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Minnesota

Department

of
Education

Supporting and Serving:

- Students and Families
- Citizens and Taxpayers
- Teachers and Principals
- Administrators and Superintendents



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Minnesota
Department
of **Education**

"If we encourage schools to raise the bar of expectations and try something new, we will see more energy and better results."

– Governor Tim Pawlenty



The Agency Mission

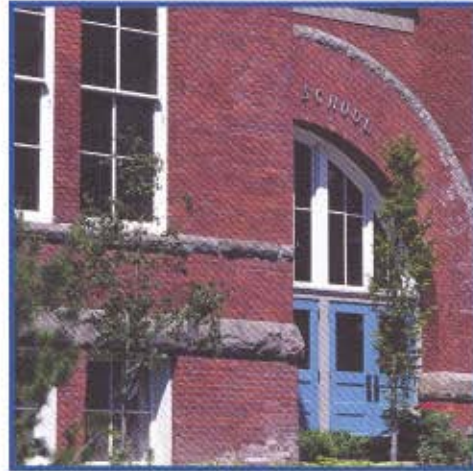
Our mission is to improve educational achievement by establishing clear standards, measuring performance, assisting educators and increasing opportunities for lifelong learning.

The Minnesota Department of Education strives to be an innovative education agency, assisting schools, families and other education providers with exemplary services that result in high academic achievement for all students, pre-kindergarten to grade 12, and adult learners.

Every learner will have access to a high-quality education that promotes his or her development to full potential through an outstanding Minnesota educational system that is a world leader.

As a department, we are focusing on four primary goals:

1. Improve Achievement for all students
2. Enhance Teacher Quality
3. Expand Education Options for Students and Families
4. Implement Education Finance Reform and Enhance Accountability



Our Customers

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) serves a wide range of customers:

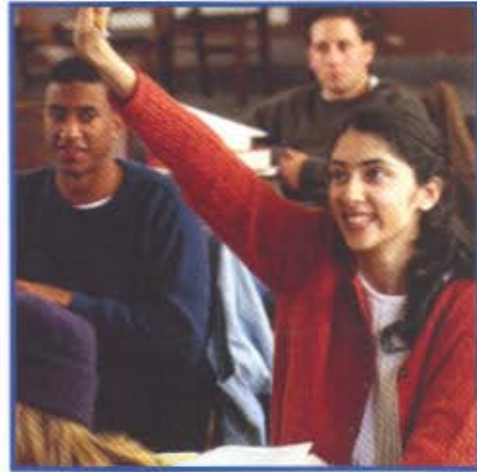
- 850,000 pre-K – grade 12 students and their parents/guardians
- 339 school districts
- 52,781 licensed teachers
- 1,835 public schools, including 93 charter schools
 - 965 elementary
 - 170 middle
 - 483 secondary (junior and senior high)
 - 12 K-12 schools
 - 205 area learning centers
- 82,000 adult learners participating in adult basic education, including GED, adult diploma, ESL and citizenship programs
- 118,214 young children and their families participating in early learning programs including Head Start and ECFE

Annual K-12 School Funding in Minnesota:

State: \$6.1 billion or 71 percent of total funding

Local: \$2.0 billion or 23 percent of total funding

Federal: \$0.5 billion or 6 percent of total funding



Agency Operations

The department provides services through four policy divisions:

Office of Academic Excellence

The Office of Academic Excellence is responsible for academic standards development; professional development for educators; Indian education programs; school choice; charter schools; and supplemental service programs; library development services; school technology; the Faribault Library for the Blind; and school administrator and teacher licensing.

Office of Student Support Services

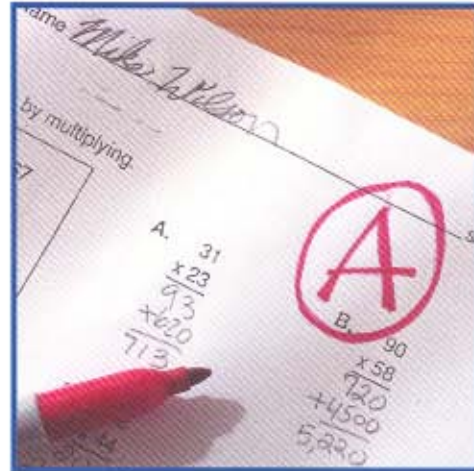
The Office of Student Support Services is responsible for adult basic education; adult and career education; special education programs; early learning; and food and nutrition services.

Office of Finance and Administrative Services

The Office of Finance and Administrative Services is responsible for distributing aid payments to school districts and calculating school district property tax levy limitations; providing information technology support to the agency; providing policy, management, fiscal and human resource direction and leadership; and special education compliance and accountability.

Office of Accountability and Improvement

The Office of Accountability and Improvement is responsible for statewide testing; *No Child Left Behind*; and research and evaluation.



Improve Achievement

Improve Achievement for all Students

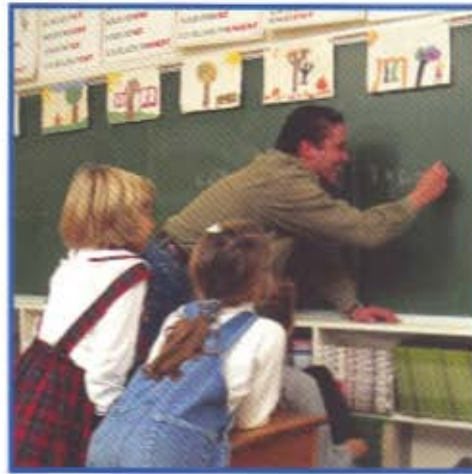
Raise overall student achievement levels and close the achievement gap that currently exists among students of color and students with disabilities by implementing standards, research-based best practices, measuring progress with statewide assessments and promoting lifelong learning.

- Implement new, rigorous, grade-specific academic standards in reading, math, science and history/social studies.
- Assist schools in aligning local curriculum, instruction and classroom-based assessments to state standards.
- Implement annual statewide testing in grades 3 through 8 and high school for reading and math, and assessments in elementary, middle and high schools for science.
- Provide intensive assistance to schools identified as being in need of improvement including technical help and coaching, parent choice information and supplemental education services.

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Teacher Quality

Enhance Teacher Quality

Improve teacher quality in Minnesota by implementing initiatives to increase the number of highly trained teachers, enhance teacher preparation, improve teacher retention in high-need schools and provide ongoing professional development.

- Establish services to help recruit and place teachers and establish pilot sites in high-need schools to mentor teachers in their first five years.
- Provide information to higher education institutions about graduation standards, teacher education program characteristics and teacher competencies aligned to the new academic standards.
- Use the options available in the *No Child Left Behind Act* to provide fair, equitable and flexible mechanisms for schools with unique circumstances to meet requirements for highly qualified existing teachers.
- Create alternative pathways to teacher licensure for highly qualified mid-career professionals from other occupations who have an interest in teaching.
- Provide ongoing professional development to K-12 teachers to support quality instruction and increased student achievement.



Options for Students

Expand Education Options for Students and Families

Ensure that programs offering education options to families support quality schools and continuous improvement in student achievement. Create new choices to better meet the educational needs of all children, especially students from low-income families, students of color, students with disabilities and students who are English language learners.

- Develop initiatives to improve and expand education choice options available to families.
- Partner with other community organizations to help parents understand and access education choices for their children.
- Showcase innovations being used by choice schools and programs to better meet students' diverse learning needs.



Finance Reform

Implement Education Finance Reform and Enhance Accountability

Encourage improved financial management of school districts and charter schools, make the system more understandable and accountable to the public, implement performance-based pay linked to student achievement gains and enhance accountability for student learning through a comprehensive data system.

- Implement an improved finance system that is clearer, user-friendly and communicates decisions and accountability measures to citizens.
- Ensure that education funding is distributed equitably to students across the state with appropriate adjustments for legitimate cost differences, including funding for “at risk” students.
- Implement the Minnesota Teacher Advancement Program (MNTAP), a research model that combines performance-based pay, career ladders for teachers, embedded staff development and comprehensive evaluations.
- Implement school report cards that will assist parents and citizens with understanding each school’s measure of student learning, opportunities and use of fiscal resources.
- Research the need for a comprehensive statewide data system for all schools to be able to implement local data-driven decisions that are based on student learning needs.



Agency Progress

Key Agency Accomplishments

- We have started a statewide dialogue on how to close the achievement gap between white children and children of color.
- New academic standards have been developed using an inclusive and open public process.
- New parent-friendly school report cards have been developed and posted to the agency Web site.
- Critical elements of the No Child Left Behind Act have been put into place, ensuring that the \$689 million that we receive each year from the federal government for education is well protected.
- Minnesota can now boast of negotiating one of the fairest Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) formulas in the country.
- Our preschool standards in reading and math have been revised, earning a ranking of "A" from the national Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA).

Learn more by visiting our Web site at:

www.education.state.mn.us

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