

# Minnesota State Senate

Education Finance Committee  
Wednesday, February 5, 2025  
8:30 AM, 1150 Minnesota Senate Bldg.

## Minutes

**Present:** Senator Mary K. Kunesh - **Chair**, Senator Heather Gustafson - **Vice Chair**, Senator Jason Rarick - **Ranking Minority Member**, Senator Doron Clark, Senator Steve A. Cwodzinski, Senator Robert D. Farnsworth, Senator Karin Housley, Senator Michael E. Kreun, Senator Andrew R. Lang, Senator Eric Lucero, Senator Erin K. Maye Quade, Senator Clare Oumou Verbeten

**Absent:** Senator Bonnie S. Westlin

Senator Robert Farnsworth called the meeting to order at 8:36 am

### Call to Order

#### Presentations of Minnesota’s Independent and Faith-Based Schools Testifiers:

- a. Meg Forgette, Associate Director of Educational Quality & Excellence, Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
- b. Tricia Menzhuber, Principal. John Paul II Catholic School
- c. Andrew Hilliker, President, Stella Maris Academy (Remote)
- d. Russ Gregg, Founder and Head of School, Hope Academy
- e. Quentin Moore, Vice President of Advancement, Ascension Catholic Academy
- f. Joshua Blonski, Dean of Students, St. Agnes School
- g. Dan Beckering, Principal, Southwest Christian High School
- h. Tim Benz, President, MINNDEPENDENT
- i. Dean Jennissen, Principal/Teacher, Immanuel Lutheran Church & School (Remote after 9:30am)
- j. Anne Neilitz, Principal, Prince of Peace Lutheran School (Remote after 10:00am)
- k. Anthony Pisapia, Head of School, Marshall School (Duluth)
- l. Dr. Lori-Anne Brogdon, Vice-President of Learning/Head of School, Groves Learning Organization
- m. Jackie Smith, Principal, Heilicher
- n. Dr. Karen Balmer, Lower School Principal, Minnehaha Academy
- o. Dr. Bill Hudson, Head of School, Mounds Park Academy
- p. Melissa A. Marti, Principal, Queen of Peace Catholic School (Cloquet) (Remote).

The following individuals testified on Presentations of Minnesota’s Independent and Faith-Based Schools:

Meg Forgette, Associate Director of Educational Quality & Excellence, Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis  
Tricia Menzhuber, Principal. John Paul II Catholic School  
Andrew Hilliker, President, Stella Maris Academy (Remote)  
Russ Gregg, Founder and Head of School, Hope Academy  
Quentin Moore, Vice President of Advancement, Ascension Catholic Academy  
Joshua Blonski, Dean of Students, St. Agnes School  
Dan Beckering, Principal, Southwest Christian High School  
Tim Benz, President, MINNDEPENDENT  
Dean Jennissen, Principal/Teacher, Immanuel Lutheran Church & School (Remote after 9:30am)  
Anne Neilitz, Principal, Prince of Peace Lutheran School (Remote after 10:00am)

Anthony Pisapia, Head of School, Marshall School (Duluth)  
Dr. Lori-Anne Brogdon, Vice-President of Learning/Head of School,  
Groves Learning Organization m. Jackie Smith, Principal, Heilicher  
Dr. Karen Balmer, Lower School Principal, Minnehaha Academy  
Dr. Bill Hudson, Head of School, Mounds Park Academy  
Melissa A. Marti, Principal, Queen of Peace Catholic School (Cloquet) (Remote)

**Adjournment**

---

**The meeting was adjourned at 10:35**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Senator Jason Rarick**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Tessa Yeager, Legislative Assistant**