



Every single child in Minnesota will grow up and begin to compete with workers in the global economy. Our state must have the best educated workforce not just in the country - but in the world.

No matter whether a child is black, brown, white or indigenous; no matter their zip code – every single child in Minnesota deserves an education that prepares them to succeed in a 21st century economy. For far too long, Minnesota has been plagued by a gap in performance between white students and students of color on state tests. This racial disparity in test scores is evidence of a gap in opportunities depending on a student’s race or zip code.

If our children are to create and fill the jobs of the future - jobs which we haven’t even imagined yet - they must be creative, solve problems, and innovate.

ONE MINNESOTA VISION FOR FUNDING A 21ST CENTURY EDUCATION FOR EVERY CHILD

- Fund a 21st century education: Minnesota lawmakers need to have an honest conversation about what it costs to make sure that every child has the education they require to compete in a global economy, and then commit to funding it. This includes finally fully funding the cost of special education.
- Stop playing games with inflation: The current education budget does not include any inflationary increase, denying the reality that things cost a little bit more every year. We should index the education budget to inflation so that we stop playing budgetary shell games with school funding.
- Make the education budget clear, concise, and understandable: Simplify the school funding formula so you don’t need a doctorate to understand how we fund our children’s education. Parents, teachers, and community members should be able to see and understand what the state pays for, and districts should have greater flexibility to use school funds to better meet the unique needs of each community.
- Make school funding fair: Increase levy assistance for low property wealth school districts. If district taxpayers want to provide additional funding for schools, they shouldn’t be at a disadvantage by having to pay more based on their zip code. The playing field should be level for all Minnesotans.
- Provide funding for supports for student learning: Our schools are facing a crisis when it comes to providing counseling, social workers, and mental health support for students who need it. We must address this acute need not only to provide the best conditions for our children to learn, but also to keep them safe in school.

ONE MINNESOTA VISION FOR SCHOOL INNOVATION AND MODERNIZATION

- Reimagine Minnesota’s school accountability systems: Accountability should be about supporting districts, schools, teachers to provide the best education for our students. Although reading, writing and math are still essential, testing those skills alone doesn’t tell us the whole story about a student. 21st century skills include teamwork, creativity, ethics, resilience, curiosity, and time management skills. Minnesota should support efforts to teach and assess those and other skills that give a truer picture of the varied talents of our students. These skills are critical in the jobs of the 21st century, and build upon Minnesota’s good work in social emotional learning.
 - Expand personalized and student-directed learning: Support schools and teachers that are using personalized learning approaches or enabling students to take more responsibility for their learning. Students learn best when they are passionate about the subject or when they can apply lessons that are relevant to their lives. Personalized or self-directed approaches empower students to meet standards and expectations while solving
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real problems. Supporting districts and schools in experimenting with and creating best practices that can then become models for others is a good way get started.

- Reduce class size: to make sure that every student gets the attention and has the relationships that they need to be a successful learner. It's really that simple.
- Create a collaborative college and career pathway: Incentivize college and career pathway high schools where schools partner with higher education institutions to offer a 2 year degree upon completion of high school. Some areas have adopted this model, but both K-12 schools and colleges need support to get these innovative programs that control college debt working.
- Dramatically expand access to career and technical education: Many Minnesota students want to have a career, but do not want to attend a four-year college. They must have pathways to those high-demand, often high-tech careers that start in their schools and community colleges.
- Attract and retain the best-and-brightest in our classrooms: Fewer and fewer students are entering teacher preparation and more and more teachers are leaving classrooms for other careers within their first 5 years. It's time to bring the respect back to education, which means providing districts and teachers the option of paying a year-round salary for teachers who want to do curriculum and professional development in the summer, making sure that early career educators have meaningful mentorship, reducing the burden of college debt that makes teaching economically impossible for many of our young people, and making sure that our educators are treated as the highly trained professionals that they are.

ONE MINNESOTA VISION FOR EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

- Start early: Much of a student's brain development occurs before they get to school, but many communities are daycare and preschool deserts. Children who enter school kindergarten ready are dramatically more successful in third and fifth grade, and go on to have a reduced likelihood of incarceration and a much higher income. We must commit to ensuring that every child enters school ready to learn. This means expanding the Child Care Assistance Program to help needy families afford high quality early childhood options for our youngest learners birth – 3. It also means that children must have access to high quality Pre-K that is aligned with their school district curriculum and high quality care. Narrowing access and opportunity gaps early is one of the most proven methods to reducing racially predictable disparate outcomes in education.
 - Expand full service community schools: These schools provide wrap-around services to meet the social, emotional, and health needs of the students and families that the school serves. They also provide programming before and after school to keep students engaged and cared for during out-of-school hours. Schools using this model assess the needs of families with which they work, make a plan to partner with service providers like mental health clinics or vision providers, and allow students and families to access these services through the school. These schools tackle everything from physical health to hunger and social service needs, helping to meet students' needs so they can focus on learning.
 - Improve and restore balance to the curriculum: We need to ensure that children have racial windows and mirrors in their curriculum so they see themselves in what they are learning. Minnesota students also need to understand the history of the land on which they live, which means teaching an inclusive and empowering American Indian Minnesota history. Finally, Tim and Peggy will expand access to culturally relevant curriculum and resources that teach school skills, like AVID, that have proven to reduce racially predictable outcomes for students.
 - Recruit and retain educators of color: Recruit and retain educators of color so that every child sees a racial role model leading their classroom – black, white, brown, and indigenous. Tim and Peggy will provide incentives, including student loan forgiveness, to educators of color who stay in the teaching profession for 5 or more years. They will offer similar incentives to all educators who stay for the same timeframe in high need schools, certifications and subject areas. Stopping the churn that happens in schools that educate many of our children of color will provide the much-needed stability that these students need to succeed.
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- Rebuild our schools: Allow the use of state bonding to rebuild crumbling schools that serve high-need students in low property wealth areas, particularly native children who live on reservations. In addition, we would continue to support additional funding for students at Bureau of Indian Education Schools, and tying this to inflation or adjustments to the formula.
 - Hire equity coaches: Support districts in using state integration aid to hire equity coaches (also called integration specialists) who can support educators in using effective strategies with diverse learners.
 - Support diverse schools: Lead the work towards greater diversity in our schools – racial and socioeconomic alike – by engaging all stakeholders in comprehensive planning for school integration and supporting the growth of cross-geographic, voluntary magnet schools.
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