants for programs intended to heighten high school students' interest in the teaching profession. In fiscal year 2022, six districts received grants for their Grow Your Own programs for adults, and five districts received grants for high school student programs. The grants may be up to \$750,000 and the proceeds of the grant may be used over a five-year period. MDE, following the statutory criteria, ranks applicants and awards grants accordingly.

(Minn. Stat. § 122A.73)

**Mentoring, Induction, and Retention grants.** The teacher mentoring program was first enacted by the 1987 Legislature and initially funded at \$250,000 per year for fiscal years 1988 and 1989. Funds continued to be appropriated through 1995 when the program went dormant. In 2019, the legislature reworked the program and began providing ongoing funding beginning in fiscal year 2020. In its current configuration, school districts are required to develop mentoring programs for teachers new to the district, teachers with special needs, and teachers in need of peer coaching. PELSB awards grants to applicants interested in developing or expanding mentoring programs to: school districts; groups of school districts; coalitions of school districts, teachers, and teacher education institutions; and coalitions of schools, teachers, and nonlicensed educators. For fiscal year 2022, PELSB awarded \$1.925 million in grants to 37 applicants. Common uses of the funds include professional development, affinity group activities, substitute teacher costs for mentors, and stipends to mentors.

(Minn. Stat. § 122A.70)

**Teacher Recruitment Marketing grants.** Beginning in fiscal year 2022, ongoing funding of \$250,000 per year is appropriated to PELSB for grants for outreach and marketing to elevate the teaching profession and to recruit teachers. The law requires the marketing to be directed

at two groups: (1) American Indian Students and Students of Color who attend high school or college and who have not yet chosen a career path; and (2) adults from racial or ethnic groups underrepresented in the teaching workforce who may be seeking to change careers.

(Laws 2021, 1st spec. sess. ch. 13, art. 3, § 8, subd. 4)

**Special Education Teacher Pipeline.** A school district, charter school, or cooperative unit may apply for a grant to support qualifying individuals wishing to become a Tier 3 or Tier 4 special education teacher. The grant applicant must partner with an approved teacher preparation program to operate its special education teacher pipeline program. An individual participating in the program may be a Tier 1 or Tier 2 licensed special education teacher, or a paraprofessional or other unlicensed staff person interested in becoming a special education teacher. The grant recipient may use funds to pay tuition and stipends for program participants, to provide mentoring, technology support, and licensure test preparation, and to recruit program participants.

(Minn. Stat. § 122A.731)

**Student Support Personnel Pipeline.** The 2023 Legislature established funding of \$5 million per year for grants to increase the numbers of student support personnel in Minnesota. Student support personnel include school psychologists, school nurses, school counselors, and school social workers.

(Laws 2023, ch. 55, art. 5 § 64, subd. 15)

**Teacher Residency Program.** The 2023 Legislature established funding of \$3 million per year for teacher residency programs conforming to the programs authorized in Minnesota Rules, part 8500.2100. A residency program is one offered in partnership with a designated school partner that provides a year-long clinical experience integrating learning opportunities and student teaching. A residency program pairs candidates (residents) with cooperating teachers. The resident must co-teach and participate in professional development for at least 80 percent of the contracted school week. The resident may receive a stipend, salary, or other form of financial support during the residency program.

(Laws 2023, ch. 55, art. 5 § 64, subd. 16)

**Table 53: Appropriations for Teacher Supply Programs**

| Fiscal Year | Collaborative Educator Grants | Grow Your Own Programs | Special Education Teacher Pipeline | Student Support Personnel Pipeline | Teacher Residency Program | Mentoring and Retention Grants | Come Teach In Minnesota Bonuses | Teacher Recruitment Marketing |
|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2025        | \$5,440,000                   | \$25,000,000           | \$20,000,000                       | \$5,000,000                        | \$3,000,000               | \$3,500,000                    | \$400,000                       | \$500,000                     |
| 2024        | 5,440,000                     | 25,000,000             | 10,000,000                         | 5,000,000                          | 3,000,000                 | 3,500,000                      | 200,000                         | 500,000                       |
| 2023        | 1,000,000                     | 6,500,000              | --                                 | --                                 | --                        | 2,996,000                      | 200,000                         | 250,000                       |
| 2022        | 1,000,000                     | 6,500,000              | --                                 | --                                 | --                        | 3,004,000                      | 200,000                         | 250,000                       |

| Fiscal Year | Collaborative Educator Grants | Grow Your Own Programs | Special Education Teacher Pipeline | Student Support Personnel Pipeline | Teacher Residency Program | Mentoring and Retention Grants | Come Teach In Minnesota Bonuses | Teacher Recruitment Marketing |
|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2021        | 1,000,000                     | 1,500,000              | --                                 | --                                 | --                        | 750,000                        | --                              | --                            |
| 2020        | 1,099,000                     | 1,500,000              | --                                 | --                                 | --                        | 750,000                        | --                              | --                            |

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## Inactive and Repealed Integration Funding Programs

**Magnet School Grants.** Metropolitan magnet schools were eligible for grants to help operate the magnet programs. Grants could be used for teachers, aides, instructional services, equipment, field trips, and other programs designed to enhance metropolitan integration. Beginning in fiscal year 2001, start-up grants were also available to a metropolitan magnet school program for its first two years of operation. Start-up cost aid equaled \$500 times the magnet school’s pupil units served for that year. Capital funding has also been provided to help construct metropolitan magnet school facilities. This program was repealed for the 2011-12 school year and later years.

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.88)

**Other Former Integration Programs.** Other former integration programs included minority fellowship grants, the minority teacher incentives program, teachers of color program grants, and cultural exchange grants. These programs have not been funded since fiscal year 2003.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 122A.64; 122A.65; 124D.89; Laws 1994, ch. 647, art. 8, § 29)

# Career and Technical Education

## Career and Technical Revenue

Career and technical education services include courses that were formerly called vocational programs and include agricultural, business, technology, and health occupations courses. A district that offers career and technical programming is eligible for revenue under this program.

Career and technical revenue is an equalized aid and levy. Each school district’s career and technical revenue equals 35 percent of the district’s approved expenditures on career and technical programming. The revenue cannot be less than the revenue authority for the previous year, provided that the revenue does not exceed 100 percent of the district’s career and technical expenditures for that year. The career and technical levy is 100 percent forward-shifted, meaning that the levy for taxes payable in 2023 is recognized as revenue in fiscal year 2023.

$$\text{Career and Technical Revenue} = .35 \times \text{Approved Program Expenditures}$$

$$\text{Career and Technical Levy} = \text{Career and Technical Revenue} \times \frac{\text{District's ANTC per pupil unit}}{\$7,612}$$

$$\text{Career and Technical Aid} = \text{Career and Technical Revenue} - \text{Career and Technical Levy}$$

**Table 54: Funding Formulas for Career and Technical Revenue**

| Fiscal Year       | Revenue Formula  | Aid       | Levy  |
|-------------------|--|-----------|---|
| 2015 and later    | 35% of approved expenditures but not less than previous years’ revenue   | Equalized | Levy equalized and uncapped   |
| 2014              | 35% of approved expenditures but not less than previous years’ revenue   | Equalized | Levy equalized but capped at \$20.65 million                                |
| 2012 through 2013 | Previous year’s revenue adjusted to match statewide levy cap   | No aid    | All levy; capped at \$17.85 million for FY 12 and \$15.52 million for FY 13 |
| 2008 through 2011 | Lesser of (1) \$80 per pupil in grades 10 to 12, (2) 25% of approved career and tech expenditures, (3) \$10,000, or (4) previous years’ levy | No aid    | All levy  |
| 2001 through 2007 | NA   | No aid    | All levy  |
| Prior to 2001     | Formula driven-based on previous years’ program spending   | All aid   | No levy   |

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**Table 55: Career and Technical Revenue**

| Fiscal Year | Payable Year | Aid       | Levy         |
|-------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| 2025*       | 2025         | \$761,000 | \$39,258,000 |
| 2024*       | 2024         | 1,512,000 | 39,097,000   |
| 2023        | 2023         | 1,980,000 | 36,301,000   |
| 2022        | 2022         | 2,560,000 | 35,912,000   |
| 2021        | 2021         | 3,233,000 | 32,657,000   |
| 2020        | 2020         | 3,867,000 | 30,347,000   |

\* Estimated. Levy 100% forward shifted.

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(Minn. Stat. § 124D.4531)

### **ServeMinnesota Aid**

ServeMinnesota is the name of a state grant program designed to work in concert with federal youth service programs. Prior to 2011, this program was called “Youth Works.” In Minnesota, ServeMinnesota is the statutorily designated recipient of federal Americorps funds. Youth service programs are generally designed to provide the participant with skills and training while creating an opportunity for the participant to perform tasks that benefit the community. The ServeMinnesota program awards grants to program providers on a competitive-grant basis. The program provider combines the state grant money with federal money and provides the participants with living expenses or a stipend, health insurance, child care if needed, and a postservice educational award of up to \$7,395 for the 2023-24 school year, which may be used for higher education costs or to repay student loans. The maximum postservice award is the same as the maximum for the Pell Grant program.

ServeMinnesota programs are encouraged to channel participants into tutoring and other children’s literacy and numeracy programs. Other program activities include working on affordable housing projects, family stability programs, environmental restoration projects, and disaster relief programs.

### **Early Childhood Literacy and Numeracy Programs**

State aid is appropriated for grants for early childhood literacy and numeracy programs. These grants may be awarded to the Minnesota Reading Corps and Minnesota Math Corps, which are programs operated by ServeMinnesota.

**Table 56: Appropriations for ServeMinnesota and the Minnesota Reading and Math Corps**

| Fiscal Year | ServeMinnesota Aid | Early Childhood Literacy Program Grants | Minnesota Math Corps | Federal Operating Funds for Reading Corps* | Federal Funds Scholarship* |
|-------------|--------------------|---|----------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 2025        | \$900,000          | \$7,950,000                             | \$1,000,000          | NA   | NA                         |
| 2024        | 900,000            | 7,950,000                               | 1,000,000            | \$25,564,000**                             | \$8,244,000                |
| 2023        | 900,000            | 7,950,000                               | 1,000,000            | 23,867,000***                              | 7,703,000                  |
| 2022        | 900,000            | 7,950,000                               | 1,000,000            | 21,355,000****                             | 7,287,000                  |
| 2021        | 900,000            | 7,950,000                               | 500,000              | 14,343,000                                 | 6,677,000                  |
| 2020        | 900,000            | 7,950,000                               | 500,000              | 14,684,000                                 | 6,500,000                  |

\* Amounts leveraged by state appropriation for ServeMinnesota Americorps programs.

\*\*Includes \$4.819 million from the American Relief Plan (ARP) Act.

\*\*\* Includes \$7.419 million from the ARP Act.

\*\*\*\* Includes \$4.392 million from the ARP Act.

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.37-124D.45)

## State Academies

### Minnesota State Academies for the Deaf and Blind

Minnesota operates two residential academies for deaf and blind students in Faribault. The academies are both public schools and state institutions and annually serve students through residential programs, summer school, preschool programs, and outreach efforts. In fiscal year 2023, the Minnesota State Academy for the Blind enrolled 46 pupils, and the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf enrolled 97 pupils.

The budget for the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf and Blind (MSA) is primarily funded through direct state appropriations, but also includes funding from some other school finance formulas as well. The MSA counts its students for purposes of compensatory revenue and this amount is paid directly from MDE to the MSA. The MSA also receives funding for the costs of one-to-one instructional staff (aides or licensed staff) from the state special education formula and uses the tuition bill-back formula to charge any unreimbursed costs for the one-to-one staff back to the resident district. If the MSA's student enrollment exceeds 175 students, the MSA receives the general education basic formula allowance for each student in excess of 175 students. For fiscal year 2023, the MSA is expected to receive about \$14.3 million in direct appropriations of state aid, \$5.6 million in special education revenue, \$175,000 in compensatory revenue, and \$620,000 in transfers from school districts. The federal funds for fiscal year 2023 are estimated at \$495,000.

The resident school district of a student attending the MSA counts the student in its pupil count and receives revenue for that student as if the student were attending the resident district, except for the general education basic revenue attributable to that student, which is subtracted from the amount paid to the resident district and the compensatory revenue for that student, which is calculated at the site the student actually attends (MSA). The resident school district is responsible for the cost of transporting academy students to and from the academies on weekends during the school year and includes these costs in the resident district's special education funding requests. The resident district's special education funding is reduced by the amount of any unreimbursed special education costs for the one-to-one staff processed through the tuition bill-back formula.

**Table 57: Direct Appropriations for the Minnesota State Academies for the Deaf and Blind**

| Fiscal Year | Direct Line Item Appropriation |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 2025        | \$17,189,000                   |
| 2024        | 17,766,000                     |
| 2023        | 14,317,000                     |
| 2022        | 14,056,000                     |
| 2021        | 13,787,000                     |

| Fiscal Year | Direct Line Item Appropriation |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 2020        | 13,746,000                     |

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 125A.61-125A.72)

### Perpich Center for Arts Education

The 1985 Legislature established the Minnesota School of the Arts and Resource Center. In 1987, the legislature explicitly expanded the center’s mission to include operating an 11th and 12th grade arts high school. In the mid-1990s, the center was renamed the Lola and Rudy Perpich Center for Arts Education, and in 1999, the name was shortened to the Perpich Center for Arts Education. The center’s mission includes arts outreach activities, professional development opportunities, and operating the arts high school. The center is located in Golden Valley on the former campus of Golden Valley Lutheran College and is funded through direct state appropriations. Students enrolled in the center’s arts high school do not generate general education aid for either the arts high school or for their home school districts.

**Governance and management.** The center is governed by an independent board appointed by the governor. The 16-member board includes the Commissioner of Education as an ex officio member. The board manages and controls the center. The board appoints the center’s director who must hold a superintendent’s license.

**Students served.** The arts high school is limited by statute to serving not more than 310 students in grades 11 and 12. The arts high school enrolled 142 11th and 12th grade students during the 2022-23 school year. Students from across the state attend the arts high school. The arts high school provides room and board to students and may charge a reasonable fee for the room and board. Approximately 62 percent of the arts high school students live in the dorms on campus.

**Funding.** The center, including the arts high school, is funded through a direct state appropriation. Students enrolled in the center’s arts high school do not generate general education aid for either the arts high school or for their home school districts.

(Minn. Stat. § 129C.10)

**Table 58: Minnesota Center for Arts Education**

| Fiscal Year | Total Direct Appropriation |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| 2025        | \$8,435,000                |
| 2024        | 9,243,000                  |
| 2023        | 7,527,000                  |
| 2022        | 7,406,000                  |

| Fiscal Year | Total Direct Appropriation |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| 2021        | 7,283,000                  |
| 2020        | 7,292,000                  |

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## Residential Academies

In fiscal year 1999, \$12 million was appropriated to fund capital and start-up costs for residential academies. Two grants for residential academies were awarded. One grant was to Catholic Charities in an amount of \$5,840,810. The Catholic Charities facility was located in Faribault, Minnesota. The second grant was to Synergy (which was located in Minneapolis) in an amount of \$6,159,190.

Enrollment at a residential academy was voluntary and was available to students in grades four through 12 who were either performing below suitable performance levels or who experienced homelessness or an unstable family environment. A parent, county worker, health care provider, school employee, or judicial employee recommended a student for admission to a residential academy. Educational and social service funding for a student attending the academy was deemed to follow the student from the student's school district or county of residence to the residential academy, as provided by law.

Each residential academy determined that the most effective way to provide educational services to the children placed at the residential facility would be to affiliate the residential academy with a specific charter school. Harvest Preparatory Academy provided educational services for residents of Synergy Academy. Synergy Residential Academy closed in 2003 due to a lack of funding for noneducational costs. Since that time, the facility has been used for early childhood educational services by Seed Academy, a preschool affiliated with Harvest Preparatory Academy.

Covenant Academy Charter School provided educational services to residents of the Catholic Charities facility, which was named Covenant Residential Academy. On June 30, 2005, the Covenant Residential Academy suspended residential services. Covenant Academy Charter School renamed itself Discovery Public School of Faribault and is currently providing services to about 65 students from the Faribault area. The facility that initially housed Covenant Academy was sold in 2009 to Shattuck-St. Mary's School, and the net proceeds of the sale (\$775,000) were returned to the state treasury.

(Laws 1998, ch. 398, art. 5, § 46)

## Miscellaneous Funds for Education

### Alternative Compensation (Q-Comp) Revenue

Alternative compensation revenue was added to the general education program by the 2005 Legislature as a funding mechanism for the alternative teacher professional pay system. Beginning in fiscal year 2015, Q-Comp was removed from general education revenue and became a separate categorical revenue program. The alternative teacher professional pay system, referred to as Q-comp (short for quality compensation), often requires participating school districts and their teachers to develop an educational improvement plan and an alternative teacher pay system. A school district's alternative teacher compensation plan must be approved by the Commissioner of Education before a school district can access alternative compensation revenue. As of August 15, 2023, the Commissioner of Education had approved Q-comp plans for 109 school districts, 72 charter schools, and two cooperative units. Q-comp revenue is capped; 13 school districts, 12 charter schools, and two cooperative units are on the waiting list and approved for funding if the legislature increases the program's total revenue.

**Revenue Calculation.** A school district that has an approved alternative compensation plan is eligible for alternative compensation revenue. The statewide amount of aid for the program is capped at \$88.118 million. The revenue program consists of a basic revenue amount provided entirely in state aid plus an equalized aid and levy. The basic revenue amount is \$169 per enrollee and the equalized aid and levy makes up the remaining \$91 per enrollee unit. An intermediate school district or other cooperative unit qualifies for aid equal to \$3,000 times the number of licensed teachers employed by the cooperative.

**Table 59: Q-Comp Revenue**

| Fiscal Year | Aid Entitlement | Levy         | No. of Participating Districts | No. of Participating Charters |
|-------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2025*       | \$88,427,000    | \$37,234,000 | 109                            | 73                            |
| 2024        | 88,466,000      | 41,156,000   | 109                            | 73                            |
| 2023        | 88,453,000      | 39,969,000   | 109                            | 73                            |
| 2022        | 88,559,000      | 41,440,000   | 109                            | 72                            |
| 2021        | 88,851,000      | 40,826,000   | 109                            | 72                            |
| 2020        | 89,166,000      | 39,948,000   | 109                            | 72                            |
| * Estimated |                 |              |                                |                               |

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$$\begin{aligned} \text{Alternative Compensation Revenue} &= \$260 \times \frac{\text{the number of enrollees at the participating site}}{\text{the participating site}} \\ \text{Alternative Compensation Levy} &= (\$91 \times \text{number of enrollees}) \times \begin{matrix} \text{the lesser of:} \\ (1) \text{ one; or} \\ (2) (\text{ANTC/adjusted pupil units})/\$6,100 \end{matrix} \\ \text{Alternative Compensation Aid} &= \text{Alternative Compensation Revenue} - \text{Alternative Compensation Levy} \end{aligned}$$

(Minn. Stat. §§ 122A.413-122A.415)

### Literacy Incentive Aid

Beginning in fiscal year 2013, school districts and charter schools qualify for literacy incentive aid. The aid consists of two parts, Proficiency Aid and Growth Aid, which are both based on 3rd and 4th grade students’ performance on the state reading test called the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA).

Proficiency Aid rewards schools based on the percentage of their 3rd grade students that meet or exceed proficiency levels on the reading MCA. Aid equals \$530 times the average number of 3rd grade students meeting or exceeding proficiency levels on the MCA during the past three years.

$$\text{Proficiency Aid} = \$530 \times \text{average number of 3rd grade students at the school meeting or exceeding proficiency}$$

Growth Aid rewards districts based on the three-year average number of 4th grade students who make medium or high growth on the 4th grade reading MCA. Aid equals \$530 times the average number of 4th graders making medium or high growth on the reading MCA.

$$\text{Growth Aid} = \$530 \times \text{average number of 4th grade students at the school making growth standards}$$

$$\text{Literacy Incentive Aid} = \text{Proficiency Aid} + \text{Growth Aid}$$

Note: For fiscal years 2020 and 2021, the literacy aid amounts are adjusted to match the program’s February 2020 Forecast appropriations level because of MCA testing canceled due to COVID-19.

**Table 60: Literacy Incentive Aid**

| Fiscal Year | Appropriation |
|-------------|---------------|
| 2025        | \$42,502,000  |
| 2024        | 42,234,000    |
| 2023        | 45,968,000    |

| Fiscal Year | Appropriation |
|-------------|---------------|
| 2022        | 45,075,000    |
| 2021        | 44,658,000    |
| 2020        | 44,976,000    |

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(Minn. Stat. § 124D.98)

### Abatement Aid

Abatement adjustments occur when the tax capacity of any school district is lowered after the property taxes for the year have been spread by the county auditor. An abatement adjustment is different from the authority a school district has to levy for economic development abatement activities. If a school district is subject to an abatement adjustment, the district receives an aid payment from the state for the major equalized programs. The aid entitlement is computed as follows:

$$\text{Abatement Aid Entitlement} = \frac{\text{net revenue loss as certified by the county auditor}}{\text{district's total certified equalized levies}} \times \text{district's total certified levy for that year}$$

In essence, the purpose of the formula is to compensate school districts for the loss of tax base with additional state aid payments for the portion of the district's levy share attributable to equalized school levies.

The district is allowed to make a levy for the remainder of the revenue loss and any interest owed on abatements. A school district may levy for each year's abatement loss over a three-year period.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.46; 127A.49, subd. 2)

**Table 61: Abatement Aid and Levy**

| Fiscal Year | Appropriation | Levy         |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| 2025*       | \$2,665,000   | \$16,482,000 |
| 2024        | 2,339,000     | 10,652,000   |
| 2023        | 2,003,000     | 7,760,000    |
| 2022        | 2,042,000     | 9,083,000    |
| 2021        | 2,595,000     | 10,400,000   |
| 2020        | 1,770,000     | 12,116,000   |
| * Estimated |               |              |

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A district may levy for the portion of abatement aid owed but not paid by the state because of aid proration.

## Excess Tax Increment Payments

Tax increment districts capture the growth in tax capacity values for property within the tax increment district. If the tax increment project generates excess tax increment, and if that excess is returned to a school district, the district's aid is reduced by the following subtraction:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Excess Tax} \\ \text{Increment} \\ \text{Subtraction} \end{array} = \begin{array}{l} \text{the amount of the excess} \\ \text{tax increment payment} \end{array} \times \frac{\text{district's total certified equalized levies}}{\text{district's total certified levy for that year}}$$

The purpose of this calculation is to allocate excess tax increment payments between state aid and the local property tax levies that would otherwise have been larger had that portion of the property tax increment value been included in the district's property tax base.

(Minn. Stat. § 127A.49, subd. 3)

## Aid for Nonpublic School Students

Minnesota's nonpublic students include 72,478 students attending traditional nonpublic schools (e.g., Cretin-Derham Hall) and 26,423 homeschool students.

**Books, Materials, Tests, Health Services, Guidance, and Counseling.** School districts are required to provide nonpublic school pupils with textbooks, individualized instructional materials, and standardized tests, all of which must be secular in nature and cannot be used for religious instruction or worship. In addition, a district must provide the same health services to pupils of nonpublic schools as it provides to public school pupils. Nonpublic secondary pupils must also be offered guidance and counseling services by the public secondary schools. The state reimburses districts for their costs up to the amount of the statewide average expenditure per pupil (determined as of February 1 of the preceding school year) times the number of nonpublic school pupils served, with an inflation adjustment equal to the percent of increase in the general education revenue program formula allowance from the second preceding school year. For fiscal year 2024, the reimbursement rates are set at 100 percent of the statewide average expenditures per pupil unit, which are as follows: for textbooks, \$95.69; for pupil health services, \$85.30; and for secondary guidance and counseling, \$317.11.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 123B.40-123B.43)

**Table 62: Nonpublic School Student Aid**

| Fiscal Year | Appropriation |
|-------------|---------------|
| 2025        | \$23,902,000  |
| 2024        | 22,354,000    |
| 2023        | 19,029,000    |
| 2022        | 16,919,000    |
| 2021        | 18,918,000    |
| 2020        | 17,925,000    |

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If the state appropriation for nonpublic pupil aid is insufficient to cover school districts’ expenditures, the districts may correspondingly reduce their expenditures to the amount of aid actually provided by the state.

**Shared Time Programs.** Nonpublic school pupils may be admitted by school districts to public school programs for part of the school day. A district that admits nonpublic pupils receives general education basic revenue for these pupils in an amount proportional to the time the pupils spend in the public schools. The appropriation for shared time programs is included in the regular appropriation for general education aid.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.01, subds. 6-8; 126C.19)

**Table 63: Shared Time Programs**

| Fiscal Year | Estimated Shared Time Weighted Pupil Count | Aid Entitlement* |
|-------------|--|------------------|
| 2025        | 559  | \$4,070,000      |
| 2024        | 557  | 3,976,000        |
| 2023        | 563  | 3,865,000        |
| 2022        | 531  | 3,572,000        |
| 2021        | 550  | 3,417,000        |
| 2020        | 544  | 3,508,000        |

\* Appropriation included in general education appropriation.

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**Shared Time Special Education.** School districts are required to provide special education programs for children with disabilities. (See page 58 for description of program requirements.) These programs must be made available to disabled nonpublic school pupils, and the district receives shared time general education aid for these pupils (as well as special education aid). For the 2022-23 school year, about one-third of the total shared time average daily membership was for students with an IEP.

(Minn. Stat. § 125A.18)

**Transportation.** School districts are also required to provide equal transportation for nonpublic school pupils. This means that the district within which a nondisabled pupil resides must provide transportation for the pupil to a nonpublic school within the district if he or she lives at least the same distance from the nonpublic school as public school students in the district who are transported to school. Public schools are also permitted to transport nonpublic school pupils to regular shared time programs and must transport disabled nonpublic school pupils to and from the facility where special education is provided. Public schools must also provide nonpublic school pupils with transportation within the district boundaries between the nonpublic school and public school or neutral site<sup>6</sup> for the purpose of receiving health and guidance and counseling services. State transportation aid is available for all of these transportation services to nonpublic school pupils.

Prior to fiscal year 1998, the appropriation for the transportation of nonpublic school pupils was contained in the transportation aid appropriation. For fiscal year 1998 and later, there is a line-item appropriation for nonpublic pupil transportation.

Nonpublic pupil transportation aid equals the sum of:

- 1) the product of the district’s actual expenditures in the second preceding year for all pupils transported in the regular and excess categories, the number of nonpublic pupils receiving those services in the current year, and the ratio of the formula allowance in the current year to the allowance for the second previous year; and
- 2) the district’s actual expenditure for nonpublic, nonregular transportation in the second preceding year times the ratio of the formula allowance in the current year to the allowance for the second preceding year.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 123B.84-123B.87; 123B.92, subd. 9)

**Table 64: Nonpublic Pupil Transportation**

| Fiscal Year | Appropriations |
|-------------|----------------|
| 2025        | \$23,624,000   |
| 2024        | 22,248,000     |
| 2023        | 19,796,000     |
| 2022        | 19,050,000     |
| 2021        | 20,100,000     |
| 2020        | 19,079,000     |

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<sup>6</sup> Neutral site is defined by Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.41, subdivision 13, and means a public center, a nonsectarian, nonpublic school, a mobile unit located off the nonpublic school premises, or any other location off the nonpublic school premises that is neither physically nor educationally identified with the functions of the nonpublic school.

**Education for English Language Learners.** The English Language Learners Act requires districts providing state-funded English learning programs to offer nonpublic school pupils access to the same programs on the same terms as public school pupils. (See page 27 for additional information on English learners programs.) In addition to counting nonpublic school pupils for purposes of English learners funding, those pupils may also be counted by the district serving them for purposes of shared time general education aid.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.65, subd. 6; 124D.58-124D.64)

## Nutrition Programs

The National School Lunch Program, first established in 1946, provides federal meal assistance to students in public and private schools. The program provides nutritional standards and funding for school lunch and breakfast programs. The federally assisted meal programs are administered by the Minnesota Department of Education under the rules established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The federal government sets reimbursement levels for each meal served based on a student’s family income. Minnesota has supplemented federal school meals funds with state aid payments for many years.

**Federal Reimbursement.** The federal government sets its meal reimbursement rates each year. The meal reimbursement rates vary based upon whether the school site is serving a high need or “severe” need population and by the student’s family income. Qualifying family income is based on the federal poverty guidelines and falls into one of three categories:

- **Free Meal Eligibility**—a student is considered a free meal eligible student if the student’s family income is less than or equal to 130 percent of the federal poverty guideline (FPG), which is adjusted by family size. For the 2023-24 school year, for a family of four, 130 percent of the FPG is \$39,000.
- **Reduced Meal Eligibility**—a student is considered eligible for a reduced-price meal if the student’s family income is between 130 percent and 185 percent of the FPG. For the 2023-24 school year, for a family of four, 185 percent of the FPG is \$55,500.
- **Fully Paid**—a student is considered a fully paid student if the student’s family income is in excess of 185 percent of the FPG.

A family may qualify for eligibility through a direct match, where participation in other income support programs like Medicaid or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), automatically qualifies income-eligible families, or through an application process (often associated with the paper forms sent home by schools at the beginning of each school year).

**Table 65: Federal and State Reimbursement Rates  
Per Meal for Lunch and Breakfast  
2023-24 School Year**

| Program and Funding Source  | Fully Paid       | Reduced-Price Meals | Free Meals      |
|---|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Lunch - Federal   | \$ .40*          | \$3.85*             | \$4.25*         |
| Lunch - Federal; Performance Incentive  | \$ .08           | \$ .08              | \$ .08          |
| Lunch - State Aid   | \$3.975          | \$ .525             | \$ .125         |
| <b>Lunch - Total Funding</b>  | <b>\$4.455*</b>  | <b>\$4.455*</b>     | <b>\$4.455*</b> |
| Breakfast - Federal   | \$ .38           | \$1.98**            | \$2.28*         |
| Breakfast - State Aid   | \$1.90***        | \$ .30              | \$0             |
| <b>Breakfast Total Funding</b>  | <b>\$2.28***</b> | <b>\$2.28**</b>     | <b>\$2.28**</b> |
| <p>* A school district where more than 60 percent of the students qualify for free lunch receives an extra 2 cents per lunch from the federal government.<br/> ** A "severe need" school (where more than 40 percent of the students qualify for free meals) receives an extra 45 cents per free or reduced-price breakfast from the federal government.<br/> *** A severe need school serving a fully paid breakfast receives an extra 45 cents of state aid for that breakfast.</p> |                  |                     |                 |

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**Community Eligibility Provision.** The federal government also has a program called the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). CEP provides additional federal funding to schools that participate in the program. A school that participates in CEP agrees to provide all meals served at that site at no cost, regardless of the student's family income. The reimbursement is such that any school with more than 62.5 percent free lunch eligible students has the full cost of its meals covered by the federal government. For the 2022-23 school year, a school could participate in CEP if the school had at least 40 percent of its students qualify for free meals and would receive 60 percent more funding if free meals were offered to all students. For the 2023-24 school year, the USDA has proposed lowering the minimum CEP eligibility percentage from 40 percent to 25 percent.

**COVID-19 School Meals Policy.** During the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government funded free school meals for all students, regardless of the student's family income status.

**Free School Meals for Kids.** Beginning with the 2023-24 school year, Minnesota is providing additional state funding so that every student, regardless of income, attending a school participating in the federal school meals program is eligible for one free breakfast and one free lunch every school day. The state aid equals the difference between the applicable federal reimbursement rate at that school site for a free meal, as determined annually by the USDA, and the actual federal reimbursement received by the participating school for the breakfast or lunch served to the student, including any CEP reimbursements. A school site with more than 62.5 percent of its students eligible for a free meal must participate in the federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program. Other school sites eligible for the CEP program are

encouraged to participate in the program to leverage federal funding and reduce the cost to the state of the free school meals for kids program.

**Supplemental School Lunch aid.** The state pays an additional state aid of 12.5 cents per student lunch served to help support school lunch programs.

**Kindergarten Milk.** The state pays 20 cents for each half-pint of milk that is served to kindergarten students outside of the breakfast or lunch programs.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.111-124D.119)

**Table 66: State and Federal Funds for School Nutrition Programs**

| Fiscal Year | State Appropriations for School Lunch Aid | State Appropriations for School Breakfast Aid | State Appropriations Kindergarten Milk (not included in school breakfast amount) | Federal Funds for School Nutrition Programs |
|-------------|---|---|--|---|
| 2025        | \$197,936,000                             | \$26,719,000                                  | \$659,000  | NA  |
| 2024        | 190,897,000                               | 25,912,000                                    | 659,000  | NA  |
| 2023*       | 15,984,000                                | 10,519,000                                    | 659,000  | 327,475,000                                 |
| 2022*       | 14,187,000                                | 20,000  | 566,000  | 364,396,000**                               |
| 2021*       | 4,796,000                                 | 3,242,000                                     | 494,000  | 365,000,000**                               |
| 2020        | 16,245,000                                | 8,047,000                                     | 457,000  | 335,490,000**                               |

\* Estimated  
 \*\* Reflects significant increases in federal funding due to COVID

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### Safe Schools Levy

The safe schools levy, formerly known as the crime levy, allows school districts to levy for costs associated with student and staff safety issues. Eligible expenses include:

- police liaison services;
- drug abuse prevention programs (DARE);
- gang resistance education training;
- school security;
- the other crime prevention and student and staff safety measures; and
- counseling, social working, and chemical dependency services provided by licensed professionals.

The safe schools levy equals \$36 per pupil plus for members of an intermediate school district, up to \$15 per pupil unit for safe schools activities at the intermediate school district.

**Table 67: Safe Schools Levy**

| Fiscal Year | School District Safe Schools Per Pupil Allowance | Allowance for Member of Intermediate School Districts Per Pupil | Total Levy Amount | Included Intermediate School District Levy Amounts |
|-------------|--|---|-------------------|--|
| 2025*       | \$36   | \$15  | \$35,259,000      | \$4,097,000  |
| 2024        | 36   | 15  | 34,277,000        | 3,971,000  |
| 2023        | 36   | 15  | 34,772,000        | 4,009,000  |
| 2022        | 36   | 15  | 35,324,000        | 4,060,000  |
| 2021        | 36   | 15  | 34,604,000        | 3,845,000  |
| 2020        | 36   | 15  | 35,500,000        | 3,845,000  |
| * Estimated |  |   |                   |  |

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(Minn. Stat. § 126C.44)

## Miscellaneous Levies

The following is a list of miscellaneous levies that have been statutorily authorized.

**Liabilities of dissolved districts.** A district that has had attached to it a portion of a dissolved district may levy for any liabilities of the dissolved district. This levy has not been used in the last decade.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 123A.67; 126C.43)

**Transition expenses of a district created by consolidation.** A consolidated district may levy for certain reorganization operating debt levies, severance pay, and early retirement expenses.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 123A.73; 126C.43)

**Judgments.** A district may levy the amount necessary to pay judgments from lawsuits.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.43; 126C.47)

**Unemployment (reemployment) insurance.** A district may levy an amount to pay the unemployment insurance costs of its licensed teachers and full-year employees. Unemployment insurance for paraprofessionals and other school workers not employed during the summer term are excluded from the unemployment insurance levy and are instead eligible for reimbursement under a special funding program.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.43, subd. 2; 268.052, subd. 1; 268.085)

**Swimming pool levy.** In 2001, school districts were given authority to levy for swimming pool operating costs, as long as the school district is located in a county that: borders Canada; has a population density of less than ten persons per square mile; and includes portions of more than one school district. These current eligibility restrictions limit the levy’s availability to just four school districts: International Falls, Warroad, Lake of the Woods, and Roseau.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.455)

**Ice arena levy.** A school district that operates and maintains an ice arena may levy for the net operational costs of the ice arena.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.45)

**Tree Growth replacement revenue.** Prior to 2001, certain forested properties were exempt from the ad valorem property tax and instead made an annual payment to local governments based on the yield and stumpage of the property. In 2002, this form of taxation was eliminated and the property was included in the tax base used for calculating property taxes. Because the payments were revenue to school districts, a special levy was created to replace the loss in tree growth revenue. Since that time, a school district may levy for an amount equal to its miscellaneous revenue for tree growth revenue for taxes payable in 2001.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.445)

**Economic development abatements.** A school district may participate with a county or city in abating taxes for an economic development-related project. To replace the revenue that would otherwise be lost to the economic development abatement, a school district may separately levy for this amount.<sup>7</sup>

**Table 68: Miscellaneous Levy Amounts**

| Payable Year | Reorganization/ Consolidation Expenses | Judgment  | Unemployment Insurance | Swimming Pool Levy | Ice Arena Levy | Tree Growth Levy | Economic Development Abatements* |
|--------------|--|-----------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2024**       | \$0                                    | \$447,000 | \$6,970,000            | \$675,000          | \$3,400,000    | \$679,000        | \$743,000                        |
| 2023         | 0                                      | 447,000   | 6,834,000              | 890,000            | 3,397,000      | 679,000          | 743,000                          |
| 2022         | 413,000                                | 363,000   | 6,775,000              | 652,000            | 3,264,000      | 680,000          | 347,000                          |
| 2021         | 268,000                                | 490,000   | 14,823,000             | 642,000            | 2,968,000      | 694,000          | 893,000                          |
| 2020         | 0                                      | 75,000    | 5,217,000              | 682,000            | 2,184,000      | 694,000          | 1,249,000                        |
| 2019         | 0                                      | 1,068,000 | 4,867,000              | 633,000            | 2,117,000      | 667,000          | 1,510,000                        |

\* Note that the economic development abatement levy does not include amounts in a district’s debt service fund attributable to parking lot repairs.  
 \*\* Estimated

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<sup>7</sup> For more information, see *Economic Development Property Tax Abatement*, House Research Department, January 2023.

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## Income Tax Subtraction and Credit

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Minnesota offers both an income tax subtraction (deduction) and an income tax credit to help families offset K-12 education expenses. A Minnesota income taxpayer may subtract certain K-12 education expenses from the taxpayer's state income tax. A subtraction from income reduces the taxpayer's taxable income while a tax credit directly offsets tax liability (taxes owed). All taxpayers with qualifying education expenses may claim the subtraction. The K-12 credit is available only to filers with limited family income. Taxpayers may not claim the deduction and credit for the same expenses. Parents who qualify for both the deduction and credit receive the greatest benefit by first claiming up to the maximum allowable under the credit, and then claiming any remaining expenses under the deduction. A qualifying taxpayer may assign all or a part of an anticipated income tax refund to a financial institution or a tax-exempt organization.

### Education Income Tax Credit

Minnesota enacted an education tax credit in the first special session of 1997, with the credit first available in tax year 1998. Parents may claim the credit for all education-related expenses that qualify for the dependent education expense deduction, except nonpublic school tuition. Thus, the credit is allowed for transportation, tuition for academic summer school and summer camps, tutoring, and textbooks, defined to include instructional materials and equipment, including up to \$200 per family of computer hardware and educational software. The credit equals 75 percent of the amount of qualified education-related expenses.

Beginning in taxable year 2023, the maximum credit is \$1,500 per child. The credit is refundable. Any amount that exceeds tax liability is paid to the claimant as a refund. Claimants with adjusted gross incomes under \$70,000 may claim the full credit. The maximum credit is phased out for claimants with household income above \$70,000 by \$1 for each \$4 of income for a family with one child and by \$2 for each \$4 of income for a family with two or more children for whom the credit is claimed.

(Minn. Stat. § 290.0674)

### Education Income Tax Subtraction

For state income tax purposes, taxpayers may subtract from adjusted gross income the amounts they spend for tuition, secular textbooks, tutoring, academic summer school and camps, up to \$200 of the costs of a computer or education-related software, and transportation of dependents attending public or nonpublic elementary or secondary schools in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, or Wisconsin. The maximum subtraction is \$1,625 per dependent in grades kindergarten through six, and \$2,500 per dependent in grades seven through 12. The Department of Revenue estimated that in 2019 about 180,000 taxpayers claimed some amount as part of the K-12 education income tax subtraction.

A subtraction reduces the amount of income subject to tax; the benefit a taxpayer receives equals the taxpayer's marginal tax rate times the amount of the subtraction. For many Minnesota taxpayers, the subtraction against income falls to the second tier income tax bracket which has a rate of 6.8 percent, where a \$2,500 deduction decreases state income taxes by \$170 (.068 x \$2,500).

The constitutionality of this tax deduction was upheld in 1983 by the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Mueller v. Allen*. In a 5-4 decision affirming the lower courts' decisions, the Supreme Court held that the tuition tax deduction statute did not violate the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

(Minn. Stat. § 290.01, subd. 19b)

**Table 69: Estimated Cost to State in Foregone Tax Revenue**

| Fiscal Year | Tax Expenditure Amount for Credit | Tax Expenditure Amount for Deduction |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2025        | \$18,600,000                      | \$16,100,000                         |
| 2024        | 18,000,000                        | 15,800,000                           |
| 2023        | 6,700,000                         | 16,500,000                           |
| 2022        | 7,200,000                         | 16,700,000                           |
| 2021        | 8,600,000                         | 16,700,000                           |
| 2020        | 9,000,000                         | 16,500,000                           |

Source: Minnesota Department of Revenue tax expenditure estimates

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For more detailed information about Minnesota's K-12 education tax credit and deduction, see the House Research Department publication, *Minnesota's K-12 Education Subtraction and Credit, October 2022*.

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## Taconite Revenue for School Districts

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There are 14 school districts in northern Minnesota located in the taconite relief area—the part of the state where taconite ore is mined and concentrated. The finances of these school districts, along with the finances of the area’s other municipalities, are affected by the state treatment of taconite because the taconite industry is generally exempt from local property taxes. As a result, Minnesota’s municipal funding formulas have special aid adjustments to compensate for the loss of this potential tax base through formulas that provide both additional property tax relief and additional revenue.

What follows is a brief summary of taconite taxes and the distribution of taconite revenue to school districts. For more complete information on taconite revenues and the interrelationship between school districts and taconite revenue see the *Minnesota Mining Tax Guide*, published annually by the Department of Revenue (online at [www.revenue.state.mn.us/minnesota-mining-tax-guides](http://www.revenue.state.mn.us/minnesota-mining-tax-guides)).

### Taconite Taxes Affecting School Districts

The taconite industry is generally exempt from local property taxes and, instead, is subject to a series of taxes including production taxes, occupation taxes, excise taxes, and royalty taxes. The majority of mining industry revenues are received through the taconite production tax and nearly all the school district taconite revenue is provided through the production tax.

The overall taconite production tax rate is set in statute. For concentrate produced in 2021, the rate is \$2.892 per ton. The production tax rate is inflated each year by multiplying the production tax rate for 2013 times the change in the implicit price deflator since that time.

### Taconite Revenue Programs for Schools

The proceeds of the taconite production tax are required by statute to be deposited into a variety of funds, and state statutes also contain formulas to provide for the distribution of revenues, primarily to local units of government, including school districts. School districts located in the taconite relief area received about \$21.5 million out of a total of \$110 million raised by the production tax for production year 2021 (distributed in 2022). Minnesota Statutes require school districts to use some of the taconite revenue for property tax relief, and the remainder of the taconite revenue is set aside as additional revenue for the school districts.

### **Taconite Revenue—Regular School Fund 24.72 Cents per Ton—\$9.620 Million**

**Regular School Fund Added Aid.** Taconite area school districts receive some taconite aid that may be used for any spending purpose. For fiscal year 2014 and later, of the 24.72 cents per ton of taconite production tax revenue in the regular school fund, 11 cents per ton is distributed to all school districts located in the taconite relief area as additional revenue and may be used for any purpose.

**Regular School Fund Property Tax Relief.** The remainder of the regular school fund taconite revenue is used for direct school district property tax relief. This portion is determined by calculating an index for each district equal to its pupil units, times the ratio of the average adjusted net tax capacity per pupil unit for all districts in the taconite relief area to the district’s adjusted net tax capacity per pupil unit. This amount then reduces the districts’ school levies.

**Table 70: Estimated Taconite Revenue Used to Reduce School District Levies**

| Payable Year | Levy Reduction |
|--------------|----------------|
| 2024*        | \$9,807,000    |
| 2023         | 8,395,000      |
| 2022         | 8,353,000      |
| 2021         | 10,219,000     |
| 2020         | 8,995,000      |
| 2019         | 7,851,000      |
| * Estimated  |                |

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**Taconite Referendum Fund—\$6.179 Million**

In 1981, the legislature acted to allow taconite revenue to be used to equalize referendum levies in taconite districts. A taconite district receives an additional \$175 per pupil unit if the district has passed a referendum levy or had a referendum in place prior to the 2001 legislative session. Taconite referendum revenue essentially “equalizes” a qualifying school district’s referendum levy. The lower the district’s tax base, the higher the amount of taconite referendum revenue. The district receives additional taconite revenue according to the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Taconite} \\
 \text{Referendum} \\
 \text{Revenue} &= [(\$175 \times \text{Pupil Units}) - (1.8\% \times \text{ANTC})] \times \text{the lesser of:} \\
 &\quad (1) \text{ one; or} \\
 &\quad (2) \text{ referendum levy certified in the previous year} \\
 &\quad \quad \quad 1.8\% \times \text{ANTC}
 \end{aligned}$$

For purposes of the above calculation, the number of pupil units in the district in 1983-84 is used if that number is higher than the number of pupil units in the current year, and beginning in fiscal year 2015, the adjusted net tax capacity is fixed at the amount for 2011.

Beginning in fiscal year 2015, a second set of calculations is added to this formula to distribute additional taconite aid to school districts. This formula is as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Added Taconite Referendum Revenue}}{\text{Referendum Revenue}} = 22.5\% \times [(\$415 + \text{Referendum Allowance for FY15}) \times \text{FY12 Pupil Units}] - (1.8\% \times 2011 \text{ ANTC})$$

**Table 71: Estimated Taconite Revenue Used to Equalize Referendum Levies**

| Fiscal Year | Equalization Revenue |
|-------------|----------------------|
| 2025        | \$6,179,000          |
| 2024        | 6,179,000            |
| 2023        | 6,179,000            |
| 2022        | 6,179,000            |
| 2021        | 6,179,000            |
| 2020        | 6,179,000            |

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.48, subd. 8; 298.28, subds.3, 4; 477A.15)

**Taconite Money for Facilities Purposes**

A portion of the taconite production tax is used for school facilities purposes through a couple of different programs.

**Building Maintenance Fund—\$1.418 Million.** Annually, 4 cents per ton of the production tax is reserved for building maintenance and repairs and is distributed to the school districts where the taconite facilities are located. For taconite facilities with more than one district listed, the 4 cents per ton is distributed among the school districts based on each district’s share of enrollment.

**Table 72: Taconite Revenue for Building Maintenance: 4.0 Cents per Ton**

| School District             | Amount Distributed 2021 Production Year | Producer                     |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| ISD #316, Greenway          | \$115,081                               | U.S. Steel-Keewatin Taconite |
| ISD #319, Nashwauk-Keewatin | 47,737                                  | U.S. Steel-Keewatin Taconite |
| ISD #381, Lake Superior     | 77,477                                  | Northshore Mining            |
| ISD #695, Chisholm          | 68,969                                  | Hibbing Taconite             |
| ISD #701, Hibbing           | 194,673                                 | Hibbing Taconite             |

| School District               | Amount Distributed 2021<br>Production Year | Producer                                   |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| ISD #712, Mountain Iron-Buhl  | 92,298                                     | Minorca/U.S. Steel-Minntac                 |
| ISD #2142, St. Louis County   | 197,671                                    | Northshore/United Taconite                 |
| ISD #2711, Mesabi East        | 143,575                                    | Minorca/U.S. Steel-Minntac                 |
| ISD #2909, Rock Ridge         | 474,977                                    | Minorca/U.S. Steel-Minntac/United Taconite |
| Source: Mining Tax Guide 2022 |  |  |

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**Iron Range School Consolidation and Cooperatively Operated School Account.** The 2014 Legislature charged the Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation (IRRR), formerly called the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) with the task of administrating the newly created Iron Range school consolidation and cooperatively operated school account. Taconite tax proceeds are transferred into the account and the IRRR is responsible for determining the application process, approving qualifying projects, and allocating the funds to qualifying school district projects. The revenue and expenditures were first available for production year 2014.

## Revenue

The Iron Range school consolidation and cooperatively operated school account is funded through taconite production and occupation taxes. The proceeds into the account include:

- 1) 10 cents per ton of the production tax under Minnesota Statutes, section 298.24;
- 2) an amount equal to 6 cents per ton of the proceeds that would otherwise have been distributed according to the occupation tax;
- 3) beginning with production year 2022, \$3,500,000 per year from the Douglas J. Johnson Economic Protection Trust Fund; and
- 4) any other amounts authorized by law (including the transfer of taconite funds that were previously used to repay other school district bonds that have been repaid).

**Table 73: Iron Range School Account**

|                                 | FY 18        | FY 19        | FY 20        | FY 21        | FY 22        | FY 23        |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Balance Forward In              | \$15,703,000 | \$17,272,000 | \$24,110,000 | \$29,338,000 | \$17,160,000 | \$16,597,000 |
| Taconite Revenue In             | \$7,360,000  | \$11,235,000 | \$9,583,000  | \$8,314,000  | \$8,403,000  | \$8,353,000  |
| School Account Aid to Districts | \$5,791,000  | \$4,397,000  | \$4,355,000  | \$20,492,000 | \$8,966,000  | \$15,666,000 |

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## Expenditures

Expenditures may be made from the Iron Range school consolidation and cooperatively operated school account for the reduction in school district bond payments that are being made for a qualifying school project or for other school projects as determined by the IRRR. A qualifying school project is a school facility project that was approved by the voters after April 3, 2006, received a positive review and comment from the Commissioner of Education, and is located in the taconite assistance area. At least seven members of the IRRR must approve any expenditure from the account.

**Table 74: Iron Range School Consolidation and Cooperatively Operated School Account Distributions Awarded to School Districts**

| Date of Award | Recipient Name   | Estimated FY 24 Annual Amount | Duration in Years               | Total Amount Approved | Purpose   |
|---------------|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Feb. 2016     | St Louis County School District  | \$2,000,000                   | 12                              | \$24,000,000          | Reduce tax impact of existing building bonds  |
| Feb. 2016     | Mesabi East School District  | \$500,000                     | 10                              | \$5,000,000           | Reduce tax impact of existing building bonds  |
| Feb. 2016     | Mountain Iron-Buhl School District   | \$1,566,080                   | 20                              | \$35,200,000          | Reduce tax impact of newly issued building bonds  |
| Feb. 2016     | STEM initiative; Itasca Community College and Nashwauk-Keewatin, Greenway, and Grand Rapids school districts | \$0                           | 3 Fully distributed             | \$2,505,000           | Three-phased Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) initiative   |
| Feb. 2016     | Applied Learning Institute (ALI); Aitkin, Crosby-Ironton, and Cook County school districts                   | \$0                           | Onetime FY 17 Fully distributed | \$500,000             | Upgrading shop facilities in each district and accessing additional instructional and curriculum development assistance necessary |

| Date of Award | Recipient Name   | Estimated FY 24 Annual Amount | Duration in Years                     | Total Amount Approved | Purpose  |
|---------------|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
|               |  |                               |                                       |                       | to bring the classes online through ALI  |
| Oct. 2017     | Education Innovation Partners (EIP)  | \$0                           | Onetime<br>FY 18<br>Fully distributed | \$2,000,000           | Initiating and supporting regional multi-district high-quality education and training initiatives for students, teachers and communities and to assist EIP members with technology equipment infrastructure upgrades |
| Jan. 2018     | Grand Rapids School District   | \$0                           | Onetime<br>FY 19<br>Fully distributed | \$4,700,000           | Demolition and infrastructure needs of the Grand Rapids school district on a onetime basis   |
| Aug. 2018     | Mt. Iron-Buhl School District  | \$0                           | 1<br>Fully distributed                | \$25,000              | Expanding Chinese language instruction to include students from other Range districts  |
| Aug. 2018     | Chisholm School District and Deer River School District                            | \$0                           | 4<br>Fully distributed                | \$700,000             | 4-year project to provide one-to-one devices and to connect homeschool students and poor attendance students to school   |
| Aug. 2018     | Virginia and Eveleth-Gilbert School Districts                                      | \$0                           | 1<br>Fully distributed                | \$100,000             | Feasibility study for cooperative academy-style high school  |
| Feb. 2019     | Virginia and Eveleth-Gilbert School Districts                                      | \$4,900,000                   | 20                                    | \$98,000,000          | Reduce tax impact of newly issued building bonds   |
| June 2019     | Hibbing, Chisholm, St. Louis County, Mt. Iron-Buhl, Mesabi East, and Ely Districts | \$0                           | 1<br>Fully distributed                | \$350,000             | 6-District Innovative Summer STEAM programming   |
| Dec. 2019     | Education Innovation Partners  | \$0                           | 1<br>Fully distributed                | \$350,000             | Distance Learning Project  |
| March 2020    | Ely School District  | \$0                           | 1                                     | \$7,000,000           | School renovations   |
| Dec. 2021     | Nashwauk-Keewatin School District  | \$720,000                     | 25                                    | \$18,000,000          | Reduce tax impact of newly issued building bonds   |
| Dec. 2022     | Rock Ridge School District   | \$4,700,000                   | 1                                     | \$4,700,000           | Short-term cash infusion for higher construction costs   |
| Dec. 2022     | Ely  | \$2,000,000                   | 1                                     | \$2,000,000           | Short-term cash infusion for higher construction costs   |
|               | <b>Totals</b>  | <b>\$9,686,080</b>            |                                       | <b>\$205,030,000</b>  |  |

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(Minn. Stat. § 298.28, subd. 7a)

**Taconite School Bond Payments.** Over the 40 years prior to the creation of the Iron Range School Consolidation and Cooperatively Operated School Account, the legislature occasionally authorized in session law the use of taconite production tax revenue for the full or partial repayment of locally issued school building bonds. In most of these cases, the legislation named the school districts, specified the approved bonding authority, and set the share of the bond repayment coming from the taconite production tax.

These school bond payments have been satisfied for all but one of the recipient school districts. The Lake Superior School District received a payment of \$355,000 in 2022 and has one final payment from the fund due in 2023 of roughly \$177,000.

On three occasions (including in 2023), the legislature authorized the IRRR to issue revenue bonds backed by a portion of the production tax for school building projects. The legislature has also authorized repayment of existing bonded indebtedness to certain taconite-area school districts.

**Table 75: Taconite Debt Service Assistance Provided by Enacted Laws**

| Year of Legislation | Amount Authorized | Type of Assistance Supported by Production Tax | Citation                                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|--|--|
| 2023                | \$42,000,000      | IRRR revenue bonds                             | Chapter 64, article 6, section 13          |
| 2013                | 38,000,000        | IRRRB revenue bonds                            | Chapter 143, article 11, section 11        |
| 2008                | 15,250,000        | Reduction to existing bonds                    | Chapter 154, article 8, section 18         |
| 2005                | 15,000,000        | IRRRB revenue bonds                            | Chapter 152, article 1, section 39         |
| 2000                | 12,750,000        | Locally issued bonds                           | Chapter 490, article 5, sections 24 to 26  |
| 1998                | 5,300,000         | Locally issued bonds                           | Chapter 398, article 4, sections 17 and 18 |
| 1996                | 31,940,000        | Locally issued bonds                           | Chapter 412, article 5, sections 20 to 24  |
| 1992                | 11,379,500        | Locally issued bonds                           | Chapter 499, article 5, section 29         |
| 1990                | 12,500,000        | Locally issued bonds                           | Chapter 604, article 8, section 13         |
| 1989                | 1,000,000         | Locally issued bonds                           | Chapter 329, article 5, section 20         |
| 1988                | 9,000,000         | Locally issued bonds                           | Chapter 718, article 2, sections 62 and 63 |
| 1982                | 6,000,000         | Reduction to existing bonds                    | Chapter 523, article 30, section 4         |
| 1982                | 6,330,000         | Locally issued bonds                           | Chapter 523, article 30, section 3         |

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## Tax Relief Aids and Aids in Lieu of Taxes

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Property taxes have traditionally provided the revenue necessary to operate local governments and provide services at the local (city, town, county, or school district) level. Prior to taxes payable in 2002, nearly all tax proceeds remained at the local level. The reforms instituted by the 2001 Legislature created a statewide property tax paid by commercial/industrial and cabin property owners. In addition to direct state aids for specific programs, the state also provides general property tax relief for certain classes of property through property tax aids, credits, and reimbursements.<sup>8</sup> State aid payments are primarily from revenue raised by income and sales and use taxes and are used to reduce the property taxes that would otherwise be necessary to fund the specified levels of local services.

For school districts, a number of state aids are paid either to provide tax relief or to compensate for the presence in the district of particular types of property—property that is not taxable or that is taxed in some way by the state. The amounts of these tax relief aids and aids in lieu of taxes are deducted from local levies so that districts receiving these aids do not have excessive funds available beyond the amount provided by the general education aid formula.

The property tax aids and credits to school districts were significantly altered for fiscal year 2003 due to the state taking over the general education revenue program. Two large credits that were applied to school district levies, the education homestead credit and the education agricultural credit, have been eliminated and replaced with two smaller credits called the homestead market value credit and the agricultural market value credit, and beginning for taxes payable in 2012, the homestead market value exemption replaces the homestead market value credit.

### School Building Bond Agricultural Credit

For information about the school building bond agricultural credit, see page 49.

### Agricultural Market Value Credit

The agricultural market value credit is a property tax credit first effective for taxes payable in 2002. Each property classified as an agricultural homestead will receive the credit. The credit is computed as a percentage of the property's market value; it excludes the market value of the house, garage, and surrounding one acre of land. The formula is a sliding scale that reduces credit as a property's market value is higher. The formula for determining each property's credit is 0.3 percent of the property's market value, to a maximum of \$345. The maximum credit of \$345 is reached at a market value of \$115,000. As the market value increases above

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<sup>8</sup> A property tax aid is a state payment to a local unit of government to help pay for services. A property tax credit is defined as a reduction in a taxpayer's property tax payment, and the taxing jurisdiction receives payment from the state to make up for the tax reduction. A property tax reimbursement is a payment in lieu of taxes from the state to the local unit of government for a piece of property that would not normally generate property tax revenue.

\$115,000, the credit is reduced by .05 percent of the amount between \$115,000 and \$345,000 of value; until for properties in excess of \$345,000, the credit's maximum is \$230.

The credit is subtracted from each property's net tax capacity tax (which is determined by multiplying the property's net tax capacity by the local tax rate of each jurisdiction with taxing authority over the property). The credit subtraction is distributed across taxing jurisdictions in proportion to each jurisdiction's share of the net tax capacity tax. The state makes a payment to each taxing jurisdiction in the state to compensate for the reduction in each taxpayer's tax resulting from the credit in the calendar year in which the taxes are paid.

(Minn. Stat. § 273.1384, subd. 2)

## **Disparity Reduction Aid**

Disparity reduction aid is designed to provide property tax relief to taxing areas that have relatively high tax rates. Disparity aid is calculated on the basis of unique taxing areas (UTAs) based on taxes payable in 1988 property tax characteristics. Disparity reduction aid serves to reduce the total tax rate of UTAs that have relatively high tax rates.

Disparity reduction aid is equal to the previous year's disparity reduction aid multiplied by the ratio of:

- 1) the area's tax capacity using class rates for taxes payable in the year for which aid is being computed, to
- 2) its tax capacity using the class rates for taxes payable in the prior year, both based upon market values for taxes payable in the prior year.

Disparity reduction aid is calculated on the basis of unique taxing areas. The amount of disparity reduction aid allocated to each local unit of government is in proportion to that unit of government's gross taxes payable to total gross taxes payable.

(Minn. Stat. § 273.1398, subd. 3)

## **Taconite Homestead Credit**

Homeowners in a taconite property tax relief area have their property taxes reduced by the taconite homestead credit. The taconite homestead credit is subtracted from each homestead taxpayer's gross property tax. For taxes payable in 2002 and later, the definition of "taconite tax relief area" was amended to exclude a school district whose boundaries are more than 20 miles from a taconite mine or plant. This definition excludes the Aitkin, Crosby-Ironton, and Grand Rapids school districts from receiving taconite property tax relief under this program. However, taxpayers in these districts continue to receive the same amount of relief through a state-funded program called the "supplemental homestead credit."

For homestead property located in a city or town that has a taconite facility, taconite power plant, or on which more than 40 percent of its valuation in 1941 was iron ore, the taconite homestead credit is 66 percent of the tax on the property, up to a maximum credit of \$315.10.

For homestead property located outside such a city or town, but located within a school district that contains a taconite city or town, the taconite homestead credit is 57 percent of the tax on the property, up to a maximum credit of \$289.80.

For taxes payable in 2022, the taconite homestead and supplemental credit reduced school district property taxes by \$2,162,000.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 273.134; 273.135)

## Other Property Tax Aids, Credits, and Reimbursements

There are a variety of other property tax credits and reimbursements that are authorized by statute. These property tax aids and credits include county conservation credit, disaster reduction credit, disparity reduction credit, powerline credit, and agricultural preserves.

**Table 76: Property Tax Credits Reducing School District Levies for Taxes Payable in 2022 (Fiscal Year 2023)**

| Tax Credits Affecting School Levies               | State Aid and Credit Amount |
|---|-----------------------------|
| School Building Bonding Ag Credit                 | \$70,867,000                |
| Disparity Reduction Aid                           | 8,037,000                   |
| Agricultural Homestead Market Value Credit        | 7,642,000                   |
| Disparity Reduction Credit                        | 3,176,000                   |
| Taconite Homestead Credit                         | 2,162,000                   |
| Local Option Disaster Credit                      | 2,000                       |
| Agricultural Preserves/County Conservation Credit | 80,000                      |
| Homestead Disaster Credit                         | 0                           |
| Local Option Disaster Abatement                   | 49,000                      |
| Disaster Credit                                   | 0                           |
| Prior Year: Other Miscellaneous Credits           | 2,000                       |
| <b>School Share; Total All State Credits</b>      | <b>\$92,017,000</b>         |

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 473H.10, 273.119 – Ag Preserves; 273.123 – Homestead Disaster; 273.124 – Local Option Disaster Credit; 273.1398 – Disparity Reduction Credit; 273.1384 – Agricultural Market Value Homestead Credit; 273.1398 – Disparity Reduction Aid; 273.1387 – School Building Bonding Agricultural Credit; 273.1233 – Local Optional Disaster Abatement)

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## Teacher Retirement

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Teachers, administrators, nurses, librarians, social workers, counselors, and other professional personnel employed in Minnesota's public schools, including charter schools, are provided retirement benefits through two teacher retirement fund associations. The larger of the funds is the statewide Teachers Retirement Association (TRA). The smaller fund is a separate retirement fund association for teachers employed by the St. Paul school district.

Prior to fiscal year 1987, the state paid all employer obligations to the teacher retirement funds and Social Security. For fiscal years 1987 and 1988, a new state aid formula for teacher retirement was instituted that required school districts to make employer contributions for amounts in excess of the state aid payments. Since fiscal year 1989, school districts have been required to make all employer contributions for teacher retirement and Social Security directly from their undesignated general fund revenue. Additionally, special state aid is paid from the state to the statewide retirement fund for teachers employed by Minneapolis and Duluth and to the St. Paul retirement fund, to reduce the unfunded liability accrued by those funds.<sup>9</sup>

### Minneapolis Teacher Retirement Fund

The 2006 Legislature abolished the Minneapolis teacher retirement fund and transferred its employees, retirees, assets, and liabilities to the statewide teacher retirement fund effective July 1, 2006. The Minneapolis school district continues to pay a higher employer contribution rate into the fund, but its teacher employees are now covered and will receive their retiree benefits from the statewide teacher retirement fund.

### Duluth Teacher Retirement Fund

The 2014 Legislature consolidated the Duluth teacher retirement fund into the statewide teacher retirement fund effective July 1, 2015.

### Employer Contributions

Prior to the 1987 changes, the employer's share of retirement contributions on behalf of all TRA members had been paid by the state since the establishment of the fund in 1915. Employer contributions for teachers employed in first-class cities had been solely the state's responsibility since 1975, although state aid for first-class city teacher retirement costs began in 1968. The state had also paid employer contributions to Social Security for all members of coordinated retirement plans (a coordinated plan is a plan that also provides Social Security benefits upon retirement). Coordinated plans include Social Security coverage; employer contributions to Social Security are required. Basic plans do not include Social Security coverage and, therefore, require higher employer contribution rates to the retirement fund. Since 1959, all new

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<sup>9</sup> Additional information on Minnesota's teacher retirement plans can be found on the websites of the Minnesota Teacher Retirement Association (TRA) at <https://MinnesotaTRA.org> and the St. Paul Teacher Retirement Fund Association (SPTRFA) at <https://sptrfa.org/>.

members of the statewide TRA have been required to be covered under the coordinated plan. Minneapolis and St. Paul offered coordinated plans beginning July 1, 1978, and teachers first hired after that date are in the coordinated plans. The St. Paul School District no longer has any active employees in its basic plan. Minneapolis has one part-time basic active employee.

Employer contributions to the retirement funds are calculated as a percentage of each employee’s total qualifying payroll. These rates are recommended by the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement and are set in statute. The following tables show the number of active members for whom employer contributions are made, the fund assets and liabilities, and the employer and employee contribution rates.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 354.42; 354.43; 354.435; 354.436; 355.01-355.08 (Statewide TRA); 354A.12 (St. Paul; Cities of the First Class))

**Table 77: Membership Counts, Fund Assets, and Liabilities by Retirement Plan**

| Fund                                  | July 1, 2022 Active Membership | July 1, 2022 Actuarial Assets | July 1, 2022 Liabilities | Ongoing Annual Special State Aid Payments |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Statewide TRA active members*</b>  | 84,309                         | \$25,926,000,000              | \$31,616,000,000         | \$15,454,000***<br>14,377,000****         |
| <b>St. Paul TRFA active members**</b> | 3,528                          | \$1,201,589,000               | \$1,759,985,000          | \$14,827,000                              |

Note: As of June 30, 2006, the Minneapolis teacher retirement fund was combined into the statewide TRA fund. As of July 1, 2015, the Duluth teacher retirement fund was consolidated into the statewide TRA fund.  
 \* The “basic” active members in the statewide TRA plan are Minneapolis teachers formerly covered by the Minneapolis TRFA plan. As of July 1, 2022, one part-time basic active member remained employed by the Minneapolis schools.  
 \*\* As of July 1, 2019, there are no active basic members in St. Paul TRFA.  
 \*\*\* This amount includes \$2,500,000 in matching aid for contributions by the city and school district and \$12,954,000 on behalf of the former Minneapolis Teacher Retirement Fund Association.  
 \*\*\*\* This annual aid payment is on behalf of the former Duluth Teacher Retirement Fund Association.  
 Source: Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement, valuation reports

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**Table 78: Employee and Employer Coordinated Plan Contribution Rates (Fiscal Years)**

| TRA Fund or District   | Fiscal Year Contribution Rates |      |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |       |                |
|--|--------------------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------------|
|  | 2011                           | 2012 | 2013  | 2014  | 2015  | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | 2019   | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  | 2024  | 2025  | 2026 and later |
| <b>Statewide TRA</b>   |                                |      |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |       |                |
| <b>School District (Employers other than Mpls or Duluth)</b>   | 5.5                            | 6.0  | 6.5   | 7.0   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.71   | 7.92  | 8.13  | 8.34  | 8.55  | 8.75  | 8.75  | 9.5            |
| <b>Minneapolis School District Employer*</b>   | 9.14                           | 9.64 | 10.14 | 10.64 | 11.14 | 11.14 | 11.14 | 11.14 | 11.35  | 11.56 | 11.77 | 11.98 | 12.19 | 12.39 | 12.39 | 13.14          |
| <b>Duluth School District Employer**</b>   | 5.79                           | 6.29 | 6.79  | 7.29  | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.71   | 7.92  | 8.13  | 8.34  | 8.55  | 8.75  | 8.75  | 9.5            |
| <b>Employees</b>   | 5.5                            | 6.0  | 6.5   | 7.0   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5    | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.75  | 7.75  | 8.0            |
| <b>St. Paul TRFA</b>   |                                |      |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |       |                |
| <b>Employer</b>  | 8.34                           | 8.59 | 8.84  | 9.09  | 9.34  | 9.84  | 10.09 | 10.34 | 11.175 | 12.01 | 12.22 | 12.43 | 12.64 | 12.84 | 12.84 | 13.59          |
| <b>Employee</b>  | 5.5                            | 5.75 | 6.0   | 6.25  | 6.5   | 7.0   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5    | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.5   | 7.75  | 7.75  | 9.0            |
| * Beginning June 30, 2006, Minneapolis teachers are members of the statewide Teacher Retirement Association (TRA) and pay the same employee contribution rates as all other teachers in TRA.<br>** Beginning July 1, 2015, Duluth teachers are members of the statewide TRA and pay the same employee contribution rates as all other teachers in TRA. |                                |      |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |       |                |

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## Social Security and Medicare

The employer’s (school district’s) Social Security contribution is determined by Congress. The maximum salary base subject to the Medicare rate is greater than the maximum salary base subject to the Social Security contribution rate. Congress both establishes the rates of taxation and specifies the maximum amount of an employee’s salary that is subject to the taxes. The following contribution rates apply to all employers. The school districts’ Social Security contributions are made on behalf of employees in coordinated plans.

Employees pay a matching amount for Social Security and Medicare, and employees with higher incomes (over \$200,000 for single filers and over \$250,000 for married filers) pay an

additional Medicare tax of 0.9 percent (as a part of the Affordable Care Act) on the amount of income in excess of the limit.

**Table 79: Social Security and Medicare Employer Contribution Rates**

| Calendar Year | Social Security Contribution Rate | Medicare Contribution Rate | Social Security Maximum Salary | Medicare Maximum Salary |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2024          | 6.2%                              | 1.45%                      | \$167,700                      | Unlimited               |
| 2023          | 6.2                               | 1.45                       | 160,200                        | Unlimited               |
| 2022          | 6.2                               | 1.45                       | 147,000                        | Unlimited               |
| 2021          | 6.2                               | 1.45                       | 142,800                        | Unlimited               |
| 2020          | 6.2                               | 1.45                       | 137,700                        | Unlimited               |
| 2019          | 6.2                               | 1.45                       | 132,900                        | Unlimited               |

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## Postemployment Benefits

Many Minnesota school districts have offered a number of postemployment benefits to their employees. These benefits are in addition to the employee pension benefits provided by the teacher retirement systems for licensed staff (teachers and other licensed staff) and the Public Employee Retirement Association (PERA) for nonlicensed staff. The largest share of these benefits consists of promises to pay certain health costs of retired employees. OPEB is an acronym that stands for Other Postemployment Benefits, which are benefits that give rise to a liability under the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and in Minnesota, generally refers to retiree health benefits.

### Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB)

The 2008 Legislature passed a law that authorized municipalities, including school districts, to determine their outstanding OPEB liability and then issue bonds, without voter approval, to fund a trust up to the amount of the OPEB liability. School districts may then levy to repay these bonds as a part of the annual levy needed to make bond payments (nearly all other school district bonds are for capital purposes). Since school districts are limited in their levy authority, without this law, school districts could neither sell the bonds without voter approval nor make an annual levy to pay for the OPEB costs. Specifically, the 2008 law:

- created the authority for municipalities to determine their OPEB liability and establish either an irrevocable or a revocable trust to pay the postemployment benefits (see Minn. Stat. § 471.6175);
- authorized municipalities to bond for actuarial liabilities to pay postemployment benefits to employees after their termination of service (Minn. Stat. § 475.52, subd. 6); and
- exempted the OPEB bond sales from voter approval (Minn. Stat. § 475.58, subd. 1).

The 2009 Legislature narrowed municipalities' OPEB authority. The 2009 changes kept the ability for municipalities to create trusts, but eliminated the ability to sell bonds for this purpose for municipalities other than school districts. For school districts, beginning October 1, 2009, bonding for OPEB liabilities may occur only after the school district has received voter approval.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 471.6175; 475.51, subd. 4; 475.52, subds. 1 and 6; 475.58, subd. 1)

### Retired Employee Health Benefits Levy

Another part of the 2009 legislative changes was to expand the retired employee health benefits levy. Prior to the 2008 legislative session, a school district could levy for up to \$600,000 per year for the retired employee health insurance costs required by a collective bargaining agreement in place prior to March 30, 1992. This was for those employees who had retired prior to July 1, 1992.

The 2008 Legislature kept the \$600,000 district cap, but allowed a district to include in its levy the costs for those employees who had retired between July 1, 1992, and July 1, 1998, so long as the provisions in their collective bargaining agreements that had given rise to the employee obligation had been sunset.

The 2009 Legislature expanded the retired employee health benefits levy as a part of the package of changes to the OPEB statutes. The 2009 changes allow a school district, upon school board approval, to levy for OPEB costs that are actually incurred in the previous year as long as the district's contract has sunset certain provisions that gave rise to OPEB obligations.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.41, subd. 2)

**Added retirement.** The Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts must levy for a portion of certain costs associated with higher required employer contribution rates to their respective teacher retirement funds and for additional required contributions to the funds for nonteaching employees.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.41, subd. 3)

**Severance pay obligations, St. Paul.** The St. Paul school district may levy up to 0.34 percent of ANTC for payment of certain severance pay obligations.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.41, subd. 5)

**Table 80: Postemployment Benefit Levies**

| Payable Year | OPEB Bonded Debt Levy | OPEB Annual Levy | Retired Employee Health Benefits Levy | Added Retirement Levy | St. Paul Severance Levy |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 2024*        | \$42,684,000          | \$42,354,000     | \$1,249,000                           | \$30,044,000          | \$1,500,000             |
| 2023         | 46,531,000            | 39,354,000       | 1,388,000                             | 28,644,000            | 1,445,000               |
| 2022         | 41,612,000            | 45,553,000       | 1,251,000                             | 26,812,000            | 1,110,000               |
| 2021         | 43,522,000            | 44,041,000       | 1,235,000                             | 26,046,000            | 1,110,000               |
| 2020         | 57,377,000            | 43,207,000       | 1,411,000                             | 24,222,000            | 1,110,000               |
| 2019         | 68,795,000            | 40,147,000       | 1,515,000                             | 25,761,000            | 1,110,000               |
| * Estimated  |                       |                  |                                       |                       |                         |

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# School District Accounting

Two aspects of school district accounting are of major significance to the legislature: the accounting system that school districts are required to use, because it provides an important view of school districts' financial status; and the accounting methods that the legislature uses to pay or meter revenue to school districts, because it provides a way to carefully manage the state's payment of funds to the local school districts.

## School District Accounting System

**Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards.** The legislature requires school districts to adopt and use a uniform system of records and accounting for public schools. The adopted system, a modified accrual accounting system, is known as Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS). UFARS is important because it provides a uniform basis for comparing and evaluating school district revenue and expenditures. Under UFARS, every district must maintain at least the following funds.

**Table 81: School Funds**

| Fund Number | Operating Funds                                | Common Purposes  |
|-------------|--|--|
| 01          | General  | Money used to pay general operating costs, such as teacher salaries, administrative costs, and to purchase textbooks and equipment |
| 02          | Food Service                                   | Money for nutrition programs—primarily school lunch and breakfast  |
| 04          | Community Service                              | Money for community education programs   |
| Fund Number | Nonoperating Funds                             | Common Purposes  |
| 06          | Building Construction                          | Proceeds of bond sales used to pay contractors for building projects   |
| 07          | Debt Redemption                                | Money necessary to repay bond holders  |
| 47          | Postemployment Benefits Debt Service Fund      | Money from levy proceeds to repay OPEB bonds   |
| Fund Number | Fiduciary Funds                                | Common Purposes  |
| 08          | Trust  | Money held in trust for others   |
| 18          | Custodial                                      | Fiduciary activities not reported elsewhere for the benefit of others  |
| 45          | Postemployment Benefits Irrevocable Trust Fund | Money held in an irrevocable trust for postemployment benefits   |

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 123B.75-123B.83)

The UFARS statute (Minn. Stat. § 123B.79) generally prohibits a district from permanently transferring money from an operating fund to a nonoperating fund, although a procedure is set forth in statute for the Commissioner of Education to approve transfers in exceptional circumstances. Also, the creation by the 1995 Legislature of operating capital revenue accounts in the general fund means that districts can spend any undesignated or unreserved general fund money for capital equipment and facilities purposes. Additionally, almost every year the legislature approves specific fund transfers for individual school districts.

In contrast to the usual limitations on fund transfers, the 1991 Legislature authorized two types of fund transfers:

- **Reorganization Fund Transfers:** A school district that has reorganized may make permanent transfers between any of the funds in the newly created or enlarged district, with the exception of the debt redemption fund. These fund transfers may be made only during the fiscal year following the effective date of the district's reorganization.
- **Nonoperating Fund Transfer:** On June 30, 1992, a school district could transfer money from its capital expenditure fund and from its debt redemption fund (to the extent the funds are not needed to make debt service payments) to the transportation fund, capital fund, or debt redemption fund.

The UFARS statute also prescribes the fiscal years when revenues and expenditures are to be recognized on district books. The legislature uses these recognition provisions to distribute state aid payments to school districts and to balance the state budget. The revenue recognition procedures established by the legislature determine a district's operating debt and expenditure limitations.

**Statutory Operating Debt.** Operating debt is defined as the net negative unappropriated fund balance on June 30 of any year in all of the school district's operating funds. Districts for which the operating debt is greater than 2.5 percent of the expenditures in operating funds in the most recent fiscal year are considered to be in statutory operating debt. At the close of fiscal year 2022, two school districts and four charter schools were in statutory operating debt.

**Statutory Operating Debt Levies.** A series of levies were approved in 1977, 1983, 1985, and 1992 that allowed districts to pay off past statutory operating debt amounts. The authority under each of these levies has now expired.

**Expenditure Limitations.** A school district in statutory operating debt must limit its expenditures in each subsequent fiscal year such that its statutory operating debt is not increasing. A district in statutory operating debt must submit a special operating plan to reduce its deficit expenditures to the Commissioner of Education for approval. If the plan is disapproved, the district receives no state aid until a plan is approved.

(Minn. Stat. § 123B.83)

**Temporary Waiver of Fund Transfer Limits.** For fiscal years 2012 through 2017, a school district could transfer money from any account or fund (except the community service and food service fund) to any other account or fund as long as that transfer did not affect the school district's state aid or local levy.

For fiscal years 2020 and 2021, a school district could transfer moneys from any operating account or fund to another to adjust the district's budget in response to COVID-19.

## State Accounting Measures

**Aid Payment Percentage.** The state aid share of school district revenue that is promised to the school district through Minnesota's school finance formulas is called the "aid entitlement." The amount paid to school districts by the state during each fiscal year is called the "appropriation." Since school districts use the accrual method of accounting, the full amount of the aid entitlement owed to the district for a fiscal year is booked as revenue for that year, regardless of when the state aid is actually received. On the other hand, for budgetary purposes, the state uses a cash-based system of accounting, not an accrual system of accounting. As a result, the "cost" to the state is only the actual appropriation for a particular school year, not the aid entitlement.

Minnesota statutorily sets the portion of state aid that is paid to a school district for a specific fiscal year. This percentage is sometimes called the "aid payment percentage." In a year in which the aid payment percentage is lowered, the state "saves" money through an accounting shift because the appropriation is smaller than the aid entitlement. For this reason, the shift tends to be used in years when desired state revenues are below desired program funding levels. For fiscal year 2014 and later, the current year aid payment percentage is set equal to 90 percent. The remaining portion, often referred to as the "cleanup payment," is paid during the subsequent fiscal year. This means that the state paid school districts 90 percent of their current year aid entitlement and 10 percent of the previous year's aid entitlement in that year.

**Table 82: Aid Payment Percentage**

| Fiscal Year of Entitlement | Current Year Aid Payment Percentage | Previous Year Aid Payment Percentage | Appropriation Cost to State |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2015 – 2025                | 90.0%                               | 10.0%                                | 100.0%                      |
| 2014                       | 90.0                                | 13.6                                 | 103.6                       |
| 2013                       | 86.4                                | 35.7                                 | 122.1                       |
| 2012*                      | 64.3                                | 30.0                                 | 94.3                        |
| 2011                       | 70.0                                | 27.0                                 | 97.0                        |
| 2010                       | 73.0                                | 10.0                                 | 83.0                        |
| 2009 – 2007                | 90.0                                | 10.0                                 | 100.0                       |
| 2006                       | 90.0                                | 15.7                                 | 105.7                       |
| 2005                       | 84.3                                | 20.0                                 | 104.3                       |

| Fiscal Year of Entitlement | Current Year Aid Payment Percentage | Previous Year Aid Payment Percentage | Appropriation Cost to State |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2004                       | 80.0                                | 17.0                                 | 97.0                        |
| 2003                       | 83.0                                | 10.0                                 | 93.0                        |
| 2002 – 1999                | 90.0                                | 10.0                                 | 100.0                       |
| 1998                       | 90.0                                | 15.0                                 | 105.0                       |
| 1983 – 1997                | 85.0                                | 15.0                                 | 100.0                       |

\* Note: During the 2011 special session, the legislature and the governor agreed to set the aid payment percentage at 60, but the allocation of the February 2012 budget surplus restored \$314 million to increase the aid payment percentage to 64.3.

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The following example shows how the aid payment percentage shift defers a portion of any state aid entitlement increase into the next fiscal year.

**Table 83: Example of Appropriation Payments**

(Figures are hypothetical for illustrative purposes only and expressed as \$ in millions)

| Appropriation  | State Fiscal Year |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
|--|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|  | 2012              | 2013    | 2014    | 2015    | 2016    | 2017    | 2018    | 2019    | 2020    | 2021    |
| (a) Aid entitlement  | \$4,000           | \$4,200 | \$4,500 | \$4,800 | \$5,000 | \$5,200 | \$5,500 | \$6,000 | \$6,500 | \$7,000 |
| (b) Percent share owed for previous fiscal year              | 30%               | 35.7%   | 13.6%   | 10%     | 10%     | 10%     | 10%     | 10%     | 10%     | 10%     |
| (c) Share still owed for previous fiscal year                | \$1,140           | \$1,499 | \$571   | \$480   | \$480   | \$500   | \$520   | \$550   | \$600   | \$650   |
| (d) Percent share owed for current fiscal year               | 64.3%             | 86.4%   | 90%     | 90%     | 90%     | 90%     | 90%     | 90%     | 90%     | 90%     |
| (e) Share of entitlement paid during the current fiscal year | \$2,572           | \$3,629 | \$4,050 | \$4,320 | \$4,500 | \$4,680 | \$4,950 | \$5,400 | \$5,850 | \$6,300 |
| Appropriation for the current fiscal year (c) + (e)          | \$3,712           | \$5,128 | \$4,621 | \$4,800 | \$4,980 | \$5,180 | \$5,470 | \$5,950 | \$6,450 | \$6,950 |

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**Property Tax Shift and Levy Recognition.** The property tax early recognition shift alters the way school property taxes are recognized for state accounting purposes. Because the state uses a cash system of accounting when paying school districts, and school districts use an accrual system of accounting when receiving state aids, a change in the recognition of the property taxes that are paid to school districts by the county treasurer in June of each year allows the state to delay a certain portion of state aid payments to school districts until after July 1. This procedure allows the state to balance its books in a current fiscal year by postponing an aid payment to a school district until the following fiscal year (through fiscal year 2009).

The property tax shift was first enacted in 1982. The property tax recognition shift percentage was increased and decreased a number of times until 1998, when it was eliminated. The 2003 Legislature reinstated the property tax recognition shift for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 and beginning in fiscal year 2006, the property tax recognition shift was again eliminated through fiscal year 2009. The 2010 Legislature statutorily implemented the property tax recognition shift beginning in fiscal year 2010.

Prior to the creation of the property tax recognition shift, the full amount of the first-half property tax payment, received by school districts in late May and early June, was revenue attributable to the following fiscal year (which begins July 1). As a result of the shift, the state delays paying a portion of the aid payments to school districts, and instead, requires the school districts to “borrow” or recognize early, the statutorily specified portion of the June property tax payment instead of receiving the state aid payments. The shift is a onetime savings to the state, unless the shift percentage is increased or the total amount of net school levy increases. The net effect for most school districts is that the state aid payments promised for the late spring (primarily April, May, and June) are delayed until the following fiscal year, and the district instead relies on the May and June property tax payments from the county to meet its financial obligations during the late spring. Because of the property tax recognition shift, many school districts engage in short-term borrowing in order to meet their cash flow needs during the late spring. Since the shift was instituted in fiscal year 1983, the shift percentage has fluctuated greatly.

The property tax recognition shift percentage was set at 48.6 percent for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 and was eliminated for fiscal years 2006 through 2010. For fiscal year 2011 and later, the governor proposed an unallotment of state aid designed to mimic the property tax recognition shift at 49.1 percent. This action never took effect because the 2010 Legislature statutorily implemented the property tax recognition shift at 48.6 percent. Sufficient state funds existed in the fund balance following the 2013 legislative session such that the property tax recognition shift was eliminated for fiscal year 2014 and later.

Table 84 shows the amount of the shift percentage for each of the years since its inception and the relationship among the years for the assessment valuation and the certification, collection, and use of levies.

**Table 84: Relationship Among the Years**

| Assessment Year | December When Levy is Certified | Calendar Year When Levy is Collected | Fiscal Year        |        | School Year When Levy is Used<br>(Percent Shifted is in bold)                   |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--------|---|
| 1980            | 1981                            | 1982                                 | FY 1983            | =      | 1982-83 school year   |
| 1981            | 1982                            | 1983                                 | FY 1983<br>FY 1984 | =<br>= | 1982-83 school year: <b>32%</b> of levy<br>1983-84 school year: 68% of levy     |
| 1982            | 1983                            | 1984                                 | FY 1984<br>FY 1985 | =<br>= | 1983-84 school year: <b>32%</b> of levy<br>1984-85 school year: 68% of levy     |
| 1983            | 1984                            | 1985                                 | FY 1985<br>FY 1986 | =<br>= | 1984-85 school year: <b>24%</b> of levy<br>1985-86 school year: 76% of levy     |
| 1984            | 1985                            | 1986                                 | FY 1986<br>FY 1987 | =<br>= | 1985-86 school year: <b>24%</b> of levy<br>1986-87 school year: 76% of levy     |
| 1985            | 1986                            | 1987                                 | FY 1987<br>FY 1988 | =<br>= | 1986-87 school year: <b>24%</b> of levy<br>1987-88 school year: 76% of levy     |
| 1986            | 1987                            | 1988                                 | FY 1988<br>FY 1989 | =<br>= | 1987-88 school year: <b>27%</b> of levy<br>1988-89 school year: 73% of levy     |
| 1987            | 1988                            | 1989                                 | FY 1989<br>FY 1990 | =<br>= | 1988-89 school year: <b>27%</b> of levy<br>1989-90 school year: 73% of levy     |
| 1988            | 1989                            | 1990                                 | FY 1990<br>FY 1991 | =<br>= | 1989-90 school year: <b>31%</b> of levy<br>1990-91 school year: 69% of levy     |
| 1989            | 1990                            | 1991                                 | FY 1991<br>FY 1992 | =<br>= | 1990-91 school year: <b>31%</b> of levy<br>1991-92 school year: 69% of levy     |
| 1990            | 1991                            | 1992                                 | FY 1992<br>FY 1993 | =<br>= | 1991-92 school year: <b>37%</b> of levy<br>1992-93 school year: 63% of levy     |
| 1991            | 1992                            | 1993                                 | FY 1993<br>FY 1994 | =<br>= | 1992-93 school year: <b>50%</b> of levy<br>1993-94 school year: 50% of levy     |
| 1992            | 1993                            | 1994                                 | FY 1994<br>FY 1995 | =<br>= | 1993-94 school year: <b>37.4%</b> of levy<br>1994-95 school year: 63.6% of levy |
| 1993            | 1994                            | 1995                                 | FY 1995<br>FY 1996 | =<br>= | 1994-95 school year: <b>37.4%</b> of levy<br>1995-96 school year: 81% of levy   |
| 1994            | 1995                            | 1996                                 | FY 1996<br>FY 1997 | =<br>= | 1995-96 school year: <b>19%</b> of levy<br>1996-97 school year: 93% of levy     |
| 1995            | 1996                            | 1997                                 | FY 1997<br>FY 1998 | =<br>= | 1996-97 school year: <b>7%</b> of levy<br>1997-98 school year: 93% of levy      |
| 1996            | 1997                            | 1998                                 | FY 1998<br>FY 1999 | =<br>= | 1997-98 school year: <b>7%</b> of levy<br>1998-99 school year: 100% of levy     |
| 1997            | 1998                            | 1999                                 | FY 1999<br>FY 2000 | =<br>= | 1998-99 school year: <b>0%</b> of levy<br>1999-00 school year: 100% of levy     |
| 1998            | 1999                            | 2000                                 | FY 2000<br>FY 2001 | =<br>= | 1999-00 school year: <b>0%</b> of levy<br>2000-01 school year: 100% of levy     |

| Assessment Year | December When Levy is Certified | Calendar Year When Levy is Collected | Fiscal Year               |        | School Year When Levy is Used<br>(Percent Shifted is in bold)                   |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------|---|
| 1999            | 2000                            | 2001                                 | FY 2001<br>FY 2002        | =<br>= | 2000-01 school year: <b>0%</b> of levy<br>2001-02 school year: 100% of levy     |
| 2000            | 2001                            | 2002                                 | FY 2002<br>FY 2003        | =<br>= | 2001-02 school year: <b>0%</b> of levy<br>2002-03 school year: 100% of levy     |
| 2001            | 2002                            | 2003                                 | FY 2003<br>FY 2004        | =<br>= | 2002-03 school year: <b>0%</b> of levy<br>2003-04 school year: 100% of levy     |
| 2002            | 2003                            | 2004                                 | FY 2004<br>FY 2005        | =<br>= | 2003-04 school year: <b>47%</b> of levy<br>2004-05 school year: 53% of levy     |
| 2003            | 2004                            | 2005                                 | FY 2005<br>FY 2006        | =<br>= | 2004-05 school year: <b>48.6%</b> of levy<br>2005-06 school year: 51.4% of levy |
| 2004            | 2005                            | 2006                                 | FY 2006<br>FY 2007        | =<br>= | 2005-06 school year: <b>0%</b> of levy<br>2006-07 school year: 100% of levy     |
| 2005            | 2006                            | 2007                                 | FY 2007<br>FY 2008        | =<br>= | 2006-07 school year: <b>0%</b> of levy<br>2007-08 school year: 100% of levy     |
| 2006            | 2007                            | 2008                                 | FY 2008<br>FY 2009        | =<br>= | 2007-08 school year: <b>0%</b> of levy<br>2008-09 school year: 100% of levy     |
| 2007            | 2008                            | 2009                                 | FY 2009<br>FY 2010        | =<br>= | 2008-09 school year: <b>0%</b> of levy<br>2009-10 school year: 100% of levy     |
| 2008            | 2009                            | 2010                                 | FY2010<br>FY2011          | =<br>= | 2009-10 school year: <b>48.6%</b> of levy<br>2010-11 school year: 51.4% of levy |
| 2009            | 2010                            | 2011                                 | FY2011<br>FY2012          | =<br>= | 2010-11 school year: <b>48.6%</b> of levy<br>2011-12 school year: 51.4% of levy |
| 2010            | 2011                            | 2012                                 | FY2012<br>FY2013          | =<br>= | 2011-12 school year: <b>48.6%</b> of levy<br>2012-13 school year: 51.4% of levy |
| 2011            | 2012                            | 2013                                 | FY2013<br>FY2014          | =<br>= | 2012-13 school year: <b>48.6%</b> of levy<br>2013-14 school year: 51.4% of levy |
| 2012            | 2013                            | 2014                                 | FY2014<br>FY2015          | =<br>= | 2013-14 school year: <b>0%</b> of levy<br>2014-15 school year: 100% of levy     |
| 2013 and later  | 2014 and later                  | 2015 and later                       | First year<br>Second year | =<br>= | First year: <b>0%</b> of levy<br>Second year: 100% of levy                      |

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**Metered Payments.** State aid payments are metered to school districts on the basis of a statutory schedule. School districts receive bimonthly state aid payments from the Department of Education. The metering schedule is an accounting tool designed to help the state avoid short-term borrowing by providing school districts' state aid payments on a schedule that is supposed to reflect the average school district's cash flow needs. The same cumulative percentage is used for each district regardless of that district's particular cash flow needs. Each school district is guaranteed the cumulative percentage of its revenue.

(Minn. Stat. § 127A.45)

School districts receive state aid payments and property tax payments as shown in the following table (school district fiscal years are the same as state fiscal years and run from July 1 to June 30).

**Table 85: Metered Payments**

| Payment Date | Cumulative Aid Percentage | Comments  |
|--------------|---------------------------|---|
| July 15      | 5.5%                      | —   |
| July 30      | 8.0                       | —   |
| August 15    | 17.5                      | —   |
| August 30    | 20.0                      | —   |
| September 15 | 22.5                      | —   |
| September 30 | 25.0                      | —   |
| October 15   | 27.0                      | —   |
| October 30   | 30.0                      | District receives second half of property tax receipts from county treasurer in October and early November with a small cleanup payment in December |
| November 15  | 32.5                      | —   |
| November 30  | 36.5                      | —   |
| December 15  | 42.0                      | —   |
| December 30  | 45.0                      | —   |
| January 15   | 50.0                      | —   |
| January 30   | 54.0                      | —   |
| February 15  | 58.0                      | —   |
| February 28  | 63.0                      | —   |
| March 15     | 68.0                      | —   |
| March 30     | 74.0                      | —   |
| April 15     | 78.0                      | —   |
| April 30     | 85.0                      | —   |
| May 15       | 90.0                      | —   |
| May 30       | 95.0                      | Districts receive first half of property tax receipts in late May and early June with a small cleanup payment in July                               |
| June 20      | 100.0%                    | —   |

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Metered payments distribute 90 percent of the aid entitlement to the school districts during the current fiscal year. In the following fiscal year, the remaining 10 percent is paid to school districts. These payments are often referred to as the “cleanup” payments.

There are four cleanup payments for a school district:

- August 15: for the final adjustment for state paid property tax credits
- August 30: 30 percent of the remaining aid payments for the previous fiscal year
- September 30: 40 percent of the remaining aid payments for the previous fiscal year
- October 30: 30 percent of the remaining aid payments for the previous fiscal year

**Charter School Metered Payments.** In an effort to speed up cash flow to charter schools, the legislature has modified the aid payment and metering schedule for charter schools in three ways:

- 1) In any year where the aid payment percentage is less than 90, the full amount of the current year payment to charter schools must be paid in the July through February payments (this gives charter schools the current year payments earlier, but means charter schools won’t receive any state aid payments during March, April, May, and June).
- 2) In any year where the aid payment percentage is less than 90, the cleanup payment for charter schools is also accelerated. Seventy-five percent of the cleanup payment is made on July 15, and the remainder (25 percent) is paid on October 30.
- 3) A charter school where at least 90 percent of the students are eligible for special education services has its special education payments made on a 90/10 basis regardless of the general statutory aid payment percentage.

## Appendix

The appendix includes historical funding information about certain school finance programs where funding levels may not be easily found elsewhere. It includes information on the general education program, capital projects, integration programs, and school safety funding.

### General Education Program

The uniform general education levy was a major part of the funding for general education revenue from 1989 to 2000. Table 86 shows the general education levy, tax rate, equalizing factor, and dollars raised statewide by the levy.

**Table 86: General Education Levy**

| Year Certified | Year Levy Paid | Fiscal year | Adjusted Net Tax Capacity Rate | Dollars Raised Statewide | Equalizing Factor |
|----------------|----------------|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 2017 and later | 2018           | 2019        | 0.00%                          | \$0                      | —                 |
| 2016           | 2017           | 2018        | 0.16                           | 10,000,000               | —                 |
| 2015           | 2016           | 2017        | 0.30                           | 20,000,000               | —                 |
| 2014           | 2015           | 2016        | 0.33                           | 20,000,000               | —                 |
| 2013*          | 2014           | 2015        | 0.35                           | 20,000,000               | —                 |
|                |                |             |                                |                          |                   |
| 2000**         | 2001           | 2002        | 32.38                          | 1,330,000,000            | \$12,242          |
| 1999           | 2000           | 2001        | 35.78                          | 1,330,000,000            | 10,970            |
| 1998           | 1999           | 2000        | 36.58                          | 1,285,500,000            | 9,650             |
| 1997           | 1998           | 1999        | 36.9                           | 1,292,000,000            | 9,704             |
| 1996           | 1997           | 1998        | 37.4                           | 1,359,000,000            | 9,372             |
| 1995           | 1996           | 1997        | 40.8                           | 1,359,000,000            | 8,591             |
| 1994           | 1995           | 1996        | 34.2                           | 1,055,000,000            | 9,211             |
| 1993           | 1994           | 1995        | 34.9                           | 1,044,000,000            | 9,025             |
| 1992           | 1993           | 1994        | 30.7                           | 969,800,000              | 9,935             |
| 1991           | 1992           | 1993        | 27.9                           | 916,000,000              | 11,051            |
| 1990           | 1991           | 1992        | 26.4                           | 840,000,000              | 11,553            |
| 1989           | 1990           | 1991        | 26.3                           | 792,000,000              | 11,228            |
| 1988           | 1989           | 1990        | 29.3***                        | 1,100,580,000            | —                 |

\* Note: There was no general education levy for taxes payable in 2002 through taxes payable in 2013.

\*\* The general education equalizing factor was based on the general education levy for taxes payable from 1990 to 2001. It was eliminated for subsequent years.

\*\*\* Adjusted gross tax capacity

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## Capital Projects

The following six tables show historical data affecting capital projects including the debt service aid and levy over time (Table 87), health and safety revenue (now subsumed into the long-term facilities maintenance revenue – LTFMR; Table 88), alternative facilities revenue (subsumed into LTFMR; Table 89), maximum effort bond sales (Table 90), cooperative facilities grants (Table 91), and building lease restrictions (Table 92).

**Table 87: Total Statewide Debt Service Amounts;  
Regular and Enhanced Equalization Aid**

| School Year | Debt Service Aid Entitlement | Net Debt Service Fund Levy Certified |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2022-23     | \$21,297,000                 | \$1,043,149,000                      |
| 2021-22     | 21,939,000                   | 1,110,113,000                        |
| 2020-21     | 25,398,000                   | 1,107,409,000                        |
| 2019-20     | 20,684,000                   | 998,302,000                          |
| 2018-19     | 22,920,000                   | 916,368,000                          |
| 2017-18     | 25,092,000                   | 840,765,000                          |
| 2016-17     | 23,244,000                   | 847,542,000                          |
| 2015-16     | 20,060,000                   | 797,305,000                          |
| 2014-15     | 22,950,000                   | 801,610,000                          |
| 2013-14     | 19,778,000                   | 810,155,000                          |
| 2012-13     | 17,627,000                   | 810,779,000                          |
| 2011-12     | 14,029,000                   | 804,305,000                          |
| 2010-11     | 8,679,000                    | 773,012,000                          |
| 2009-10     | 7,884,000                    | 763,638,000                          |
| 2008-09     | 9,109,000                    | 737,982,000                          |
| 2007-08     | 14,393,000                   | 711,525,000                          |
| 2006-07     | 18,410,000                   | 665,485,000                          |
| 2005-06     | 27,206,000                   | 627,052,000                          |
| 2004-05     | 37,575,000                   | 631,000,000                          |
| 2003-04     | 34,500,000                   | 572,000,000                          |
| 2002-03     | 29,960,000                   | 510,000,000                          |
| 2001-02     | 25,987,000                   | 489,000,000                          |
| 2000-01     | 29,286,000                   | 423,000,000                          |
| 1999-00     | 32,629,000                   | 380,000,000                          |
| 1998-99     | 38,193,000                   | 335,000,000                          |

| School Year | Debt Service Aid Entitlement | Net Debt Service Fund Levy Certified |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1997-98     | 35,480,000                   | 345,000,000                          |
| 1996-97     | 37,320,000                   | 339,000,000                          |
| 1995-96     | 30,054,000                   | 296,000,000                          |
| 1994-95     | 27,521,000                   | 267,000,000                          |
| 1993-94     | 14,000,000                   | 241,000,000                          |
| 1992-93     | 6,000,000                    | 217,000,000                          |
| 1991-92     | 0                            | 167,000,000                          |

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**Table 88: Health and Safety Revenue**

| Fiscal Year | State Aid Appropriation | Levy         |
|-------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| 2017        | \$57,000*               | —            |
| 2016        | 588,000                 | \$61,603,000 |
| 2015        | 651,000                 | 57,720,000   |
| 2014        | 471,000                 | 51,445,000   |
| 2013        | 157,000                 | 53,731,000   |
| 2012        | 98,000                  | 53,332,000   |
| 2011        | 135,000                 | 58,003,000   |
| 2010        | 132,000                 | 62,763,000   |
| 2009        | 103,000                 | 67,759,000   |
| 2008        | 254,000                 | 72,497,000   |
| 2007        | 352,000                 | 73,199,000   |
| 2006        | 823,000                 | 87,974,000   |
| 2005        | 2,099,000               | 89,326,000   |
| 2004        | 5,322,000               | 127,277,000  |
| 2003        | 5,494,000               | 122,776,000  |
| 2002        | 11,437,000              | 76,623,000   |
| 2001        | 14,920,000              | 75,569,000   |
| 2000        | 14,202,000              | 67,508,000   |
| 1999        | 14,179,000              | 62,242,000   |
| 1998        | 14,081,000              | 51,643,000   |

\* Ten percent cleanup payment; future amounts in long-term facilities maintenance revenue.

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**Table 89: Alternative Facilities Revenue**

| Fiscal Year | State Aid  | Pay-as-you-go<br>Alternative Facilities Levy | Alternative Facilities<br>Bonded Debt Levy | Alternate Facilities<br>Health & Safety Levy |
|-------------|------------|--|--|--|
| 2017        | \$0        | \$0  | \$0  | \$0  |
| 2016        | 19,287,000 | 81,086,000                                   | 80,185,000                                 | 48,119,000                                   |
| 2015        | 19,287,000 | 80,816,000                                   | 77,473,000                                 | 43,214,000                                   |
| 2014        | 19,982,000 | 52,227,000                                   | 91,208,000                                 | 40,242,000                                   |
| 2013        | 19,287,000 | 50,901,000                                   | 62,117,000                                 | 36,779,000                                   |
| 2012        | 18,187,000 | 60,320,000                                   | 44,469,000                                 | 32,722,000                                   |
| 2011        | 18,708,000 | 60,957,000                                   | 45,469,000                                 | 27,016,000                                   |
| 2010        | 16,008,000 | 54,671,000                                   | 45,469,000                                 | 15,137,000                                   |
| 2009        | 19,287,000 | 51,169,000                                   | 48,187,000                                 | 15,137,000                                   |
| 2008        | 19,287,000 | 58,928,000                                   | 45,469,000                                 | 15,137,000                                   |
| 2007        | 19,287,000 | 53,636,000                                   | 42,274,000                                 | 14,976,000                                   |
| 2006        | 20,387,000 | 56,399,000                                   | 40,643,000                                 | 8,223,000                                    |
| 2005        | 19,287,000 | 44,868,000                                   | 37,080,000                                 | 4,356,000                                    |
| 2004        | 18,708,000 | 37,105,000                                   | 42,151,000                                 | —  |
| 2003        | 17,937,000 | 36,853,000                                   | 35,309,000                                 | —  |
| 2002        | 19,279,000 | 24,439,000                                   | 18,871,000                                 | —  |
| 2001        | 16,303,000 | 22,341,000                                   | 10,874,000                                 | —  |
| 2000        | 19,624,000 | 18,627,000                                   | 8,151,000                                  | —  |
| 1999        | 17,426,000 | 16,978,000                                   | 0  | —  |
| 1998        | —          | 8,420,000                                    | 16,456,000                                 | —  |

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**Table 90: Maximum Effort Bond Sales**

| Year Authorized | Amount of Bonds Authorized |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 2018            | \$14,000,000               |
| 2014            | 5,491,000                  |
| 2006            | 10,700,000                 |
| 2005            | 18,000,000                 |
| 2002            | 12,400,000                 |
| 2001            | 19,000,000                 |
| 2000            | 44,030,000                 |
| 1995            | 23,670,000                 |

| Year Authorized | Amount of Bonds Authorized |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 1994            | 2,967,000                  |
| 1993            | 5,000,000                  |
| 1991            | 45,065,000                 |
| 1990            | 23,300,000                 |
| 1988            | 22,000,000                 |
| 1980            | 20,000,000                 |
| 1969            | 20,000,000                 |
| 1967            | 2,800,000                  |
| 1965            | 10,400,000                 |
| 1963            | 16,000,000                 |
| 1961            | 2,500,000                  |
| 1959            | 2,500,000                  |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>\$319,823,000</b>       |

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**Table 91: Cooperative Facilities Grants**

| High School Name                 | Member School Districts*                 | State CSF Grant Amount | Year of Grant Approval | School Year Facility Opened |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ACGC High School                 | Atwater; Cosmos; Grove City              | \$6,000,000            | 1994                   | 1995-96                     |
| Grant County High School         | Elbow Lake; Barrett; Hoffman; Kensington | 6,000,000              | 1993                   | 1995-96                     |
| Blue Earth High School           | Blue Earth-Winnebago; Delavan; Elmore    | 5,800,000              | 1992                   | 1994-95                     |
| Minnewaska High School           | Glenwood; Starbuck; Villard              | 6,000,000              | 1989                   | 1990-91                     |
| Lac Qui Parle Valley High School | Madison-Marietta-Nassau; Appleton; Milan | 8,000,000              | 1988                   | 1989-90                     |

\* Since receiving the CSF grant, each of these groups of districts have consolidated into a single district.

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**Table 92: Building Lease Levy Restrictions**

| Applicable School Years | Payable Year First Effective | Permitted Uses/Limitations  |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| 2015-16 and later       | Pay 15 and later             | Sets the maximum lease amount at the lesser of the lease’s actual costs or \$212 per pupil unit. Allows a district that is a member of an intermediate school district to |

| Applicable School Years | Payable Year First Effective | Permitted Uses/Limitations  |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|---|
|                         |                              | levy an additional \$65 per pupil unit for lease costs faced by the intermediate school district.   |
| 2014-2015               | Pay 14                       | Sets the maximum lease amount at the lesser of the lease's actual costs or \$162 per pupil unit. Allows a district that is a member of an intermediate school district to levy an additional \$46 per pupil unit for lease costs faced by the intermediate school district. |
| 2009-10 to 2013-14      | Pay 09 to Pay 13             | Sets the maximum lease amount at the lesser of the lease's actual costs or \$150 per pupil unit. Allows a district that is a member of an intermediate school district to levy an additional \$43 per pupil unit for lease costs faced by the intermediate school district. |
| 2006-07                 | Pay 06 to 08                 | Sets the maximum lease amount at the lesser of the lease's actual costs or \$100 per pupil unit. Allows a district that is a member of an intermediate school district to levy an additional \$25 per pupil unit for lease costs faced by the intermediate school district. |
| 2004-05 to 2005-06      | Pay 04 and 05                | Limits the maximum per pupil lease for a school district to the lesser of 90 percent of the actual lease costs or \$90 per pupil unit. Allows a district that is a member of an intermediate school district to levy an additional \$22.50 per pupil for lease expenses.    |
| 2002-03 to 2003-04      | Pay 02 and 03                | Sets the maximum per pupil levy for a school district that is a member of an intermediate school district at \$125 per pupil unit.  |
| 1999-2000               | Pay 99                       | Excludes expenditures for sports stadiums from the definition of "instructional space."   |
| 1998-99                 | Pay 98                       | For agreements finalized after July 1, 1997, no district may have a lease levy in excess of \$100 per pupil unit and no district may use the lease levy for a "newly constructed building for regular kindergarten, elementary, or secondary space."                        |
| 1992-93                 | Pay 92                       | Upon approval of commissioner when economically advantageous for instructional purposes. Broadens scope to land as well as facilities.  |
| 1991-92                 | Pay 91                       | Upon approval of commissioner when economically advantageous for instructional purposes. Future lease purchase agreements are no longer eligible.   |
| 1990-91                 | Pay 90                       | Upon approval of commissioner when economically advantageous for instructional purposes.  |
| 1989-90                 | Pay 89                       | Upon approval of commissioner when economically advantageous for secondary vocational programs only.  |
| 1988-89                 | Pay 88                       | The leased facilities levy was repealed. However, a special levy allowed a district to levy the amount that would have been authorized in 1987 if the levy had not been repealed.   |
| 1987-88                 | Pay 87                       | Upon approval of commissioner when economically advantageous for instructional purposes.  |

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## Charter Schools

**Table 93: Charter School General Education, Special Education, and Building Lease Aid**

| Fiscal Year | General Education Aid Entitlement* | Special Education Direct Aid* | Building Lease Aid Appropriation | Start-up Aid Appropriation |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2025        | \$770,548,000                      | \$293,024,000                 | \$98,166,000                     | \$0                        |
| 2024        | 732,178,000                        | 265,090,000                   | 94,320,000                       | 0                          |
| 2023        | 685,857,000                        | 242,845,000                   | 95,819,000                       | 0                          |
| 2022        | 641,198,000                        | 215,173,000                   | 89,868,000                       | 0                          |
| 2021        | 597,663,000                        | 180,098,000                   | 83,778,000                       | 0                          |
| 2020        | 557,776,000                        | 178,951,000                   | 85,332,000                       | 0                          |
| 2019        | 539,034,000                        | 166,743,000                   | 78,223,000                       | 0                          |
| 2018        | 494,356,000                        | 140,396,000                   | 74,038,000                       | 0                          |
| 2017        | 461,475,000                        | 122,273,000                   | 68,969,000                       | 0                          |
| 2016        | 438,130,000                        | 100,080,000                   | 63,718,000                       | 0                          |
| 2015        | 410,026,000                        | 84,486,000                    | 60,327,000                       | 0                          |
| 2014        | 346,109,000                        | 79,310,000                    | 52,704,000                       | 0                          |
| 2013        | 323,015,000                        | 63,395,000                    | 49,124,000                       | 22,000                     |
| 2012        | 297,639,000                        | 56,703,000                    | 46,869,000                       | 161,000                    |
| 2011        | 279,960,000                        | 47,963,000                    | 43,176,000                       | 743,000                    |
| 2010        | 264,342,000                        | 39,377,000                    | 41,015,000                       | 1,218,000                  |
| 2009        | 247,483,000                        | 34,070,000                    | 37,376,000                       | 1,987,000                  |
| 2008        | 213,448,000                        | 26,225,000                    | 32,602,000                       | 1,801,000                  |
| 2007        | 172,401,000                        | 21,520,000                    | 27,803,000                       | 2,347,000                  |
| 2006        | 142,488,000                        | 8,735,000                     | 24,253,000                       | 1,291,000                  |
| 2005        | 116,385,000                        | 7,459,000                     | 20,634,000                       | 156,000                    |
| 2004        | 93,689,000                         | 6,416,000                     | 17,542,000                       | 829,000                    |
| 2003        | 79,661,000                         | 5,287,000                     | 15,625,000                       | 1,215,000                  |
| 2002        | 61,850,000                         | 3,739,000                     | 12,272,000                       | 2,026,000                  |
| 2001        | 52,741,000                         | 4,278,000                     | 10,667,000                       | 2,664,000                  |

\* General education aid and special education aid paid to charter schools are subsumed within the regular appropriations for general education and special education aid.

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## Integration Programs

Tables 94 and 95 show funding for integration activities over time.

**Table 94: Estimated Appropriations and Levies for Integration Activities Based on 100% Aid Entitlement; Amounts for Aid Fiscal Year**

| Fiscal Year/<br>Payable Year | Minneapolis |             | St. Paul     |             | Duluth      |           | Other Districts |              | Total        |              |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                              | Aid         | Levy        | Aid          | Levy        | Aid         | Levy      | Aid             | Levy         | Aid          | Levy         |
| 2023/2022                    | \$9,842,000 | \$4,218,000 | \$11,101,000 | \$4,757,000 | \$1,222,000 | \$524,000 | \$63,631,000    | \$27,271,000 | \$85,796,000 | \$36,770,000 |
| 2022/2021                    | 10,032,000  | 4,299,000   | 11,087,000   | 4,752,000   | 1,226,000   | 525,000   | 61,000,000      | 26,143,000   | 83,345,000   | 35,719,000   |
| 2021/2020                    | 10,152,000  | 4,351,000   | 11,188,000   | 4,795,000   | 1,236,000   | 530,000   | 63,795,000      | 27,310,000   | 86,301,000   | 36,986,000   |
| 2020/2019                    | 10,441,000  | 4,475,000   | 11,321,000   | 4,852,000   | 1,214,000   | 520,000   | 58,197,000      | 24,941,000   | 81,173,000   | 34,788,000   |
| 2019/2018                    | 10,732,000  | 4,600,000   | 11,417,000   | 4,893,000   | 1,178,000   | 505,000   | 50,494,000      | 21,640,000   | 73,822,000   | 31,638,000   |
| 2018/2017                    | 10,964,000  | 4,699,000   | 11,462,000   | 4,912,000   | 1,171,000   | 502,000   | 48,589,000      | 20,824,000   | 72,185,000   | 30,936,000   |
| 2017/2016                    | 10,680,000  | 4,577,000   | 11,351,000   | 4,759,000   | 1,159,000   | 494,000   | 43,573,000      | 18,900,000   | 66,763,000   | 28,730,000   |
| 2016/2015                    | 10,877,000  | 4,662,000   | 11,751,000   | 5,036,000   | 1,140,000   | 488,000   | 44,189,000      | 18,936,000   | 67,952,000   | 29,122,000   |
| 2015/2014                    | 11,013,000  | 4,720,000   | 11,677,000   | 5,005,000   | 1,139,000   | 488,000   | 42,713,000      | 18,301,000   | 66,532,000   | 28,514,000   |
| 2014/2013                    | 8,895,000   | 6,300,000   | 10,718,000   | 5,763,000   | 931,000     | 614,000   | 38,651,000      | 15,836,000   | 59,195,000   | 28,513,000   |
| 2013/2012                    | 11,218,000  | 7,313,000   | 13,890,000   | 5,739,000   | 1,414,000   | 606,000   | 37,716,000      | 16,164,000   | 63,739,000   | 29,822,000   |
| 2012/2011                    | 11,385,000  | 6,563,000   | 13,526,000   | 5,795,000   | 1,461,000   | 627,000   | 39,383,000      | 15,196,000   | 65,755,000   | 28,181,000   |
| 2011/2010                    | 11,422,000  | 6,587,000   | 13,154,000   | 5,637,000   | 1,450,000   | 621,000   | 38,495,000      | 14,807,000   | 64,521,000   | 27,652,000   |
| 2010/2009                    | 11,524,000  | 6,648,000   | 13,616,000   | 5,835,000   | 1,516,000   | 649,000   | 34,862,000      | 13,233,000   | 61,518,000   | 26,365,000   |
| 2009/2008                    | 11,686,000  | 6,743,000   | 13,708,000   | 5,875,000   | 1,555,000   | 666,000   | 33,884,000      | 12,787,000   | 60,833,000   | 26,071,000   |
| 2008/2007                    | 11,875,000  | 6,866,000   | 14,081,000   | 6,035,000   | 1,629,000   | 698,000   | 31,458,000      | 11,705,000   | 59,043,000   | 25,304,000   |
| 2007/2006                    | 12,405,000  | 7,171,000   | 14,393,000   | 6,168,000   | 1,662,000   | 712,000   | 30,011,000      | 11,008,000   | 58,471,000   | 25,059,000   |
| 2006/2005                    | 12,956,000  | 7,492,000   | 14,652,000   | 6,279,000   | 1,692,000   | 725,000   | 29,716,000      | 9,511,000    | 56,016,000   | 24,007,000   |
| 2005/2004                    | 13,599,000  | 7,866,000   | 14,688,000   | 6,295,000   | 1,748,000   | 749,000   | 24,274,000      | 8,365,000    | 54,309,000   | 23,275,000   |
| 2004/2003                    | 15,780,000  | 6,866,000   | 16,580,352   | 4,953,000   | 1,997,000   | 596,000   | 25,830,000      | 5,563,000    | 60,187,000   | 17,978,000   |
| 2003/2002                    | 13,522,000  | 10,383,000  | 14,576,000   | 8,560,000   | 1,715,000   | 1,007,000 | 19,045,000      | 8,036,000    | 48,858,000   | 28,694,000   |
| 2002/2001                    | 23,602,000  | 6,428,000   | 18,160,000   | 5,183,000   | 2,216,000   | 622,000   | 19,127,000      | 4,441,000    | 63,105,000   | 16,765,000   |
| 2001/2000                    | 23,704,000  | 6,520,000   | 18,343,000   | 5,223,000   | 2,276,000   | 634,000   | 8,842,000       | 196,000      | 53,165,000   | 12,583,000   |
| 2000/1999                    | 20,015,000  | 9,735,000   | 15,587,000   | 7,508,000   | 1,993,000   | 966,000   | —               | —            | 37,755,000   | 18,527,000   |
| 1999/1998                    | 15,751,000  | 13,122,000  | 12,325,000   | 10,113,000  | 1,605,000   | 1,826,000 | —               | —            | 30,161,000   | 24,830,000   |
| 1998/1997                    | 9,368,300   | 10,176,000  | 8,090,700    | 9,627,000   | 1,385,000   | 1,537,000 | —               | —            | 18,844,000   | 21,340,000   |
| 1997/1996                    | 9,368,300   | 10,168,000  | 8,090,700    | 9,588,000   | 1,385,000   | 1,406,000 | —               | —            | 18,844,000   | 21,162,000   |
| 1996/1995                    | 9,368,300   | 10,041,000  | 8,090,700    | 9,461,000   | 1,385,000   | 1,344,000 | —               | —            | 18,844,000   | 20,967,000   |
| 1995/1994                    | 9,638,000   | 9,560,000   | 8,090,500    | 8,540,000   | 1,385,000   | 1,091,000 | —               | —            | 18,844,000   | 19,191,000   |
| 1994/1993                    | 9,638,300   | 7,308,000   | 8,090,500    | 6,620,000   | 1,385,000   | 696,000   | —               | —            | 18,844,000   | 14,625,000   |
| 1993/1992                    | 7,782,300   | 8,439,000   | 6,676,500    | 6,899,000   | 1,385,200   | 625,000   | —               | —            | 15,844,000   | 15,963,000   |

| Fiscal Year/<br>Payable<br>Year | Minneapolis |           | St. Paul  |           | Duluth    |         | Other Districts |      | Total      |            |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------------|------|------------|------------|
|                                 | Aid         | Levy      | Aid       | Levy      | Aid       | Levy    | Aid             | Levy | Aid        | Levy       |
| 1992/1991                       | 7,782,300   | 8,071,000 | 6,676,500 | 6,599,000 | 1,385,200 | 598,000 | —               | —    | 15,844,000 | 15,268,000 |
| 1991/1990                       | 7,382,300   | 7,772,000 | 6,276,000 | 6,312,000 | 1,285,200 | 572,000 | —               | —    | 14,944,000 | 14,603,000 |
| 1990/1989                       | 7,382,300   | 7,012,000 | 6,276,000 | 3,943,000 | 1,285,200 | 664,000 | —               | —    | 14,944,000 | 11,618,000 |
| 1989/1988                       | 5,950,300   | 3,177,000 | 5,081,400 | 3,837,000 | 981,800   | —       | —               | —    | 12,013,600 | 7,313,000  |
| 1988/1987                       | 5,677,700   | —         | 4,766,500 | 1,958,000 | 1,123,100 | —       | —               | —    | 11,557,300 | 1,958,000  |

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**Table 95: Appropriations for Other Integration Funding Programs**

| Fiscal Year | Magnet School Operating Grants | Magnet School Capital Grants* | Magnet School Start-up Aid | Interdistrict Integration Transportation | Other Integration Programs |
|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 2021        | \$0                            | \$0                           | \$0                        | \$14,962,000                             | \$0                        |
| 2020        | 0                              | 0                             | 0                          | 14,231,000                               | 0                          |
| 2019        | 0                              | 0                             | 0                          | 13,193,000                               | 0                          |
| 2018        | 0                              | 0                             | 0                          | 14,328,000                               | 0                          |
| 2017        | 0                              | 0                             | 0                          | 15,193,000                               | 0                          |
| 2016        | 0                              | 0                             | 0                          | 14,423,000                               | 0                          |
| 2015        | 0                              | 0                             | 0                          | 14,248,000                               | 0                          |
| 2014        | 0                              | 0                             | 0                          | 13,521,000                               | 0                          |
| 2013        | 0                              | 0                             | 0                          | 13,966,000                               | 0                          |
| 2012        | 0                              | 0                             | 0                          | 13,362,000                               | 0                          |
| 2011        | 750,000                        | 0                             | 0                          | 13,743,000                               | 0                          |
| 2010        | 750,000                        | 0                             | 0                          | 12,342,000                               | 0                          |
| 2009        | 750,000                        | 0                             | 0                          | 11,881,000                               | 0                          |
| 2008        | 750,000                        | 0                             | 0                          | 9,901,000                                | 0                          |
| 2007        | 750,000                        | 0                             | 0                          | 10,134,000                               | 0                          |
| 2006        | 750,000                        | 1,083,000                     | 0                          | 6,032,000                                | 0                          |
| 2005        | 750,000                        | 0                             | 454,000                    | 8,401,000                                | 0                          |
| 2004        | 750,000                        | 0                             | 37,000                     | 5,796,000                                | 0                          |
| 2003        | 1,052,000                      | 0                             | 230,000                    | 3,101,000                                | 1,076,000                  |
| 2002        | 448,000                        | 1,700,000                     | 431,000                    | 0  | 924,000                    |
| 2001        | 1,750,000                      | 16,500,000                    | 225,000                    | 970,000                                  | 1,000,000                  |
| 2000        | 1,750,000                      | 0                             | 0                          | 970,000                                  | 1,000,000                  |
| 1999        | 1,750,000                      | 0                             | 0                          | 970,000                                  | 1,000,000                  |

| Fiscal Year | Magnet School Operating Grants | Magnet School Capital Grants* | Magnet School Start-up Aid | Interdistrict Integration Transportation | Other Integration Programs |
|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 1998        | 5,750,000                      | 22,200,000**                  | 0                          | 800,000                                  | 1,000,000                  |
| 1997        | 1,500,000                      | 0                             | 0                          | 630,000                                  | 1,000,000                  |
| 1996        | 1,500,000                      | 0                             | 0                          | 300,000                                  | 1,000,000                  |
| 1995        | 1,500,000                      | 0                             | 0                          | 0  | 752,000                    |
| 1994        | 0                              | 20,000,000                    | 0                          | 0  | 1,035,000                  |

\* Appropriations are from state bond proceeds.

\*\* \$1,893,000 of this appropriation was cancelled back to the general fund.

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## School Safety

Table 96 shows the safe schools revenue and the accompanying revenue restrictions over time.

**Table 96: Safe Schools Levy**

| Fiscal Year | School District Safe Schools Per Pupil Allowance | Allowance for Member of Intermediate School Districts Per Pupil | Revenue Restrictions  | Total Levy Amount | Included Intermediate School District Levy Amounts |
|-------------|--|---|---|-------------------|--|
| 2023        | \$36   | \$15  | None  | \$34,772,000*     | \$4,009,000*                                       |
| 2022        | 36   | 15  | None  | 35,324,000        | 4,060,000  |
| 2021        | 36   | 15  | None  | 34,604,000        | 3,845,000  |
| 2020        | 36   | 15  | None  | 35,500,000        | 3,845,000  |
| 2019        | 36   | 15  | None  | 35,410,000        | 3,845,000  |
| 2018        | 36   | 15  | None  | 34,680,000        | 3,689,000  |
| 2017        | 36   | 15  | None  | 34,592,000        | 3,128,000  |
| 2016        | 36   | 15  | None  | 33,963,000        | 3,149,000  |
| 2015        | 36   | 10  | None  | 33,180,000        | 2,424,000  |
| 2014        | 30   | 10  | None  | 28,730,000        | 2,778,000  |
| 2013        | 30   | 10  | None  | —                 | —  |
| 2012        | 30   | 10  | None  | 28,560,000        | 2,641,000  |
| 2011        | 30   | 10  | Minimum maintenance of effort required for school counselors, school nurses, school social workers, and | 28,371,000        | 2,638,000  |

| Fiscal Year | School District Safe Schools Per Pupil Allowance | Allowance for Member of Intermediate School Districts Per Pupil | Revenue Restrictions              | Total Levy Amount | Included Intermediate School District Levy Amounts |
|-------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|
|             |  |   | chemical dependency program staff |                   |  |
| 2010        | 30   | 10  | See above                         | 28,262,000        | 2,651,000  |
| 2009        | 30   | 10  | —                                 | 26,262,000        | 2,671,000  |
| 2008        | 27   | 10  | —                                 | 24,148,000        | 2,651,000  |
| 2007        | 27   | —   | —                                 | 24,055,000        | —  |
| 2006        | 27   | —   | —                                 | 24,196,000        | —  |
| 2005        | 27   | —   | —                                 | 24,395,000        | —  |
| 2004        | 30   | —   | —                                 | 27,615,000        | —  |
| 2003        | 11   | —   | —                                 | 10,066,000        | —  |
| 2002        | 11   | —   | —                                 | 9,985,000         | —  |
| 2001        | 1.50 per capita                                  | —   | —                                 | 6,590,000         | —  |
| 2000        | 1.50 per capita                                  | —   | 5                                 | 6,256,000         | —  |
| *Estimated  |  |   |                                   |                   |  |

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