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Minnesota School Finance
A Guide for Legislators

Research Department
Minnesota House of Representatives

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This guidebook is a reference tool for the Minnesota school finance system, the method by which funds are provided to operate public elementary and secondary schools.

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Introduction

The Minnesota school finance system is the method by which funds are provided to operate public elementary and secondary schools. The bulk of state support for elementary and secondary education is distributed to school 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 purpose of this guide is to describe the various state programs that provide financial aid to Minnesota school districts. It includes finance data as well as some historical background. Historical, legal, and descriptive information in the following pages provide the context for understanding the school finance system.

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:

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 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 1970-71, 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 that became effective in the 1984-85 school year. The new program replaced several components of the previous foundation aid formula (i.e., discretionary, replacement, grandfather, and low-fund balance aids and levies) 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 a modified funding formula called 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 and the extent of need for each school district.

For fiscal year 2015, each school district's general education revenue is the sum of the following components:

- basic revenue
- extended time revenue
- declining pupil revenue
- local optional revenue
- compensatory revenue
- English learner (EL) revenue
- gifted and talented revenue
- operating sparsity revenue
- small schools revenue
- transportation sparsity revenue
- operating capital revenue
- equity revenue
- transition revenue

For fiscal years 2015 and later, Q-comp is "rolled out" of general education revenue and becomes a stand-alone categorical revenue program; a new component of revenue, called declining pupil aid, is added to general education revenue; and a portion of each district's referendum revenue may be transferred to a new component of revenue called local optional revenue.

General education revenue is the primary source of general operating funds for Minnesota's public schools; consisting of 332 school districts and 158 charter schools for the 2014-15 school year. Operating expenses of the district include employee salaries, fringe benefits, and supply costs. School districts also receive state appropriations through categorical aids, which are funds designated for specific purposes (such as special education and school integration/desegregation).

School Finance Litigation

During the 1970s and early 1980s, 29 states, in addition to Minnesota, adopted legislation to reform the school finance system by enacting or improving equalization formulas, which provide more state aid to districts with low property wealth. In many states, including Minnesota, court challenges to the constitutionality of traditional school finance systems added to the pressure for reform.

There have been three rounds of legal challenges to state aid formulas based on equalization principles, due largely to their effect of reducing state aid to districts with less 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." This standard was found to be too political and unclear for a court to apply.

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 Dusartz 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.

The third 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 state supreme court (in 1977) found that the school finance system violated the state equal protection clause under the principles of fiscal neutrality. 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 (e.g., New Jersey), must ensure that districts have the minimum resources necessary to supply a basic education (e.g., Washington, Ohio, West Virginia), must respond to differences among districts’ tax burdens, costs, and needs (e.g., New York, Wisconsin), or cannot predominantly base the availability of funds on voters’ willingness to approve taxes (e.g., Ohio, Pennsylvania). Challenges to school finance systems are pending in many states.

In 1993, the Minnesota Supreme Court reversed an earlier trial court decision and held the state’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 referendum and debt service levies that are based upon local property taxes and the training, experience, and supplemental revenues that were, at that time, fully equalized state aid components of the general education revenue program.

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’.”

The court ruled that education in Minnesota is a fundamental right and that the system of education finance in place then 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.¹

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

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. In 2012-13, a full-time equivalent teaching staff of 52,173 served approximately 844,000 students. In 2012-13, there were also an estimated 70,715 pupils enrolled in nonpublic schools and 17,129 students attending homeschools.

Minnesota’s public school enrollment has recently stabilized after a decade of moderate growth. Table 3 and Table 4 display the state total enrollment history and projections for the period from 1959-60 to 2016-17.

The state and federal governments share in financial partnership with local districts and charter schools to fund elementary and secondary education. For the 2012-13 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 2012-13 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, 2012-2013
 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	39,751	9,441	2,403	913	179	43	802,534
Limited English Proficiency Pupils K-12 All	11,754	794	176	7	0	0	58,705
Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals	29,126	2,836	900	333	82	20	300,646
2011 Adjusted Net Tax Capacity Per Pupil Unit	\$39,140	\$16,492	\$9,769	\$6,363	\$2,704	\$0**	\$5,709,943,935
Total PK-12 Operating Expenditures per Pupil	\$21,090	\$14,298	\$10,171	\$9,759	\$7,992	\$7,294	\$8,125,791,735
* Two districts, Franconia and Prinsburg, are nonoperating districts, and don’t directly serve regular education students and are excluded from this data.							
** The Pine Point school district exists entirely within the Park Rapids school district and has no tax base.							
Sources: Minnesota, Department of Education Profiles 2012-2013; Research Department, Minnesota House of Representatives							

Table 2:
Characteristics of Minnesota Charter Schools, 2012-2013

	Maximum	95th Percentile	Mean	Median	5th Percentile	Minimum	State Total
Average Daily Membership Served and Tuition Served	2,854	788	281	186	48	7	41,571
Limited English Proficiency Pupils K-12 All	611	302	57	1	0	0	8,363
Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals	1,670	537	160	76	14	0	23,733
Total PK-12 Operating Expenditures per Pupil	\$59,462	\$18,917	\$11,256	\$9,885	\$6,774	\$5,140	\$394,801,418

Sources: Minnesota, Department of Education Profiles Data 2012-13; Research Department, Minnesota House of Representatives

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Table 3:
School Enrollment 1959-60 to 2016-17 by School Type

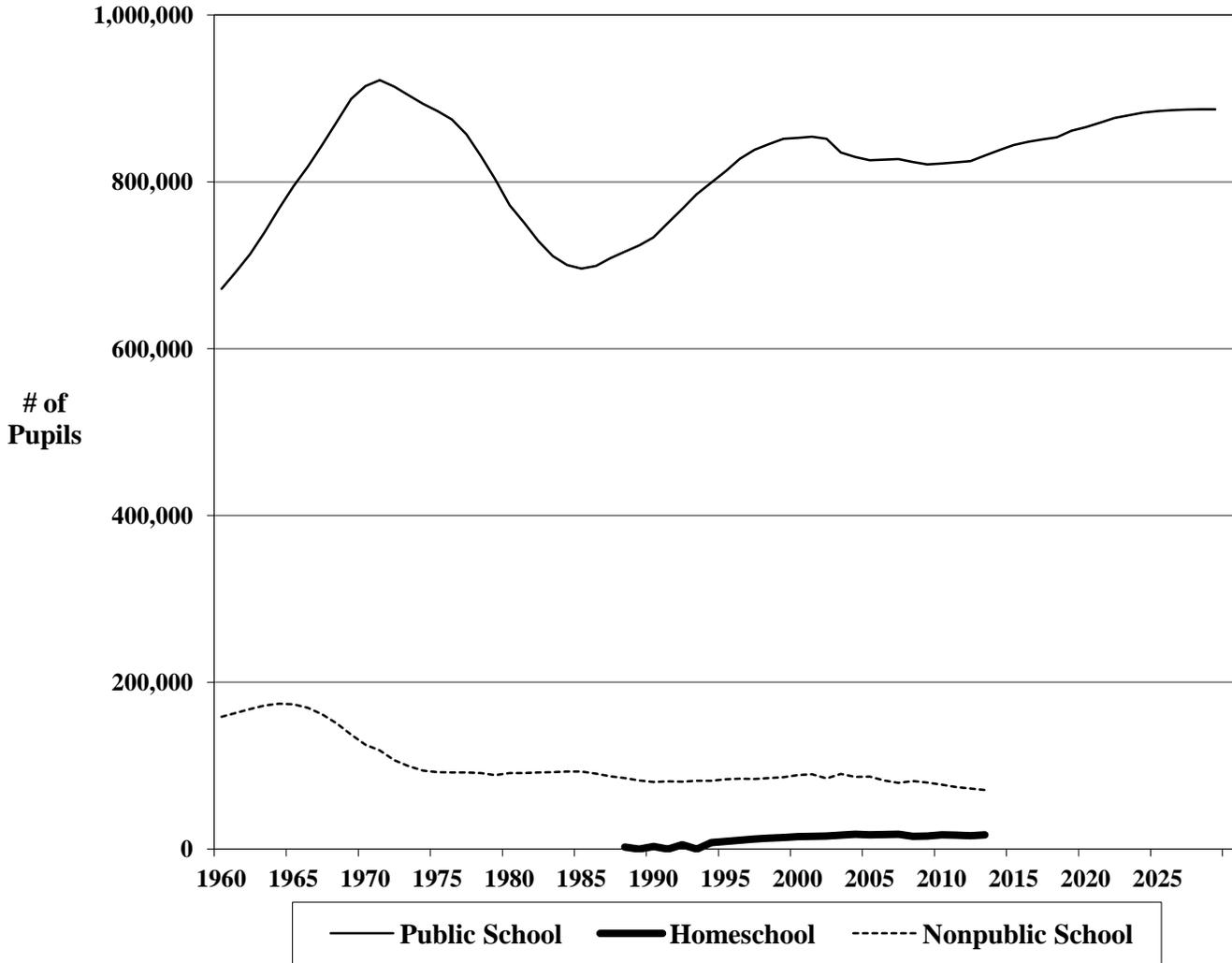
School Year	All Public School (including Charter Students)		Charter School		Traditional Nonpublic		Homeschool	
	Adjusted Avg. Daily Membership	Percent Change From Prior Year	Average Daily Membership	Percent Change from Prior Year	Enrollment	Percent Change From Prior Year	Enrollment	Percent Change from Prior Year
1960	1	671,682	N/A		158,560	N/A		
1961	1	692,136	3.0%		163,253	3.0%		
1962	1	713,461	3.1		167,909	2.9		
1963	1	739,735	3.7		171,968	2.4		
1964	1	768,089	3.8		174,265	1.3		
1965	1	794,302	3.4		173,534	-0.4		
1966	1	818,255	3.0		169,207	-2.5		
1967	1	844,554	3.2		161,523	-4.5		
1968	1	871,510	3.2		150,596	-6.8		
1969	1	899,597	3.2		137,319	-8.8		
1970	1	914,857	1.7		124,934	-9.0		
1971	1	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	-2.1		91,793	-0.1		
1978		831,250	-3.0		90,919	-1.0		
1979		803,311	-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		710,971	-2.5		92,302	0.5		

School Year	All Public School (including Charter Students)		Charter School		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
1984	700,167	-1.5			92,760	0.5		
1985	695,776	-0.6			92,822	0.1		
1986	699,191	0.5			90,530	-2.5		
1987	708,446	1.3			87,208	-3.7		
1988	716,125	1.1			85,043	-2.5	2,322	
1989	723,599	1.0			82,165	-3.4	N/A	
1990	733,338	1.3			80,293	-2.3	2,900	24.8%
1991	750,864	2.4			81,262	1.2	N/A	
1992	767,787	2.3			80,743	-0.6	5,086	75.4
1993	785,072	2.3	47	N/A	81,631	1.1	N/A	
1994	799,285	1.8	615	1,208.5%	81,697	0.1	7,671	50.8
1995	812,582	1.7	1,046	70.1	83,435	2.1	9,135	19.1
1996	827,588	1.8	1,514	44.7	84,278	1.0	10,519	15.2
1997	838,336	1.3	2,138	41.2	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	7,553	51.3	88,502	2.9	14,906	9.3
2001	854,042	0.2	9,067	20.0	89,680	1.3	15,249	2.3
2002	851,536	-0.3	10,171	12.2	4 84,538	-5.7	15,610	2.4
2003	846,947	-0.5	11,998	18.0	89,944	6.4	16,519	5.8
2004	2 829,832	-0.2	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	4 79,200	-3.7	5 17,621	1.7
2008	823,755	-0.4	27,753	17.7	81,598	3.0	5 15,256	-13.4
2009	821,021	-0.3	31,687	14.2	79,793	-2.2	5 15,653	2.6
2010	821,923	0.1	34,463	8.8	77,121	-3.3	5 17,036	8.8
2011	823,347	0.2	36,087	4.7	74,384	-3.5	5 16,523	-3.0
2012	824,922	0.2	38,044	5.4	72,458	-2.6	5 16,081	-2.7
2013	831,506	0.8	40,834	7.3	70,715	-2.4	6 17,129	6.5
2014	3 839,004	0.9	3 43,774	7.2	68,521	-3.1	7 17,451	1.9
2015	3 845,945	0.8	3 48,274	10.3				
2016	3 850,138	0.5	3 52,029	7.8				
2017	3 854,126	0.5	3 56,000	7.6				

Notes: 1. Fall enrollment count
2. 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.
3. Estimated
4. Department of Education officials suspect significant under-reporting of nonpublic pupil count for 2001-02 and 2006-07 school years by nonpublic schools
5. Minnesota Department of Education Homeschool Enrollment by Compulsory Attendance Count. All ages compliant and noncompliant; March 1, 2012
6. Minnesota Department of Education Homeschool Enrollment by Compulsory Attendance Count. All ages compliant and noncompliant; March 1, 2013
7. Minnesota Department of Education Homeschool Enrollment by Compulsory Attendance Count. All ages compliant and noncompliant; March 1, 2014

Source: Pupil Unit Estimates, Minnesota Department of Education

Table 4:
Minnesota School Enrollment
1960 to 2013 Actual; 2014 to 2029 Estimated



School Finance Terminology

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 years 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 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. Marginal costs pupils are removed from this count.

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 2015 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. The ADM is a pupil count that reflects actual student attendance over the school year.

Categorical Aid: Funds paid by the state to school districts and designated for specific purposes, such as transportation, special education for disabled children, and vocational 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: The maximum amount of adjusted net tax capacity per pupil unit a district may have without going “off the formula”—that is, becoming disqualified from receiving that specific education aid. A district receives no education aid for that formula when the amount raised by the tax rate times its adjusted tax capacity exceeds its revenue (i.e., number of pupil units times the formula allowance). The equalizing factor is computed by dividing the formula allowance by the tax rate. Many school funding program formulas have a statutorily fixed equalizing factor.

Table 5:
Equalizing Factor

Year Certified	Year Paid	School Year	Equalizing Factor
2000	2001	2001-02	\$12,242
1999	2000	2000-01	10,970
1998	1999	1999-2000	9,650
1997	1998	1998-99	9,704
1996	1997	1997-98	9,372
1995	1996	1996-97	8,591
1994	1995	1995-96	9,211
1993	1994	1994-95	9,025
1992	1993	1993-94	9,935
1991	1992	1992-93	11,051
1990	1991	1991-92	11,553
1989	1990	1990-91	11,228

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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 2015 runs from July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2015. A fiscal year is interchangeable with a school year for school finance purposes. For example, fiscal year 2015 is equivalent to the 2014-15 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 2015 is \$5,831.

Table 6:
General Education Formula Increases 1989 to 2015 (\$ 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 Prev Year
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%
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

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. Replaces foundation aid.

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.

Table 7:
General Education Levy

Year Certified	Year Paid	Adjusted Net Tax Capacity Rate	Dollars Raised Statewide
2014	2015	0.329%	\$20,000,000
2013*	2014	0.35	20,000,000
2000	2001	32.38	1,330,000,000
1999	2000	35.78	1,330,000,000
1998	1999	36.58	1,285,500,000
1997	1998	36.9	1,292,000,000
1996	1997	37.4	1,359,000,000
1995	1996	40.8	1,359,000,000
1994	1995	34.2	1,055,000,000
1993	1994	34.9	1,044,000,000
1992	1993	30.7	969,800,000
1991	1992	27.9	916,000,000
1990	1991	26.4	840,000,000
1989	1990	26.3	792,000,000
1988	1989	29.3**	1,100,580,000

* Note: There was no general education levy for taxes payable in 2002 through taxes payable in 2013.
 ** Adjusted gross tax capacity

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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 equals zero for fiscal years 2003 (taxes payable in 2002) through 2014. The general education tax rate (student achievement tax rate) is 0.35 percent for fiscal years 2015.

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 sparsity revenue; operating capital; equity revenue; small schools revenue; 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 is collected in the calendar year beginning the following January. (See Table 80 on page 123 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 2014 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.

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.

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: Statutory classification percentages that are applied to market values. Tax capacity percentages replace classification ratios.

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 by the former State Board of Education under legislative mandate to govern the methods by which school districts record financial transactions and inform the Department of Education about their finances.

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

Table 8:
Education Acronyms

Acronym	Name	Meaning/Use
ADM	Average Daily Membership	Count of resident students attending public school
AMCPU	Adjusted Marginal Cost Pupil Units	Weighted count of students actually served by a public school used to compute most education revenue amounts prior to fiscal year 2015
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 used to compute most education revenue amounts beginning in fiscal year 2015
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
EHC	Education Homestead Credit	Property tax credit that reduces the general education levy for homeowners
HACA	Homestead and Agricultural Credit Aid	Property tax aid that reduces school levies
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
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
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 public employees
PSEO	Postsecondary Enrollment Options Program	Choice program allowing 11th and 12th grade students to attend postsecondary institutions
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

Property Tax System Terminology

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: State law excludes a portion of each home's market value for property tax purposes. The property's estimated market value less the homestead market value exclusion is its taxable market value.

Referendum Market Value: Referendum market value is the taxable market value of all taxable property in the school district excluding seasonal recreational 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.

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).

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, and the county treasurer then forwards the remitted amounts to the appropriate taxing jurisdiction (city, county, or school district).

Counting Students

Minnesota funds the majority of its K-12 programs on a rather involved count of the number of students attending each school. For fiscal years 2015 and later, for most funding programs, the pupil count, known as adjusted pupil units, is used to determine school revenue amounts.

Determining Pupil Units

There are three steps involved in calculating the student count, called adjusted pupil units, that 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 9. 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 years 2015 and later, for purposes of calculating a school district’s operating referendum revenue, 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 numerators are 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 9:
Enrollment Weights by Grade

Fiscal Year(s)	Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Disabled Weight*	Half-day Kindergarten Weight	Full-day Kindergarten Weight	Grades 1-3 Weight	Grades 4-6 Weight	Secondary Weight
2015 and later	Hours served	.550	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.20
2008 to 14	Hours served	.612	.612	1.115	1.06	1.30
2000 to 07	Hours served	.557	.557	1.115	1.06	1.30
1995 to 99	Hours served	.530	.530	1.06	1.06	1.30
1994	Hours served	.515	.515	1.03	1.03	1.30
1992 to 93	Hours served	.500	.500	1.00	1.00	1.30
1990 to 91	Hours served	.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.

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For fiscal years 1994 to 2014, the additional kindergarten (above .50) and elementary pupil weights (above 1.0) provide reserved revenue that must be set aside to reduce elementary class sizes. For fiscal years 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 there are equalized levies for operating capital, equity revenue, transition revenue, and beginning in fiscal year 2015, a general education levy, called the student achievement levy, is reinstated.

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 10. The table shows each general education revenue component name, revenue amount, and the number of districts eligible for the revenue for that year.

Table 10:
**General Education Revenue Components Excluding Referendum Revenue
Estimated for Fiscal Year 2015**

	General Education Revenue Component	Amount of Revenue	Number of Eligible Districts	Est. Number of Eligible Charters
1	Basic Formula Allowance	\$5,339,444,000	331/332	149/149*
2	Extended Time Revenue	76,556,000	135/332	0/149
3	Gifted and Talented	11,904,000	331/332	149/149
4	Small Schools Revenue	16,054,000	162/332	0/149
5	Declining Enrollment Revenue	4,835,000	143/332	26/149
6	Local Optional Revenue	244,550,000	95/332	0/149
7	Basic Skills (including EL) Revenue	579,969,000	330/332	149/149
8	Sparsity Revenue (elementary and secondary)	24,845,000	97/332	149/149
9	Operating Capital Revenue	206,432,000	331/332	149/149
10	Transportation Sparsity Revenue	63,001,000	303/332	148/149
11	Equity Revenue	106,408,000	332/332	149/149
12	Transition Revenue	30,995,000	196/332	39/149
13	Pension Adjustment Revenue	8,498,000	62/332	149/149
14	Options Adjustments	4,379,000	27/332	93/149
Total General Education Revenue		\$6,717,867,000		

* As of June 30, 2014, 149 charter schools and 332 school districts were reporting pupils for the 2013-2014 school year. As of September 15, 2014, because of charter school openings, there will be 158 charter schools serving pupils.

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 pupil units for the school year. Beginning in fiscal year 2015, adjusted pupil units at the new pupil weights replace adjusted marginal cost pupil units as the count of pupils used for most funding programs.² The basic formula allowance is \$5,831 per adjusted pupil unit (APU) for fiscal years 2015 and later.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subd. 2)

Table 11:
Basic Education Formula Allowances

School Year	Formula Allowance
2014-15	\$5,831*
2013-14	5,302
2012-13	5,224
2011-12	5,174
2010-11	5,124
2009-10	5,124

* Higher level includes 2 percent increase over fiscal year 2014 and remainder of increase reflects change in pupil weighting.

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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 point in time, 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.

² Page 15 provides additional information on pupil unit weights and calculations.

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.

Extended Time Revenue = \$5,017 x the district's extended time adjusted pupil units

3. Gifted and Talented Revenue

Beginning in fiscal year 2006, each school district received \$4 per pupil unit for gifted and talented programming. This amount was increased to \$9 per pupil unit for fiscal year 2007 and further increased to \$12 per pupil unit for fiscal years 2008 through 2014. For fiscal year 2015 and later, the formula allowance is increased to \$13 per pupil unit to reflect the new, lower adjusted pupil count. 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.

Gifted and Talented Revenue = \$13 x Adjusted Pupil Units

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.

5. Declining Enrollment Revenue

For fiscal years 2015 and later, 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.

6. Local Optional Revenue

The 2013 Legislature created a new component of general education revenue called location equity revenue. For fiscal year 2016, local optional revenue equals \$424 per pupil for every school district. For fiscal year 2015 only, local optional revenue, formerly named location equity revenue, is equal to \$424 per pupil for any district partially or wholly located in the seven-county metropolitan area and \$212 per pupil for any district in the rest of the state that serves at least 2,000 pupils. Local optional revenue is offset from each district's approved amount of referendum revenue, so for most qualifying districts, local optional revenue provides no direct additional revenue. Instead, local optional revenue provides space under the referendum allowance cap and provides enhanced equalization revenue for some districts.

A district's per pupil referendum authority is reduced by the district's local optional revenue.

Local optional revenue is equalized at the same rate as referendum revenue in the second tier, using an equalizing factor of \$510,000 per pupil.

(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 the revenue must be distributed to, and spent on, 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 direct instructional services under the assurance of mastery program
- ▶ 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)
- ▶ providing staff development consistent with each site's site plan
- ▶ purchasing instructional materials and technology
- ▶ implementing programs to reduce truancy, encourage graduation, and provide a safe and secure learning environment
- ▶ providing bilingual, bicultural, and EL programs
- ▶ providing all-day kindergarten
- ▶ providing parental involvement 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 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.

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

$$\text{Compensatory Revenue} = (\text{Basic Formula Allowance} - \$415) \times .6 \times \text{Compensatory Pupil Units}$$

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. While the concentration principle has stayed the same over time, the actual calculation of compensatory pupil units has changed several times in recent years.

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 2015, these percentages limited yearly income for a family of four to not more than \$31,005 and \$44,123). The compensatory pupil count is conducted during the fall at each school site.

Compensatory pupil units are calculated for each site as follows:

- (1) Multiply 100 by 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

(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 12:
**Compensatory Revenue Characteristics for
Selected School Buildings for the 2014-15 School Year**

Dist. No.	District Name	Building Name	Fall 2013 School Enrollment	Pupils Eligible for Free or Reduced Meals	% of Enrollees Eligible	Compensatory Revenue	Compensatory Revenue/ Enrollee
1	Minneapolis	Bethune	359	359	100%	\$1,060,300	\$2,953
1	Minneapolis	Barton	743	218	29	221,195	298
38	Red Lake	Elementary	529	424	80	1,248,549	2,360
264	Herman	Elementary	54	17	31	15,625	289
273	Edina	South View	1,305	129	10	39,587	30
282	St. Anthony	Sr. High	663	139	21	81,969	124
625	St. Paul	Adams	705	383	54	594,247	843
625	St. Paul	Vento	516	497	96	1,467,648	2,844
709	Duluth	East	1,549	335	22	211,111	136
709	Duluth	Myers-Wilkins	424	360	85	1,045,325	2,465
833	S. Wash.	Park Sr.	1,824	433	24	297,224	163
State Average/Total			850,859	327,827	39%	\$523,548,730	\$615

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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. Beginning in fiscal year 2015, a student is limited to a maximum of six years of funding for EL revenue.

There are two parts to the EL portion of basic skills revenue: the first part or basic formula is a set amount per marginal cost EL pupils; 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.

$$\text{Basic EL Revenue} = \$700 \times \text{district's EL Pupil Units}$$

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

- (1) 1; or
- (2) $(\text{EL pupils}/\text{ADM})/.115$

$$\text{EL Concentration Revenue} = \$250 \times \text{the district's EL concentration pupils}$$

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

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:

$$\text{Isolation Index} = \frac{\sqrt{.55 \times \text{attendance area}}}{\text{miles to next nearest high school}}$$

$$\text{Secondary Sparsity Revenue} = \frac{\text{Sparsity Formula Allowance}^3}{\text{Adjusted Pupil Units}} \times \frac{(400 - \text{SADM})}{(400 + \text{SADM})} \times \frac{(\text{Isolation index} - 23)}{10}$$

The isolation index is a numerical representation of the sum of the geographic area of the district and the miles to the next nearest high school. The isolation index is limited to a maximum of 1.5.

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

Table 14 (page 29) displays characteristics of the sparsest and densest districts in the state.

Sparsity Guarantee. Beginning in fiscal year 2010, 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, and beginning in fiscal year 2011, 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)

³ For fiscal years prior to 2015, the sparsity allowance is the basic formula less \$415. For fiscal years 2015 and later, to adjust for the new pupil weights, the subtraction from the basic formula allowance is \$530.

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. Operating capital revenue must be reserved and used for equipment and facility 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 and facilities needs.

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

Revenue Computation. Operating capital revenue is computed by adding a fixed dollar amount for all districts to a variable amount per pupil unit based on the age of the district's school facilities. 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:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Operating Capital Revenue} &= [\$79 + (\text{MCI} \times \$109)] \times \text{Adjusted Pupil Units} \\ \text{Operating Capital Levy} &= \text{Operating Capital Revenue} \times \text{the lesser of:} \\ &\quad (1) \text{ one; or} \\ &\quad (2) (\text{ANTC}/\text{Adjusted Pupil Units})/\$10,194 \\ \text{Operating Capital Aid} &= \text{Operating Capital Revenue} - \text{Operating Capital Levy} \end{aligned}$$

Operating capital revenue provides \$109 per adjusted pupil unit times the district's maintenance cost index. Districts with older buildings receive more revenue because of the maintenance cost index. Districts with newer buildings receive less revenue.

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

- ▶ acquiring land for school purposes
- ▶ acquiring or constructing buildings for school purposes, up to \$400,000
- ▶ 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

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.

Transportation sparsity revenue is computed as follows:

$$\text{Transportation Revenue} = \text{Transportation Sparsity Allowance} \times \text{Adjusted Pupil Units}$$

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

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

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

$$\text{Transportation Sparsity Allowance} = \frac{\text{(Basic Formula Allowance)} \times .1469}{\text{Allowance}} \times (\text{Sparsity Index}^{26/100}) \times (\text{Density Index}^{13/100}) - \frac{\text{(Basic Formula Allowance)} \times .0485}{\text{Allowance}}$$

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

11. Equity Revenue

Basic Equity Revenue. The equity revenue formula consists of four parts: basic equity revenue; a metro area adjustment; low referendum equity revenue; and a supplemental formula. The state is divided into a seven-county metro region and a greater Minnesota region, and equity revenue is calculated separately for districts within each region. The school districts located in cities of the first class (Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Duluth) are excluded from receiving basic equity revenue. A school district's equity revenue is based on the difference between its sum of basic formula allowance, local optional revenue, and referendum revenue per pupil unit and the amounts for the district at the 95th percentile.

The first step in calculating equity revenue is to determine the 5th and 95th percentiles of the portion of general education revenue equal to the sum of the basic formula allowance, local optional revenue, and referendum revenue for the metro and nonmetro regions. For fiscal year 2015 these percentiles are estimated as follows:

Table 13:
Equity Revenue Percentiles
Fiscal Year 2015

	5th	95th
Rural	\$6,131	\$7,875
Metro	\$6,131	\$7,667

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The second step in calculating equity revenue is to divide districts into two classes: those with a referendum and those without.

Equity revenue for a district with a referendum equals \$13 plus the product of \$75 and the district's equity index, all times the district's adjusted pupil units. Equity revenue for a district without a referendum equals \$13 times adjusted pupil units.

Metro Area Adjustment. For a district located in the metro area, this amount is multiplied by 1.25.

Low Referendum Revenue. A school district that has per pupil referendum revenue less than 10 percent of the statewide average amount of referendum revenue (\$811 for fiscal year 2015) 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 an additional \$46 per pupil unit.

Equity Aid and Levy. A district's 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

Some of the changes in the school district employer-paid retirement contributions have been linked to other changes in school funding. For years prior to fiscal year 2015, a school district's general education revenue is reduced by two decreases in employer contribution rates and increased by two increases in the employer contribution rate. The calculation for the reduction is as follows:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{General Education} \\ \text{Retirement Reduction} \end{array} = \begin{array}{r} \text{1984 PERA} \\ \text{Adjustment} \end{array} + \begin{array}{r} \text{FY 1997 TRA} \\ \text{Adjustment} \end{array} - \begin{array}{r} \text{FY 1999 PERA} \\ \text{Adjustment} \end{array} - \begin{array}{r} \text{FY 2007 TRA} \\ \text{Adjustment} \end{array}$$

- (1) The 1984 PERA (Public Employees Retirement Association) adjustment is equal to the amount of the 1984 PERA rate reduction times the school district's 1984 PERA payroll.
- (2) The fiscal year 1997 TRA (Teachers Retirement Association) reduction equals 2.34 percent times the district's 1997 TRA payroll. (Prior to 1997, the reduction was .84 percent of TRA payroll. This reduction was added to the 2 percent reduction made in 1997, then reduced to the net amount of 2.34 percent after compensating for the PERA revenue increase under (3)).
- (3) The fiscal year 1999 PERA increase equals .70 percent times the district's 1999 PERA payroll.
- (4) The fiscal year 2007 increase equals .50 percent times each district's 2007 TRA payroll.

The reduction is a fixed total dollar amount (not a per pupil amount) and does not change each year unless the district's teacher payroll is significantly lower than in the previous fiscal year, in which case the Commissioner of Education recalculates a lower reduction based on the new payroll data.

For fiscal years 2015 and later, a district's pension adjustment revenue equals the difference between its per pupil pension adjustment for fiscal year 2014 and the statewide average adjustment for that year.

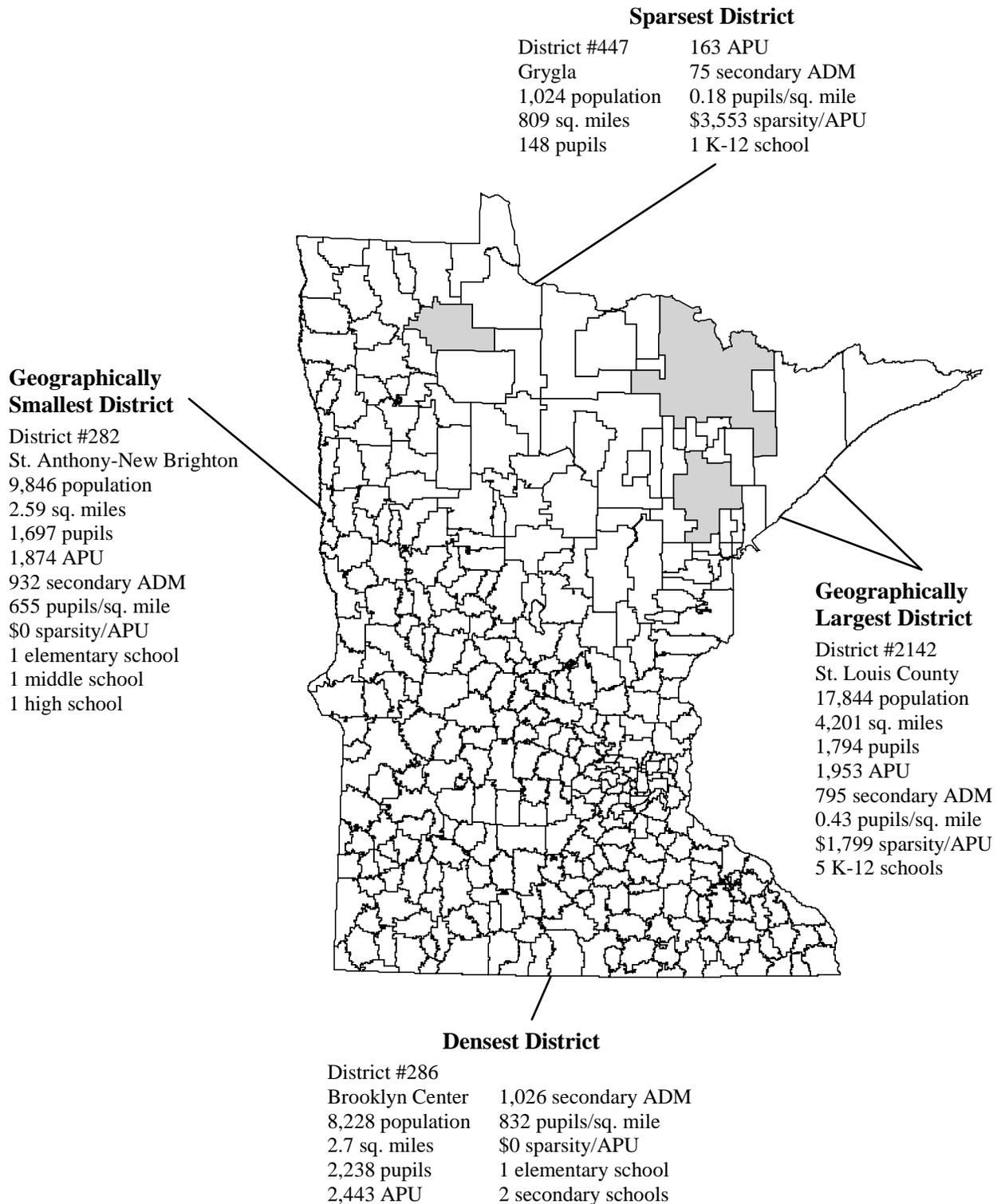
(Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subd. 38; 127A.50)

14. Options Adjustments

A school district's general education revenue is adjusted by the "options" adjustment, based on enrollment changes made under student movement programs. A district's general education revenue is reduced for referendum aid attributable to resident pupils who are open-enrolled, certain aid payments for resident pupils who attend the Minnesota Academies for the Deaf or Blind, and certain charter school transportation payments. A district's general education revenue is increased by an amount equal to the referendum aid attributable to nonresident students served by the school district, plus an aid amount equal to the transportation portion of each charter school pupil whom the district transports.

(Minn. Stat. § 127A.47)

Table 14:
Characteristics of Largest and Smallest School Districts
Fiscal Year 2015



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 (\$116.62 per pupil unit for fiscal year 2015) 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. Reserved revenue must be used to reduce elementary class sizes to a ratio of 17 students to one classroom teacher, beginning with kindergarten and first grade classes. All of the general education revenue generated by legislative increases in pupil weights must be reserved and spent for this purpose. Once the district achieves a class size of 17:1 in grades kindergarten and one, the district may use the remaining reserved revenue to reduce class sizes in each subsequent elementary grade.

Class size reduction revenue is a result of the additional pupil weighting working its way through all of the school finance formulas that are based on adjusted marginal cost pupil units. Class size reduction revenue, referred to in statute as learning and development revenue, is generated by increases (made primarily in the mid-1990s) in the kindergarten weights from 0.50 to 0.557; the elementary pupil weights for students in grades one to three from 1.00 to 1.115; and the elementary pupil weights for students in grades four to six from 1.00 to 1.06. Class size revenue equals the basic formula allowance times the increased pupil weights and must be reserved and spent only to reduce class sizes in elementary grades. In fiscal year 2014, school districts are expected to reserve approximately \$196 million for class size reduction.

For fiscal years 2015 and later, the reserved revenue for class size reduction will equal the sum of \$299 times the kindergarten adjusted average daily membership and \$459 times the adjusted average daily membership in grades 1 to 6.

Table 15:
Revenue Reserved for Class Size Reduction

Fiscal Year	Formula Allowance	Class Size ADM	Reserved Revenue
2015	\$299 per pupil for K; \$459 per pupil for 1-6	—	\$195,420,000
2014	5,302	37,042	196,399,000
2013	5,224	37,046	193,529,000
2012	5,174	36,319	187,916,000
2011	5,124	33,543	171,877,000
2010	5,124	35,304	180,900,000

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Operating capital revenue. For purposes of eligible operating capital expenditures (see page 24 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 general education revenue from both state aid payments and local property taxes (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 general education aid the district receives from the state and the higher the amount of revenue provided through the local district's property tax.

Student Achievement Levy. Beginning in fiscal year 2015, a general education levy, called the student achievement levy, is reinstated. The levy is set as the adjusted net tax capacity rate required to raise \$20 million.

General Education Levy and Aid. For the 2001-02 school year, the total local levy of all districts for the general education program was required to raise \$1,330 million. To raise this revenue statewide, a tax rate of 32.41 percent of adjusted net tax capacity (ANTC) was necessary. For fiscal years 2003 through 2014, basic general education revenue was provided entirely in state aid and there was not a general education levy.

Operating Capital Levy and Aid. Beginning in fiscal year 2005 (taxes payable in 2004), 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). Operating capital was equalized on net tax capacity using an equalizing factor of \$22,222 for fiscal years 2005 and 2006. This was a relatively high level of equalization, providing about 80 percent of the revenue through state aid. For fiscal years 2007 through 2012, the equalizing factor was \$10,700, lowering the aid share of operating capital revenue to approximately 40 percent of total revenue. For fiscal years 2013 and 2014, the equalizing factor is \$10,194. For fiscal years 2015 and later, the equalizing factor is \$14,500.

Equity Levy and Aid. A district's equity revenue is equalized on referendum market value using an equalizing factor of \$510,000 (the same equalizing factor used for calculating the second tier of referendum revenue). 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. For fiscal year 2015, about \$28 million in equity revenue is provided in state aid; the remaining \$79 million is raised through the levy.

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

Table 16:
General Education Program Aid Entitlement and Levy

	Fiscal Year			
	2012	2013	2014	2015
Basic General Education				
Aid	\$4,918,404,000	\$5,000,435,000	\$5,098,653,000	\$5,319,622,000
Levy	0	0	0	19,823,000
Operating Capital				
Aid	75,413,000	83,583,000	86,739,000	120,167,000
Levy	120,897,000	113,858,000	112,203,000	86,265,000
Equity				
Aid	17,456,000	20,329,000	21,562,000	27,597,000
Levy	75,022,000	74,052,000	72,157,000	78,773,000
Transition				
Aid	5,182,000	6,078,000	6,759,000	8,497,000
Levy	24,161,000	23,418,000	23,134,000	22,520,000

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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; 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 include:

- (1) changing the allowance from an amount per resident marginal cost 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.

Referendum Revenue Cap. A school district eligible for sparsity revenue is not subject to a cap on referendum revenue. For other districts, for years prior to fiscal year 2015, a district's maximum total referendum allowance is limited to 26 percent of the formula allowance adjusted for inflation (\$1,597 for fiscal year 2014). For those districts with authority from 1994 that were above the cap, their capped authority increased by 26 percent of the formula allowance or 17.7 percent less \$215 (instead of the \$415 subtraction that applies to other school districts whichever is greater). For fiscal years 2015 and later, the referendum revenue cap is \$1,845 annually adjusted for inflation.

Referendum Revenue Equalization. For fiscal year 2015 and later, each district's referendum revenue consists of three equalized tiers. The first tier of equalization aid is the amount up to \$300 per adjusted pupil. This amount carries an equalizing factor of \$880,000 per pupil. Referendum revenue for fiscal year 2015 is computed in three tiers as follows:

$$\text{Total Referendum Revenue} = \text{Adjusted Pupil Units} \times \text{Referendum Allowance}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Tier 1 Revenue} &= \text{the lesser of:} \\ &\quad (1) \$300 \text{ per adjusted pupil unit; or} \\ &\quad (2) \text{the district's Total Referendum Revenue} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Tier 1 Equalization Levy} &= \text{Tier 1 Revenue} \times \text{the lesser of:} \\ &\quad (1) 1; \text{ or} \\ &\quad (2) \frac{\text{district referendum market value per pupil unit}}{\$880,000} \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Tier 1 Equalization Aid} = \text{Tier 1 Revenue} - \text{Tier 1 Equalized Levy}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Tier 2 Revenue} &= \text{The lesser of:} \\ &\quad (1) \$460 \text{ per adjusted pupil unit; or} \\ &\quad (2) \text{the greater of:} \\ &\quad \quad (i) \text{zero; or} \\ &\quad \quad (ii) \text{the district's referendum revenue less } \$300 \text{ per adjusted pupil unit} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Tier 2 Equalization Levy} &= \text{Tier 2 revenue} \times \text{the lesser of:} \\ &\quad (1) 1; \text{ or} \\ &\quad (2) \frac{\text{district referendum market value per pupil unit}}{\$510,000} \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Tier 2 Equalization Aid} = \text{Tier 2 Revenue} - \text{Tier 2 Levy}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Tier 3 Revenue} &= (1) \text{the lesser of:} \\ &\quad (i) \text{the district's referendum revenue; or} \\ &\quad (ii) \text{an amount equal to 25 percent of the basic formula allowance} \\ &\quad \quad \text{times the district's resident pupil units less,} \\ &\quad (2) \text{the sum of its tier 1 and tier 2 referendum revenue} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Tier 3 Equalization Levy} &= \text{Tier 3 Revenue} \times \text{the lesser of:} \\ &\quad (1) 1; \text{ or} \\ &\quad (2) \frac{\text{district's market value per pupil unit}}{\$290,000} \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Tier 3 Equalization Aid} = \text{Tier 3 Revenue} - \text{Tier 3 Equalized Levy}$$

$$\text{Total Referendum Equalization Aid} = \text{Tier 1 Equalization Aid} + \text{Tier 2 Equalization Aid} + \text{Tier 3 Equalization Aid}$$

$$\text{Total Referendum Levy} = \text{Total Referendum Revenue} - \text{Total Referendum Equalization Aid}$$

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. Referendum tax base replacement aid was eliminated for fiscal years 2015 and later.

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 by first-class mail of the election and of the proposed tax increase at least 20 days before the referendum.

Beginning in fiscal year 2015, the first \$300 per pupil of authority may be approved by board action and does not need to be voter approved.

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 17:
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
2015	\$1,845	\$300	\$880,000	\$460	\$510,000	> \$760	\$290,000
2014	1,628	700	476,000	> 700	270,000	NA	NA
2013	1,609	700	476,000	> 700	270,000	NA	NA
2012	1,576	700	476,000	> 700	270,000	NA	NA
2011	1,537	700	476,000	> 700	270,000	NA	NA
2010	1,507	700	476,000	> 700	270,000	NA	NA

Table 18:
Referendum Revenue Amounts

Fiscal Year	Referendum Aid Entitlement	Tax Base Replacement Aid	Referendum Levy
2015	\$182,132,000	\$0	\$557,331,000
2014	97,100,000	8,551,000	779,760,000
2013	87,445,000	8,539,000	763,051,000
2012	68,813,000	8,523,000	750,886,000
2011	58,610,000	8,593,000	737,629,000
2010	58,123,000	8,619,000	712,334,000

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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. For fiscal years 2010 and 2011 and for the September payment in fiscal year 2012, the payments were based on resident pupils. Beginning with the March 2012 payment, the PSF payments to schools are based on pupils served, and payments go to both traditional school districts and charter schools.

Table 19:
Permanent School Fund Endowment and Income

Fiscal Year	Endowment Fund Balance	Payment to Schools	Payment per pupil
2015	\$1,077,333,000*	\$24,643,000*	\$29.66
2014	1,051,208,000	23,741,000	28.72
2013	937,254,000	24,867,000	30.32
2012	841,906,000	24,294,000	29.71
2011	759,711,000	22,938,000	27.92
2010	671,956,000	22,913,000	28.00
*Estimated			

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 127A.30-127A.34; 126C.21, subd. 1)

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.

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

County Apportionment Aid. General education aid is reduced by an amount equal to the district's share of county apportionment funds (miscellaneous fines and fees, collected by counties and apportioned to school districts).

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

School Transportation

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.

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 95).

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;
- ▶ 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)

Categorical Funding

The 1995 Legislature eliminated most of the categorical transportation funding programs. The majority of the transportation funding was added to the general education revenue program in three parts: \$170 per pupil unit was added to the basic formula allowance; a transportation sparsity component was added to the general education formula; and a grandfathered revenue amount called transition revenue was created to limit the funding shifts resulting from the elimination of the previous transportation funding formulas (see page 25 for details).

Nonpublic pupil transportation revenue equals the sum of the following calculations of regular, excess, and nonregular transportation:

- ▶ for transportation that meets the definition of regular and excess transportation categories according to section 123B.92, an amount equal to the product of:
 - (1) the district's actual expenditure per pupil transported in the regular and excess transportation categories during the second preceding school year; times
 - (2) the number of nonpublic school pupils residing in the district who receive regular or excess transportation service or reimbursement for the current school year; times
 - (3) the ratio of the general education formula allowance for the current school year to the formula allowance for the second preceding school year
- ▶ for transportation that meets the definition of nonregular transportation according to section 123B.92, excluding special program transportation and late activity transportation, an amount equal to the product of:
 - (1) the district's actual expenditure for nonpublic, nonregular transportation during the second preceding school year; times
 - (2) the ratio of the general education formula allowance for the current school year to the formula allowance for the second preceding school year

(Minn. Stat. § 123B.92)

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)

Capital Finance

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 usually financed at the local level, often with the assistance of 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. All debt incurred prior to July 1, 1992, will be included in the district’s net debt. However, debt incurred after July 1, 1992, 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. For fiscal years 2013 and later, 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 20:
Debt Service Equalizing Factors

Fiscal Year	1st Tier	2nd Tier	3rd Tier
2017 and later	Unequalized	\$4,430	\$8,000
2016	Unequalized	3,400	8,000
2015	Unequalized	3,049	7,622
2014	Unequalized	3,550	7,900

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The following example shows the calculation of debt service equalization aid for a hypothetical district for fiscal year 2015.

Table 21:
**Debt Service Equalization Aid Calculation
 for a Hypothetical District**

a	Debt revenue (amount needed to repay bonds)		\$6,000,000
b	Initial unequalized tax rate		40.0%
c	Pupil units used for debt calculation		5,000
d	Tax base (adjusted net tax capacity)		\$15,000,000
e	Tax base/per pupil unit	(d)/(c)	\$3,000
f	Regular equalizing factor		\$3,049
g	Enhanced equalizing factor		\$7,622
h	Tier 1: 15.74 paid locally	(d) x .1574	\$2,361,000
	Tier 2: 15.74% to 26.24% equalized at \$3,049		
i	Debt revenue in this category	(d) x .105	\$1,575,000
j	Aid percentage	1 – (k)	1.60%
k	Levy percentage	(e)/(f)	98.40%
l	First-tier aid	(j) x (i)	\$25,200
m	First-tier levy	(k) x (i)	\$1,549,800
o	Tier 3: Remaining debt above 26.24% at enhanced rate	(a) – ((h) + (i))	\$2,064,000
p	Aid percentage	1 – (q)	60.6%
q	Levy percentage	(e)/(g)	39.4%
r	Second-tier aid	(p) x (o)	\$1,250,784
s	Second-tier levy	(q) x (o)	\$813,216
t	Total annual aid	(l) + (r)	\$1,275,984
u	Total annual levy	(a) – (t)	\$4,724,016
v	Total tax rate	(u)/(d)	31.5%
w	Percent of debt revenue from state	(t)/(a)	21.3%

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(Minn. Stat. §§ 123B.53; 123B.55)

Natural Disaster Debt Service Equalization

For fiscal years 2017 and later, 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 (currently estimated at \$20,863).

Table 22:
Total Statewide Debt Service Amounts

School Year	Debt Service Aid Entitlement	Net Debt Service Fund Levy Certified
2014-15	\$22,591,000	\$801,611,000
2013-14	19,778,000	815,643,000
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
1999-2000	32,629,000	380,000,000
1998-99	38,193,000	335,000,000
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

Capital Project Referendum

A school district may conduct an election to approve funds for certain capital projects. (This program was formerly called the Down Payment Levy.) When approved by a voter referendum, school districts may levy for no more than ten years the amount authorized for a down payment on future construction costs or for specific capital projects. Proceeds of the levy must be placed in a special account and used only for the approved purposes.

(Minn. Stat. § 123B.63)

Table 23:
Capital Project Levy

Fiscal Year	Capital Project Levy Certified	Number of Districts
2015	\$60,852,000	34
2014	47,247,000	26
2013	47,100,000	25
2012	40,504,000	22
2011	39,213,000	22
2010	35,668,000	20

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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. These districts can qualify for state assistance under the Maximum Effort School Aid Law. Under this program, the state borrows money via bond sales and lends it to qualifying school districts on favorable terms. Two types of loans are available: **capital loans** (for new construction projects) and **debt service loans** (to reduce the amount that districts must levy for debt service on completed projects). Qualifying districts can obtain either or both types of loans. A district is eligible for a capital loan only if its net debt tax rate, after any state-paid debt service equalization aid, is more than 33.59 percent of ANTC.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.62-126C.72)

Capital Loans. The process to obtain a capital loan follows.

1. A school district that intends to apply for a capital loan must submit the project proposal to the Commissioner of Education for review and comment by July 1. Capital 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 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 loan must adopt a resolution that describes the project and submit an application for a capital loan to the commissioner by November 1.
 4. The commissioner makes a recommendation for each capital loan to the education committees of the legislature by February 1.
 5. Each capital loan must be approved in law.
 6. A district must conduct a successful referendum on the project before February 1.

If the capital 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 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 and interest on the local bond issue.

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.

A law passed in 2011 allowed school districts that had received maximum effort capital loans prior to January 1, 1997, to repay only the outstanding principal on the capital loan prior to July 1, 2012, in order to fully satisfy the district's obligation to repay the loan and forgive any outstanding interest amounts owed to the state.

Debt Service Loans. Districts in which the levy required to make debt service payments on local bond issues exceeds 29.39 percent of ANTC by 10 percent, or by \$5,000, can obtain a debt service loan from the state. This is a loan to reduce the magnitude of the debt service levy which must be collected. The amount of the loan can be up to the amount of the difference between the required debt service levy and 29.39 percent of ANTC. However, the debt service loan amount cannot exceed 1 percent of the district's outstanding bonded debt.

Debt service loans are repaid in the same fashion as capital loans. Districts must levy at least 29.39 percent of ANTC; if this amount exceeds the amount which the district must levy for debt service on its bonds, the difference is used to repay the state loan.

Funding. Capital loans and debt service loans are initially funded by the sale of state bonds. In addition to the bond proceeds, supplemental appropriations by the legislature are necessary to make principal and interest payments because repayments of loans by districts are occurring at a slower rate than that required to meet the state’s obligations.

Table 24:
Maximum Effort Bond Sales

Year Authorized	Amount of Bonds Authorized
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
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
Total	\$305,823,000

Cooperative Facilities Grant Program

The cooperative facilities grant program provides state grants to groups of local school districts that desire to build or remodel a facility. Prior to July 1, 2007, the program focused only on secondary facilities. A district must meet the same criteria as required by the consolidation program in order to qualify for a grant; for nonconsolidated districts, a minimum of two school districts must agree to apply for the grant. Grant amounts are currently limited to the lesser of 75 percent of the project cost, \$20 million for a new facility, or \$10 million for a remodeling project.

A consolidated school district or a group of districts that wants a cooperative facility grant must apply to the Department of Education for project approval. If the state makes general obligation bond proceeds available, the district or districts must hold a referendum to approve the sale of bonds for the local portion of the project costs within 180 days of receiving a state grant. The referendum must be approved by a majority of those voting on the bond issue. In some years, the legislature has awarded a \$100,000 planning grant to potential grant recipients and has also named specific grantees in law when the bond proceeds are made available.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 123A.44-123A.446)

Table 25:
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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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)

Health and Safety Revenue

A district with a building problem related to health or safety concerns may submit an application to the Commissioner of Education for authorization to receive health and safety revenue. Health and safety revenue may be used for the following purposes:

- ▶ to remove or encapsulate asbestos
- ▶ to dispose of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
- ▶ to remove and dispose of fuel oils
- ▶ to eliminate a fire hazard
- ▶ to remove a life safety hazard
- ▶ to correct certain air quality problems

The 2003 Legislature narrowed the scope of projects that qualify for health and safety revenue (particularly regarding indoor air quality projects). The legislature also required any project in excess of \$500,000 to be handled through the alternative facilities program.

Capital expenditure health and safety aid, levy, and revenue is computed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Health \& Safety Revenue} &= \text{amount approved by the Department of Education} \\ \text{Health \& Safety Levy} &= \text{Health \& Safety Revenue} \times \begin{array}{l} \text{the lesser of} \\ (1) \text{ one; or} \\ (2) \frac{\text{ANTC/pupil units}}{\$3,956} \end{array} \\ \text{Health \& Safety Aid} &= \text{Health \& Safety Revenue} - \text{Health \& Safety Levy} \end{aligned}$$

(Minn. Stat. § 123B.57)

Table 26:
Health and Safety Revenue

Fiscal Year	State Aid Appropriation	Levy
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

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Alternative Facilities Program

Certain school districts may choose to participate in the alternative facilities bonding and levy program instead of the health and safety revenue program. A district qualifies to participate in the alternative facilities program if the district has:

- (1) more than 66 students per grade;
- (2) either:
 - (a) over 1,850,000 square feet of space and an average age of building space that is 15 years or older, or
 - (b) more than 1,500,000 square feet of space and an average building age of 35 years or more;
- (3) insufficient funds from projected health and safety revenue and capital facilities revenue to meet the district's need for deferred maintenance repairs, to make accessibility improvements, or to make fire, safety, or health repairs; and
- (4) a ten-year facility plan approved by the commissioner.

Four districts have been granted program eligibility through special laws that have been enacted.

In addition to the eligibility factors listed above, the 2003 Legislature required any health and safety project with a cost exceeding \$500,000 to be funded through alternative facilities bonds.

An eligible school district may issue general obligation bonds without voter approval to finance the approved facilities plans. The district may then levy to repay the bonds. This levy qualifies for debt service equalization aid. Alternatively, an eligible district may make an annual levy for the costs incurred under the ten-year facility plan. The 1997 and 1998 Legislatures provided ongoing state aid payments to reduce these levy amounts for districts that qualified at that time. The levy amounts shown in Table 27 are net levies, having been reduced by the alternate facilities aid amounts.

Table 27:
Alternative Facilities Revenue

Fiscal Year	State Aid	Pay-as-you-go Alternative Facilities Levy	Alternative Facilities Bonded Debt Levy	Alternate Facilities Health & Safety Levy
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	—

* Estimated

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Deferred Maintenance Revenue

Beginning in fiscal year 2008, a school district that is not eligible for alternative facilities revenue under Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.59, subdivision 1, paragraph (a), is eligible for deferred maintenance revenue. Deferred maintenance revenue must be maintained in a reserve account and used only for deferred maintenance purposes.

A qualifying district's deferred maintenance revenue is computed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Deferred Maintenance Revenue} &= \$64 \times \text{pupil units} \times \text{the lesser of:} \\ &\quad (1) \text{ one, or} \\ &\quad (2) \frac{\text{average age of the district's buildings}}{35} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Deferred Maintenance Levy} &= \frac{\text{Deferred Maintenance Revenue}}{\text{Revenue}} \times \text{the lesser of:} \\ &\quad (1) \text{ one, or} \\ &\quad (2) \frac{(\text{ANTC}/\text{pupils units})}{\$5,965} \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Deferred Maintenance Aid} = \text{Deferred Maintenance Revenue} - \text{Deferred Maintenance Levy}$$

As the deferred maintenance formula calculations show, the maximum revenue of \$64 per pupil unit is available to a district where its buildings have an average age of at least 35 years. As a district's average building age drops, so too does its deferred maintenance revenue.

Table 28:
Deferred Maintenance Revenue

Fiscal Year	Appropriation	Levy
2015	\$4,024,000	\$22,686,000
2014	3,877,000	22,612,000
2013	3,141,000	22,157,000
2012	2,331,000	23,443,000
2011	2,146,000	23,420,000
2010	1,918,000	23,075,000

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(Minn. Stat. § 123B.591)

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 shall develop criteria to determine the cost effectiveness of removing barriers in consultation with the council on disabilities. The commissioner

shall approve or disapprove an application within 60 days of receiving it. Nearly all districts have used their full authority under this program, and only a few districts have any remaining levy authority. The state has also provided state bond proceeds to help small school districts remove 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 \$212⁴ per pupil unit, except that a school district that is a member of an intermediate school district may levy an additional \$65⁵ per pupil unit for space in intermediate facilities. The facilities must be used for instructional purposes.

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

Table 29:
Building Lease Levy Amounts

Fiscal Year	Total Levy
2015	\$61,970,000
2014	51,413,000
2013	48,223,000
2012	46,253,000
2011	48,900,000
2010	47,394,000

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⁴ The building lease allowance increased from \$150 in fiscal year 2014 to \$162 for fiscal year 2015 to reflect the lower pupil weights and was increased by the 2014 Legislature to \$212 for fiscal years 2016 and later.

⁵ The added building lease allowance for districts that are members of intermediate school districts increased from \$43 in fiscal year 2014 to \$46 for fiscal year 2015 to reflect the lower pupil weights and was increased by the 2014 Legislature to \$65 for fiscal years 2016 and later.

Table 30:
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 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.

Applicable School Years	Payable Year First Effective	Permitted Uses/Limitations
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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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 \$15 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 31:
Telecommunications/Internet Access Aid

Fiscal Year	Aid
2015	\$3,750,000
2014	3,750,000
2013	3,750,000
2012	3,750,000
2011	3,750,000
2010	3,750,000

House Research Department

(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 to 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.

A total of 129,669 students, or roughly 15.2 percent, receive some special education services.⁶

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

⁶ This percentage is based on the December 2013 unduplicated child count conducted by the Department of Education.

Table 32:
**Special Education Unduplicated Child Count by Disability Category
 as of December 1, 2013**

Category	Count
Speech Language Impaired	21,036
Developmentally Cognitive Disability, Mild/Moderate	5,796
Developmentally Cognitive Disability, Moderate/Severe	2,016
Severely Multiple Impaired	1,418
Physically Impaired	1,669
Hearing Impaired	2,464
Blind/Visually Disabled	460
Specific Learning Disabilities	29,735
Emotional Behavior Disorder	14,897
Deaf/Blind	70
Other Health Impaired	17,693
Autism Spectrum Disorder	16,603
Traumatic Brain Injury	454
Early Childhood/Developmentally Delayed	15,358
Total	129,669
Source: Minnesota Department of Education	

House Research Department

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 use other general fund revenue.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 125A.75-125A.79)

Regular Special Education Revenue

For years prior to fiscal year 2014, a school district's special education base revenue was determined by a revenue-capped reimbursement formula. Special education costs were calculated using base year expenditure data. A district's revenue is the amount obtained by summing the special education reimbursements. Since the 1999-2000 school year, special education revenue has been provided in state aid and has not had a local levy component.

The overall amount of regular special education aid is set in state statute. Prior to fiscal year 2004, the statewide revenue amount was increased yearly by an inflation factor called the program growth factor (which was set at 1.08 for fiscal year 2002 and 1.046 for fiscal year 2003). The 2003 Legislature

eliminated the program growth factor so that regular special education revenue did not increase from fiscal year 2004 until fiscal year 2008. For fiscal years 2008 to 2011, the statewide aid cap is raised by amounts set in statute. The statutory statewide revenue caps are \$529 million for fiscal years 2004 to 2007, \$694 million for fiscal year 2008, \$719 million for fiscal year 2009, \$736 million for fiscal year 2010, and \$787 million for fiscal year 2011. Beginning in fiscal year 2012, the annual program growth factor of 1.046 is reestablished.

A school district's base revenue is equal to the sum of the following expenditures for regular special education and summer special education programs:

- ▶ 68 percent of the salaries paid to essential personnel in the district's program for children with a disability (essential personnel are defined as teachers, related services, and support services staff providing direct services to students); plus
- ▶ 68 percent of the salary of instructional aides at the Minnesota academies, who are assigned to students by their individual education plan; plus
- ▶ 52 percent of the difference between the contract amount for special instruction and services and the general education revenue allowance for pupils who receive special education through a contract with an agency other than a school district; plus
- ▶ 52 percent of the contract amount for supplementary special education provided through a contract with an agency other than a school district; plus
- ▶ 47 percent of expenditures for special supplies and equipment for educating children with disabilities up to a maximum of \$47 per child receiving instruction.

The base special education revenue is multiplied by the ratio of the current year's statewide enrollment to the previous year's statewide enrollment.

Each school district's regular special education revenue is then prorated so that the state total regular special education revenue does not exceed the statewide revenue cap for that year.

Excess Cost Aid

For years prior to fiscal year 2014, excess cost aid is designed to provide additional special education funding for districts that have extremely high levels of unreimbursed special education expenses. A school district's excess cost aid is capped in much the same manner as the regular special education aid. Total statewide excess cost aid is limited to a fixed amount set in statute for fiscal years 2008 to 2011, is annually inflated by 2 percent for subsequent fiscal years, and is also adjusted for the change in pupil counts for each year. Each district's initial excess cost aid is based on the difference between unreimbursed special education costs and other general education revenue. For fiscal years 2009 to 2014, initial excess cost aid equals the greater of (1) 75 percent of the difference between the district's unreimbursed special education cost and 4.36 percent of the district's general education revenue; or (2) zero.

A district's excess cost aid is its initial excess cost aid prorated to the state total excess cost aid by multiplying the district's initial excess cost aid by the ratio of the state total excess cost aid to initial (uncapped) state total excess cost aid.

Special Education Revenue for Fiscal Years 2014 and Later

The 2013 Omnibus Education Finance bill modified the way Minnesota's special education services are funded for fiscal years 2014 and later. Prior to the changes, Minnesota's special education formula was considered a partial cost reimbursement formula. As the previous two pages describe, this formula calculated each district's authorized spending on special education services (consisting primarily of the salary costs of special education teachers and aides providing services to students with IEPs) and reimbursed the district for a portion of those costs.

During the 2013 session, Gov. Mark Dayton proposed modifying the formula to base a portion of the funding on a "census style" of funding. Under a census-funding basis, a count (census) of different types of students is made and funding is assigned for each category of disability.

The 2013 Legislature included a modified version of the governor's funding proposal. The goal of the formula is to provide some special education funding based on student characteristics and to partially move away from a cost-reimbursement formula.

For fiscal years 2014 and 2015, the new formula is being phased in and combines elements of the cost-based special education aid formula with a cross-subsidy reduction aid based on the characteristics of the district. A district's cross-subsidy reduction aid equals the lesser of:

- (1) the product of the cross-subsidy reduction aid limit and the district's average daily membership; or
- (2) the product of the cross-subsidy reduction aid percentage, the district's average daily membership, and the sum of:
 - (a) \$450;
 - (b) \$400 times the district's number of pupils eligible for free lunch and 50 percent of the number of pupils eligible for reduced price meals; and
 - (c) .008 times the district's average daily membership, plus:
 - (i) \$10,100 times the count of students with autism spectrum disorder, developmental delay, or severely multiply impaired;
 - (ii) \$17,500 times the count of students who are deaf/hard of hearing or have an emotional behavioral disorder; and
 - (iii) \$26,000 times the count of students who are developmentally cognitive mild-moderate, developmentally cognitive severe-profound, physically impaired, visually impaired, or deafblind.

Once the formula is phased in, beginning in fiscal year 2016, a district is eligible for the sum of its special education-related transportation services, and the lesser of:

- (1) 50 percent of the district's nonfederal expenditures for the previous year;
- (2) 62 percent of the district's special education revenue computed under the old formulas; or
- (3) 56 percent of the sum of:
 - (a) the district's average daily membership times the sum of:
 - (i) \$450;
 - (ii) \$400 times the district's percent eligible for free and reduced price meals; and
 - (iii) .008 times the district's average daily membership;
 - (b) \$10,400 times the count of students with autism spectrum disorder, developmental delay, or severely multiply impaired;
 - (c) \$18,000 times the count of students who are deaf/hard of hearing or have an emotional behavioral disorder; and

- (d) \$27,000 times the count of students who are developmentally cognitive mild-moderate, developmentally cognitive severe-profound, physically impaired, visually impaired, or deafblind.

(Minn. Stat. § 125A.76)

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 33:
Special Education Appropriations

Fiscal Year	Regular Special Education Aid	Special Education Excess Cost	Home-based Services Travel Aid	Special Pupil Aid	Court-placed Aid	Out-of-State Tuition
2015	\$1,111,641,000	–	\$346,000	\$1,674,000	\$55,000	\$250,000
2014	1,038,465,000	\$42,016,000	351,000	1,548,000	54,000	250,000
2013	856,386,000	115,269,000	321,000	1,593,000	82,000	250,000
2012	767,845,000	107,557,000	314,000	1,508,000	80,000	250,000
2011	749,248,000	108,410,000	282,000	1,193,000	78,000	250,000
2010	609,003,000	96,926,000	224,000	1,125,000	76,000	250,000

American Indian Programs

Minnesota has a variety of programs in place to provide funds for American Indian education programs. The rest of this section describes each of the funding streams.

American Indian Scholarships

The American Indian scholarship program provides need-based scholarships to Minnesota residents who are at least one-fourth or more Indian ancestry. Prior to fiscal year 2008, the Commissioner of Education awarded the scholarships upon recommendation of the American Indian education committee. For fiscal year 2008 and later, the administration and funding for this program has been transferred to the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. The scholarships may be used at accredited Minnesota postsecondary (public and private) institutions.

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.84)

Success for the Future

The Success for the Future grant program is designed to assist American Indian students through collaborative programs that are intended to increase student achievement and lower the dropout rate through targeted retention programs, counseling and advocacy services, innovative technology-based curriculum, and best practices activities.

Prior to 2002, similar activities were funded through American Indian postsecondary preparation grants, American Indian language and culture programs, and Johnson O'Malley replacement funds.

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.81)

American Indian Teacher Preparation Grants

The Commissioner of Education makes joint grants to pairs of school districts and postsecondary institutions to assist American Indian people in becoming teachers. Grants are statutorily prescribed to: University of Minnesota at Duluth and the Duluth school district; Bemidji State University and the Red Lake school district; Moorhead State University and a school district within the White Earth Reservation; and Augsburg College and the Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts. Grant money may be used for programs, student scholarships, and student loans.

(Minn. Stat. § 122A.63)

Tribal Contract School Aid

State aid is paid to four tribal contract schools in Minnesota. The tribal contract schools must comply with Minnesota's education statutes, and state aid must supplement, not replace, funds provided by the federal government. State aid for tribal contract schools is calculated as follows:

- (1) Multiply the formula allowance times the difference of the school's weighted average daily membership (WADM) and the number of pupils receiving nonpublic benefits or enrolled in alternative programs
- (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 WADM
- (4) Multiply the school's WADM by the lesser of (3) or \$1,500

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 34:
Appropriations for American Indian Programs

Fiscal Year	Success for the Future	American Indian Teacher Preparation Grants	Tribal Contract School Aid	Early Childhood at Tribal Contract Schools
2015	\$2,137,000	\$190,000	\$2,161,000	\$68,000
2014	2,214,000	190,000	2,044,000	68,000
2013	2,137,000	190,000	1,969,000	68,000
2012	2,013,000	190,000	1,791,000	68,000
2011	2,072,000	190,000	2,119,000	68,000
2010	1,774,000	190,000	1,702,000	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 both 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.

For fiscal year 2007 and later, the basic community education revenue allowance is \$5.42. Community education revenue, aid, and levy for fiscal year 2015 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: (a) 1,335; or (b) population of the district				
Youth Service Revenue	=	\$1.00, times the greater of (a) 1,335; or (b) population of the district				
Youth After-School Enrichment Revenue	=	(1) \$1.85, times the greater of: (a) 1,335; or (b) population of the district not to exceed 10,000; plus (2) \$0.43, times the population of the district in excess of 10,000				
Community Education Levy	=	.009 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 35:
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
2014-15	.900%	\$5.42	\$1.00	\$1.85 + 0.43	\$11,040	\$1,060,000	\$38,222,000	330/332
2013-14	.900	5.42	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	11,040	955,000	38,264,000	330/332
2012-13	.940	5.42	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	11,040	746,000	38,132,000	334/336
2011-12	.900	5.42	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	11,040	442,000	38,972,000	335/337
2010-11	.900	5.42	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	11,040	473,000	38,895,000	335/337
2009-10	.900	5.42	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	11,040	476,000	38,621,000	335/337
2008-09	.900	5.42	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	11,040	796,000	38,287,000	338/340
2007-08	.900	5.42	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	11,040	1,299,000	37,485,000	338/340
2006-07	.900	5.42	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	11,040	1,949,000	36,378,000	341/343
2005-06	.981	5.23	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	10,787	2,043,000	35,000,000	341/343
2004-05	.981	5.23	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	10,787	3,198,000	33,715,000	341/343
2003-04	.7431	5.95	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	11,748	5,357,000	33,640,000	341/343
2002-03	.7431	5.95	1.00	1.85 + 0.43	11,748	6,076,000	31,245,000	342/343
2001-02	.4795	5.95	1.00	0	9,278	14,194,000	19,218,213	342/343

*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.

House Research Department

Programs for Adults with Disabilities. Districts 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. To be eligible for adults with disabilities program revenue, the program description and budget must be approved by the Department of Education.

State aid is provided to districts with approval for educational programs for adults with disabilities. State aid is equal to the lesser of \$30,000 or one-half of the actual program expenditures. The remainder of a district's program revenue is 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.

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

Table 36:
Programs for Adults with Disabilities

Fiscal Year	Appropriations	Levy	Number of Programs
2015	\$710,000	\$670,000	77
2014	734,000	670,000	77
2013	710,000	670,000	77
2012	654,000	670,000	77
2011	680,000	670,000	77
2010	588,000	670,000	77

House Research Department

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.

For fiscal year 2015 and later, the ECFE allowance equals 2.3 percent of the general education basic formula allowance (\$134.11 for fiscal year 2015). ECFE revenue is calculated as follows:

- ECFE Revenue = \$134.11, times the greater of:
 - (a) 150; or
 - (b) number of district residents under 5 years old

- ECFE Levy = 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 statewide

- ECFE Aid = ECFE Revenue – ECFE Levy

- Home-visiting Levy = \$1.60 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.

Beginning in fiscal year 2000, districts were 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 37:
Early Childhood Family Education Revenue

School Year	ECFE Tax Rate	ECFE Formula Allowance	Appropriations	Levy	Number of Participating Districts
2014-15	.395906%	\$120	\$22,651,000	\$22,127,000	329/332
2013-14	.401846	120	22,797,000	22,177,000	329/332
2012-13	.392971	120	22,358,000	22,121,000	333/336
2011-12	.34675	120	21,099,000	22,139,000	334/337
2010-11	.333792	120	21,460,000	22,085,000	332/337
2009-10	.335014	120	19,005,000	22,085,000	332/337
2008-09	.20789	120	29,324,000	13,565,000	335/340
2007-08	.382109	120	21,092,000	22,139,000	335/340
2006-07	.42725	112	15,112,000	22,148,000	337/343
2005-06	.4852	104	15,105,000	22,130,000	337/343
2004-05	.533	96	15,129,000	21,104,000	337/343
2003-04	.588	120	19,675,000	22,209,000	337/343
2002-03	.6578	120	18,664,000	22,084,000	337/343
2001-02	.5257	120	20,746,000	21,027,000	338/343

House Research Department

Early Childhood Home-visiting Program. A school district participating in a collaborative agreement to provide education services and social services through home-visiting programs may levy up to \$1.60 times the number of people under the age of five residing in the district. Statewide, this levy amounts to about \$600,000 per year.

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.13)

Early Learning Scholarship Program

The 2013 Legislature substantially expanded and codified Minnesota’s Early Learning Scholarship Program. The program provides scholarships of up to \$5,000 to an eligible child. For fiscal years 2016 and later, the maximum scholarship amount is set by the commissioner of education based on a market rate survey. The scholarships may be used at a qualifying private or public early learning program.

Child Eligibility. A child who is three or four years old on September 1 of the current year and not yet enrolled in kindergarten is eligible for an Early Learning Scholarship if the child’s family has income equal to or less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level income for that year.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) contracts with organizations to administer the scholarship program in each economic development region of the state (several of the grant administrators are community action programs). A family that wishes to receive an Early Learning Scholarship may apply through the regional administering agency.

MDE divides the annual appropriation 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. It is expected that about 4,000 children per year will receive Early Learning Scholarships.

MDE has developed two pathways for scholarships. Pathway I scholarships are awarded directly to eligible recipients. Pathway II scholarships are awarded to eligible recipients through qualifying four-star rated programs.

Scholarship Amounts. A child’s maximum scholarship amount depends on the provider’s rating under the Parent Aware quality rating improvement system. A child attending a three- or four-star rated program may receive a maximum annual scholarship of \$5,000. A child attending a one- or two-star rated program may receive a scholarship of up to \$4,000. A child attending a program that has a Parent Aware participation agreement but is not yet rated, may receive a scholarship of up to \$3,000.

A scholarship may be used in combination with other public assistance programs including the Child Care Assistance Program.

Program Eligibility. A public or private early learning program that has received a quality rating or has entered into an agreement to be rated under the Parent Aware program is eligible to accept children with scholarships. Beginning July 1, 2016, a program must have received a three- or four-star Parent Aware rating in order to accept eligible scholarship recipients.

Table 38:
Early Learning Scholarship Appropriations

Fiscal Year	Appropriation
2015	\$27,650,000
2014	23,000,000
2013	2,000,000
2012	0

House Research Department

(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.

For fiscal year 2009 and later, a district receives \$75 for each three-year-old screened, \$50 for each four-year-old screened, \$40 for each five- or six-year-old screened before enrolling in kindergarten, and \$30 for all other students screened within the first 30 days of kindergarten enrollment. For fiscal years 2006 to 2008, a school district received \$50 for each three-year-old screened, \$40 for each four-year-old screened, and \$30 for each five-year-old screened. Prior to fiscal year 2006, districts received \$40 in state aid for each child screened. 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 39:

Developmental Screening Aid

Fiscal Year	Appropriations
2015	\$3,330,000
2014	3,524,000
2013	3,543,000
2012	3,359,000
2011	3,425,000
2010	2,922,000

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 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. Beginning with fiscal year 1998, 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 | x | 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 keep school readiness aid in a reserve account within the community service fund.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.15; 124D.16)

Table 40:
School Readiness Aid

Fiscal Year	Appropriations
2015	\$11,962,000
2014	10,458,000
2013	10,095,000
2012	9,444,000
2011	9,792,000
2010	8,373,000

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 community organizations that are the grantees. In Minnesota, the most common type of grantee is a community action program.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 119A.50-119A.53)

Table 41:
Head Start Revenue

Fiscal Year	State Aid	Federal Funds for Head Start (including Early Head Start)
2015	\$20,100,000	N/A
2014	20,100,000	N/A
2013	20,100,000	\$102,352,000
2012	20,100,000	95,979,000
2011	20,100,000	88,450,000
2010	20,100,000	87,630,000

House Research Department

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. For fiscal year 1998 and later, school-age care aid and levy are calculated as follows:

School-age Care Revenue = Program costs approved by the Department of Education

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

School-age Care Aid = School-age Care Revenue - School-age Care Levy

Table 42:
School-age Care Program

Fiscal Year	Aid	Levy
2015	\$1,000	\$13,636,000
2014	1,000	13,231,000
2013	1,000	12,912,000
2012	1,000	12,288,000
2011	1,000	11,592,000
2010	1,000	11,202,000

House Research Department

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.13; 124D.22)

Adult Basic Education

Adult basic education (ABE) programs provide academic instruction for persons over age 16 who 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 from all sources cannot exceed the actual cost of providing adult education programs.

The state also reimburses testing centers for 60 percent of the cost of administering general education development (GED) tests, up to a maximum of \$20 per individual. GED tests, which qualify students for a high school equivalency certificate, are available to Minnesota residents over age 19 whether or not they have taken a refresher course.

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

Adult Basic Education Revenue. The 2000 Legislature established a new ABE funding formula beginning with revenue for fiscal year 2001. The 2003 Legislature modified the program. The new formula is based on contact hours, population, the enrollment of students with limited English proficiency, and the number of adults age 20 or older with no diploma residing in a district. The new formula caps the growth of state total ABE aid by setting in statute an overall statewide revenue limit.

For fiscal years 2009 through 2011, the statewide aid cap grew by 3 percent. For fiscal years 2012 to 2014, the statewide aid cap grew by 2 percent. For fiscal year 2014, the cap was \$47,138,000. For fiscal years 2015 and later, the cap growth is 3 percent or the average growth in contact hours over the previous ten years.

The program also caps an individual program's 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 \$22 per prior year contact hour.

For fiscal year 2015, state aid to ABE programs is equal to:

- Initial State Total ABE Aid = \$48,552,000
- ABE Basic Population Aid = the greater of:
 - (1) \$3,844; or
 - (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
 - (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
 - (3) 8% times Remaining ABE Revenue, times the ratio of the enrollment of students with limited English proficiency during the second prior program year to the state total enrollment of students with limited English proficiency during the second prior program year; plus
 - (4) 8% times Remaining ABE Revenue, times the ratio of the latest federal census count of the number of adults age 20 or older with no diploma residing in the district during the current program year to the state total number of adults age 20 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.

Table 43:
Adult Basic Education Programs

Fiscal Year	Appropriations
2015	\$48,415,000
2014	48,776,000
2013	45,901,000
2012	42,526,000
2011	42,732,000
2010	35,671,000

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 is voluntary. From fiscal year 1995 to fiscal year 2000, nearly all of these cooperative activities were funded through district cooperation revenue and membership dues paid by the member districts to the cooperative organizations. Prior to fiscal year 1995, most of these organizations were funded directly for special education and vocational education programs.

School District Cooperation Revenue. Up until fiscal year 2001, school districts were eligible for district cooperation revenue in the amount of \$67 per pupil unit or \$25,000, whichever is greater. For fiscal year 2001 and later, there is no separate appropriation for cooperation revenue. Instead, \$67 per pupil unit was added to the general education formula allowance.

Cooperation revenue was required to be reserved for purchases from cooperative entities or to provide educational services in a cooperative manner. Other restrictions apply to the expenditure of the reserved revenue. A district that belonged to an intermediate district on July 1, 1994, must allocate a 5/11th share of its prorated 1994-95 intermediate district revenue and must spend a minimum of \$9 per pupil unit of its district cooperation revenue on secondary vocational programs. Districts that were intermediate district members on that date must allocate 5/11th of their prorated intermediate district revenue to special education and 6/11th to secondary vocational programs.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.22)

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. Only a handful of school districts consolidated during the 2000s. Five consolidations have occurred during the last two years and more are expected in the next several years.

(Minn. Stat. § 123A.485)

Table 44:
Consolidation Transition Revenue

Fiscal Year	Appropriation
2015	\$254,000
2014	585,000
2013	193,000
2012	145,000
2011	576,000
2010	684,000

House Research Department

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 Program, Area Learning Center Programs, the Graduation Incentives Program, and Charter School programs. Funding for these programs is as follows (charter schools are discussed in a separate section).

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 a student once the serving district has accepted students equal to 1 percent of its total enrollment. General education revenue follows the pupil from the resident district to the district providing instruction (the serving school district) because the general education program is based on students served, not resident students. An adjustment is made to transfer the aid portion of the referendum revenue from the resident school district to the serving school district.

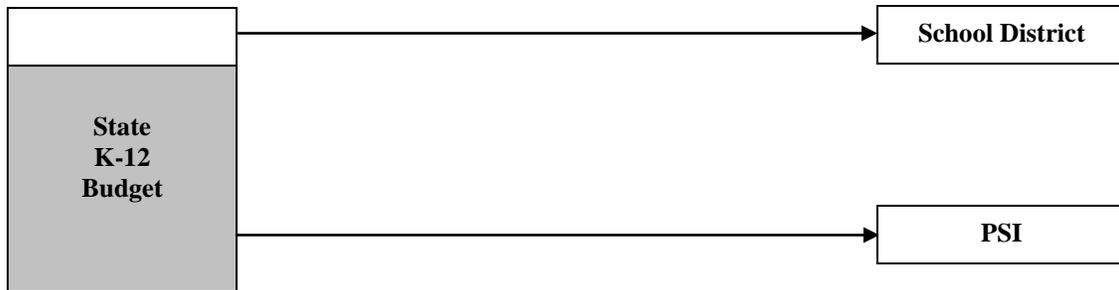
Transportation of an open enrollment pupil is the responsibility of the nonresident (serving) district from the nonresident district’s border to the school attended (the resident district has no transportation responsibilities for an open enrollment pupil).

(Minn. Stat. § 127A.47, subd. 7)

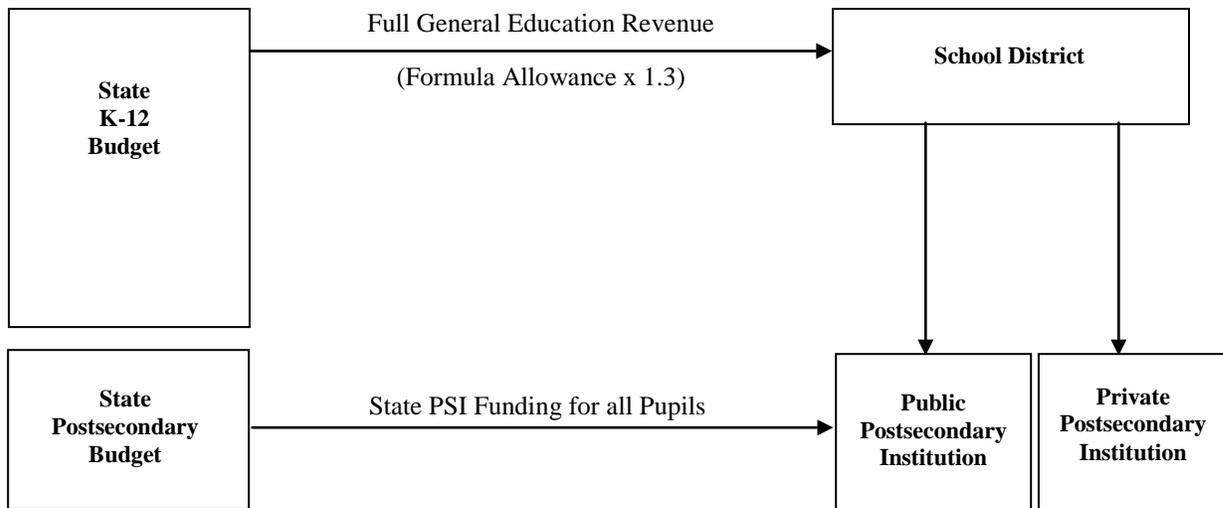
PSEO Funding. The Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program allows public and nonpublic pupils in grades 11 and 12 to enroll in college courses offered by an eligible postsecondary institution (PSI) at state expense. A pupil in 10th grade who has obtained the proficiency level “meets or exceeds” on the 8th grade reading MCA may enroll in a career and technical education course through PSEO. For fiscal year 2014, 6,712 public school pupils, 762 traditional nonpublic pupils, and 1,702 homeschool pupils attended classes at a PSI, and the state aid payment to the PSIs through the PSEO funding formula amounted to roughly \$27.8 million.

For public school pupils who participate full-time in the PSEO program, school districts receive 12 percent of the weighted formula allowance plus all other revenue generated by that pupil. For nonpublic pupils there is no payment to the school district of residence. For each part-time PSEO pupil, the district receives all of the other revenue generated by that pupil and a proportionate share of the weighted formula allowance, based on the amount of time that the PSEO pupil attends the high school. The state then pays

the PSI a standard rate per credit hour, which is set by formula in statute, and for fiscal year 2015 comes to \$144.16 for each quarter credit hour ($[(88\% \times (\$5,831 - \$425) \times 1.2]/45)$) and \$216.24 for each semester hour ($[(88\% \times (\$5,831 - \$425) \times 1.2]/30)$). The chart below shows how PSEO pupils are funded.



In 1992, the legislature specifically authorized school districts and PSIs to provide PSEO courses taught in the high school by instructors employed by the PSI. These programs are often referred to as concurrent enrollment programs. Instructors in these programs are often high school teachers specially trained by a postsecondary institution to teach the course. There is a different funding process for students taking these courses. The school district receives full funding for the PSEO. The district contracts with a PSI to provide PSEO courses and pays the PSI directly. For fiscal year 2011, approximately 19,000 pupils participated in the PSEO programs offered at the high schools. For fiscal year 2012 and later, a school may authorize 9th and 10th grade pupils to enroll in concurrent enrollment programs if the class is not otherwise fully enrolled.



Concurrent Enrollment Programs. A separate aid formula provides up to \$150 per pupil for students who are enrolled in a concurrent enrollment program. However, the capped appropriation results in a substantial proration of concurrent enrollment aid.

Table 45:
Concurrent Enrollment Aid

Fiscal Year	Concurrent Enrollment Aid	Statutory Aid Per Pupil	Participating Pupils	Proration Factor	# of Participating School Districts and Charters
2015	\$2,000,000	\$150	NA	NA	NA
2014	2,000,000	150	NA	NA	NA
2013	2,000,000	150	23,583	23.6%	NA
2012	2,000,000	150	21,695	25.6	289
2011	2,000,000	150	20,282	27.1	278
2010	2,000,000	150	21,135	26.7	282

House Research Department

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 16 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. An area learning center operated by a cooperative organization may elect to charge tuition rather than calculate aid adjustments.

(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)

Charter Schools

As of September 15, 2014, there were 158 charter schools operating in Minnesota serving an estimated 48,274 students. 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 \$272 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 the aid portion of each enrolling student's referendum revenue based on the student's resident district referendum amount.

Special Education Revenue. A charter school receives special education revenue as though it were a school district. In addition, a charter school may bill-back to a disabled student's resident school district eligible unreimbursed special education costs. For years prior to 2015, the charter school may bill back 100 percent of eligible unreimbursed costs. For fiscal years 2015 and later, the charter school may bill-back no more than 90 percent of the eligible unreimbursed costs.

Transportation Revenue. A charter school is eligible for an additional amount of general education revenue of approximately \$272 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.

Start-up Grants. For the first two years of a charter school's operation, it is eligible for charter school start-up grant aid equal to the greater of \$50,000 per charter school, or \$500 per charter school pupil unit. For fiscal years 2012 and later, state-paid start-up grants are eliminated for new charter schools.

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 is eliminated for fiscal year 2004 and later.

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.

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 46:
Charter School General Education and Categorical Aids

Fiscal Year	General Education Aid Entitlement*	Building Lease Aid Appropriation	Start-up Aid Appropriation
2015	\$404,423,000	\$58,294,000	0
2014	353,313,000	54,625,000	0
2013	329,454,000	49,978,000	\$22,000
2012	301,613,000	43,806,000	161,000
2011	279,960,000	44,938,000	743,000
2010	264,342,000	34,833,000	1,218,000
2009	247,283,000	37,527,000	1,987,000
2008	213,448,000	32,817,000	1,801,000
2007	172,401,000	27,806,000	2,347,000
2006	142,711,000	25,331,000	1,291,000
2005	116,255,000	21,400,000	156,000
2004	93,689,000	16,501,000	829,000
2003	79,478,000	14,028,000	1,215,000
2002	61,850,000	12,272,000	2,026,000
2001	52,424,000	10,667,000	2,664,000
2000	39,755,000	6,456,000	1,865,000

* General education aid paid to charter schools is subsumed within the open and standing appropriation for general education aid.

House Research Department

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.11; 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 was 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 2013-14 school year, 126 districts are required to develop integration plans and are eligible for 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.

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 47:
Achievement and Integration Maximum Revenue for Fiscal Year 2015
Selected District Characteristics

District #	District	Adjusted Pupils	Percent of Students of Color	Estimated FY 14 AIM Revenue	AIM Revenue Per Pupil	AIM Aid Per Pupil	AIM Levy Per Pupil
625	St. Paul	39,211	78.6%	\$15,978,510	\$408	\$285	\$122
13	Columbia Heights	3,428	74.1	920,458	269	188	81
280	Richfield	4,403	70.6	1,245,290	256	179	77
518	Worthington	3,108	66.9	757,057	244	170	74
1	Minneapolis	39,158	65.2	15,700,471	401	281	120
535	Rochester	17,991	34.3	2,468,543	137	96	41
709	Duluth	9,136	19.5	1,620,083	177	124	53
276	Minnetonka	10,829	11.9	558,254	52	36	16
State Total		861,833	26.5%	\$104,739,000	\$122	\$85	\$36

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

Table 48:
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
2013	\$445 + \$35 levy	\$445	\$206	\$129	\$92	70%
2012	445 + 35 levy	445	206	129	92	70
2011	445 + 35 levy	445	206	129	92	70
2010	445 + 35 levy	445	206	129	92	70
2009	445 + 35 levy	445	206	129	92	70
2008	445 + 35 levy	445	206	129	92	70
2007	445 + 35 levy	445	206	129	92	70
2006	445 + 35 levy	445	206	129	92	70
2005	445 + 35 levy	445	206	129	92	70
2004	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

House Research Department

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.86)

Table 49:
**Estimated Appropriations and Levies for Integration Activities
Based on 100% Aid Entitlement; Amounts for Aid Fiscal Year**

Fiscal Year/ Payable Year	Minneapolis		St. Paul		Duluth		Other Districts		Total	
	Aid	Levy	Aid	Levy	Aid	Levy	Aid	Levy	Aid	Levy
2015/2014	\$10,990,000	\$4,710,000	\$11,185,000	\$4,794,000	\$1,134,000	\$486,000	\$50,034,000	\$21,443,000	\$73,343,000	\$31,433,000
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
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

Other Integration Funding Programs

Magnet School Grants. Metropolitan magnet schools have been 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 2011-2012 school year and later years.

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.88)

Interdistrict Desegregation or Integration Transportation Grants. Grant money is available to provide pupil transportation services to students who participate in interdistrict desegregation, such as The Choice is Yours Program, or other integration programs.

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.87)

Other Integration Programs. Integration programs funded under the "other" category include 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)

Table 50:
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
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
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.

Vocational-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.

The 2014-15 school year marked the first complete year of the new career and technical funding program. Career and technical revenue is now 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 but not 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 2015 is recognized as revenue in fiscal year 2015.

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

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

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

Table 51:
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		No aid	All levy
Prior to 2001	Formula driven-based on previous years' program spending	All aid	No levy

Table 52:
Career and Technical Revenue

Fiscal Year	Payable Year	Aid	Levy
2015	2015	\$5,172,000	\$17,935,000
2014	2014	3,959,000	16,370,000
2013	2013	–	15,338,000
2012	2012	–	17,615,000
2011	2011	–	15,062,000
2010	2010	–	14,903,000

House Research Department

(Minn. Stat. § 124D.4531)

Transition Programs; Children with Disabilities

The 2007 Legislature eliminated separate funding for this program and instead included eligible program costs in the regular special education revenue calculation.

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 approximately \$4,700, which may be used for higher education costs or to repay student loans.

Since 2004, ServeMinnesota programs have been encouraged to channel participants into tutoring and other children’s literacy programs. Other program activities include working on affordable housing projects, family stability programs, environmental restoration projects, and disaster relief programs.

Early Childhood Literacy Programs

State aid is appropriated for grants for early childhood literacy programs. These grants may be awarded to the Minnesota Reading Corps and Minnesota Math Corps, which are programs operated by ServeMinnesota; in some years, the grants also go toward the Word Works program.

Table 53:
Appropriations for ServeMinnesota and the Minnesota Reading Corps

Fiscal Year	ServeMinnesota Aid	Early Childhood Literacy Program Grants	Minnesota Math Corp	Federal Operating Funds for Reading Corps*	Federal Funds Scholarship*
2015	\$900,000	\$5,125,000	\$250,000	NA	NA
2014	900,000	4,125,000	250,000	\$10,839,000	\$5,211,000
2013	900,000	4,125,000	0	10,852,000	5,550,000
2012	900,000	4,125,000	0	8,725,000	3,896,000
2011	900,000	1,375,000	0	7,800,000	3,210,000
2010	900,000	1,375,000	0	5,995,000	2,306,000

* Amounts leveraged by state appropriation for ServeMinnesota

House Research Department

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.37-124D.45)

State Academies

Lola and Rudy Perpich Minnesota Center for Arts Education

The 1985 Legislature established a board of 15 members to develop, manage, and control the Lola and Rudy Perpich Minnesota Center for Arts Education. The board has the authority to determine the location for the center, to establish a charitable foundation, and to accept and invest gifts and bequests. The center, including the arts high school, is located in Golden Valley on the former campus of Golden Valley Lutheran College. The board may also develop and pilot test an academic curriculum that includes dance, literary arts, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts. The board may provide room and board to students. If room and board is provided, the board shall charge a reasonable fee.

Since the 1985-86 school year, the resource center has offered programs directed at improving arts education in schools throughout the state. These programs include in-service workshops for teachers and summer institutes for students in various regions of the state. A resource center advisory council advises the board about the activities of the center.

Arts education is to be provided by the board to Minnesota students in the following areas:

- ▶ interdisciplinary arts and education program for 300 students in 11th and 12th grade
- ▶ magnet arts programs through at least one school district in each congressional district
- ▶ intensive arts seminars for one or two weeks for 9th and 10th grade pupils
- ▶ summer arts institutes for pupils in grades nine to 12
- ▶ artist mentor programs at regional sites
- ▶ teacher education programs

In July 2013, the board of the Perpich Center for Arts Education entered into a one-year agreement with the East Metro Integration District (EMID) to operate the Crosswinds Integration Magnet School for 6th to 10th grade students located at the Crosswinds building in Woodbury. The 2014 Legislature explicitly granted the Perpich Center authority to operate the Crosswinds school and conveyed the building to the Perpich Center. For the 2014-2015 school year and later, the Crosswinds school will be operated by the Perpich Center, with staff hired by the Perpich Center and with funding based on the number of pupils actually served by the school, provided through the school funding formulas to Crosswinds.

(Minn. Stat. § 129C.10)

Table 54:
Minnesota Center for Arts Education

Fiscal Year	Total Direct Appropriation
2015	\$6,773,000
2014	6,773,000
2013	6,733,000
2012	6,733,000
2011	7,087,000
2010	7,087,000

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 (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.

The two residential academies both affiliated with charter schools that provided educational services to their residents. Harvest Preparatory Academy, a relatively large charter school serving about 325 students, provided educational services for residents of Synergy Academy. Synergy 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. As of June 30, 2005, the Covenant Residential Academy suspended residential services. The Covenant Academy Charter School has renamed itself Discovery Public School of Faribault and is currently providing services to about 55 students from the Faribault area. The facility that 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)

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 more than 500 students through residential programs, summer school, preschool programs, and outreach efforts. In fiscal year 2014, the Minnesota State Academy for the Blind enrolled approximately 46 full-time pupils, and the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf enrolled approximately 144 full-time pupils.

The academies' budgets are primarily funded through direct state appropriations. The resident school district of a student attending the State Academies for the Deaf and the Blind counts the student for general education revenue and passes that funding on to the state academies. The academies also receive roughly the following in annual financial contribution from other sources: \$252,000 in federal funding; \$21,000 from school district tuition payments; \$378,000 in general education revenue; and \$2.1 million from school districts for instructional aides. Resident school districts are responsible for the cost of transporting academy students to and from the academies on weekends during the school year.

Table 55:
**Direct Appropriations for the Minnesota State
Academies for the Deaf and Blind**

Fiscal Year	Appropriation
2015	\$11,964,000
2014	11,749,000
2013	11,603,000
2012	11,603,000
2011	11,912,000
2010	11,912,000

House Research Department

(Minn. Stat. §§ 125A.61-125A.72)

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 is removed from general education revenue and becomes a 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 September 1, 2014, the Commissioner of Education had approved Q-comp plans for 84 school districts and 68 charter schools; another four schools have applications pending.

Alternative Compensation Revenue. Beginning in fiscal year 2006, 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 \$75.636 million for fiscal year 2007 and later. 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.

Table 56:
Q-comp Revenue

Fiscal Year	Aid Entitlement	Levy	No. of Participating Districts	No. of Participating Charters
2015	\$79,553,000	\$30,372,000	71*	66*
2014	63,540,000	26,633,000	69	66
2013	50,681,000	19,336,000	61	59
2012	43,920,000	17,090,000	52	56
2011	44,538,000	18,178,000	50	54
2010	41,484,000	16,807,000	44	32

* Based on February 2014 Forecast Data

House Research Department

$$\text{Alternative Compensation Revenue} = \$260 \times \text{the number of enrollees at the participating site}$$

$$\text{Alternative Compensation Levy} = (\$91 \times \text{number of enrollees}) \times \text{the lesser of: (1) one; or (2) ANTC/adjusted pupil units}$$

$$\text{Alternative Compensation Aid} = \text{Alternative Compensation Revenue} - \text{Alternative Compensation Levy}$$

(Minn. Stat. §§ 126C.10, subs. 34, 35, 36; 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.

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

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

Table 57:
Literacy Incentive Aid

Fiscal Year	Appropriation
2015	\$47,458,000
2014	50,998,000
2013	31,241,000

House Research Department

(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. 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 58:
Abatement Aid and Levy

Fiscal Year	Appropriation	Levy
2015	\$3,103,000	\$13,694,000
2014	2,876,000	16,394,000
2013	2,072,000	8,321,000
2012	1,406,000	5,822,000
2011	1,132,000	5,214,000
2010	1,000,000	3,440,000

House Research Department

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:

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

The subtraction formula reduces excess tax increment aid by the percentage of a district’s levies that are certified.

(Minn. Stat. § 127A.49, subd. 3)

Aid for Nonpublic School 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 2015, the reimbursement rates are set at 100 percent of the statewide average expenditures per pupil unit, which are as follows: for textbooks, \$79.44; for health services, \$64.20; and for guidance and counseling, \$219.49.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 123B.40-123B.43)

Table 59:
Nonpublic School Student Aid

Fiscal Year	Appropriation
2015	\$16,132,000
2014	15,867,000
2013	15,594,000
2012	14,302,000
2011	16,157,000
2010	12,861,000

House Research Department

If the appropriation for nonpublic pupil aids is insufficient to cover school districts' expenditures, the districts may correspondingly reduce their expenditures for nonpublic school pupil aids.

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 aid 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 basic appropriation for general education aid.

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

Table 60:
Shared Time Programs

Fiscal Year	Estimated Shared Time Weighted Pupil Count	Appropriation*
2015	757	\$4,396,000
2014	741	3,929,000
2013	755	3,496,000
2012	768	3,974,000
2011	768	3,935,000
2010	737	3,776,000

*Appropriation included in general education appropriation.

House Research Department

Shared Time Special Education. School districts are required to provide special education programs for children with disabilities. (See page 55 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.

(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 site⁷ 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 years 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.

For fiscal year 2015, the ratio is adjusted to match the lower pupil weights and higher formula allowance.

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

⁷ 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.

Table 61:
Nonpublic Pupil Transportation

Fiscal Year	Appropriations
2015	\$17,710,000
2014	18,500,000
2013	19,036,000
2012	17,757,000
2011	19,729,000
2010	17,297,000

House Research Department

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 22 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

School Lunch. The state pays aid to school districts for each school lunch served to a student. The state aid amounts were increased beginning in fiscal year 2014, from 12 cents to 12.5 cents per student lunch served, whether the meal is a fully paid, reduced price, or free student lunch, and beginning in fiscal year 2015, the state reimbursement for reduced price meals is 52.5 cents per lunch served. The state aid is in addition to federal funds provided to districts for fully paid (28 cents per lunch served), reduced-price (\$2.53 per lunch served), and free lunches (\$2.93 per lunch served). Each lunch that meets the revised nutritional standards qualifies for an extra 6-cent payment.

Beginning in fiscal year 2015, all students qualifying for a free or reduced price lunch may receive their school lunch at no cost.

School Breakfast. The state pays aid to school districts that participate in the federal school breakfast program. The state pays 55 cents for each fully paid breakfast served and 30 cents for each reduced-price breakfast served for students in grades other than kindergarten. For kindergarten pupils, beginning in fiscal year 2015, the state pays \$1.30 for each fully paid breakfast and all kindergarten students are eligible for breakfast at no cost to the student. A school district may not charge a fee to students for free or reduced-price breakfast. The federal government provides a reimbursement for each school breakfast served ranging from 28 cents for full-paid students to \$1.89 for free meal eligible students attending a “severe need” school.

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.

Federal support for school nutrition programs is substantial. For fiscal year 2014 in Minnesota, this support included \$151.5 million for lunch programs, \$25.8 million in commodity value (foodstuffs given to schools), and \$41.6 million for breakfast programs.

(Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.111-124D.119)

Table 62:
School Lunch, Milk, and Breakfast Aid

Fiscal Year	Appropriations for School Lunch Aid	Appropriations for School Breakfast Aid and School Milk	Kindergarten Milk
2015	\$16,185,000	\$6,176,000	\$1,002,000
2014	12,417,000	5,308,000	992,000
2013	12,524,000	5,560,000	1,035,000
2012	12,285,000	5,247,000	1,025,000
2011	12,671,000	4,825,000	1,126,000
2010	12,307,000	4,652,000	1,104,000

House Research Department

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.

For fiscal years 2009 to 2014, the safe schools levy equals \$30 per pupil unit and a school district that is a member of an intermediate school district may levy up to an additional \$10 per pupil unit for safe schools activities at intermediate school districts. For fiscal years 2015 and later, the safe schools levy equals \$36 per pupil (this is a \$4 per pupil increase in actual funding and the other \$2 per pupil change adjusts for the lower pupil weights).

For fiscal years 2010 and 2011 only, a school district was required to reserve at least \$3 per pupil of its revenue for school counselors and certain other support personnel. In addition, by making the levy, for these years, the district was obligated to meet a maintenance of effort for school counselors, school nurses, school social workers, and chemical dependency counselors as measured either by total cost for these activities or by total FTE for these activities. This maintenance of effort requirement was repealed for fiscal year 2012 and later.

Table 63:
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
2016	\$36	\$15	None	\$33,513,000*	\$3,129,000*
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 chemical dependency program staff	28,371,000	2,638,000
2010	30	10	See above	28,262,000	2,651,000
2009	30	10		26,262,000	2,671,000
2008	27			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			6,256,000	

* Estimated

House Research Department

(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.

(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)

Reemployment (unemployment) insurance costs. A district may levy the amount necessary to pay the district's unemployment insurance costs.

(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)

Table 64:
Miscellaneous Levy Amounts

Payable Year	Liabilities of Dissolved Districts	Reorganization /Consolidation Expenses	Judgment	Unemployment Insurance	Swimming Pool Levy	Ice Arena Levy	Tree Growth Levy
2014	\$0	\$1,336,000	\$484,000	\$8,091,000	\$528,000	\$1,891,000	\$695,000
2013	0	1,103,000	564,000	11,029,000	541,000	1,955,000	683,000
2012	0	1,225,000	516,000	12,942,000	536,000	1,809,000	683,000
2011	0	1,316,000	377,000	13,067,000	530,000	1,624,000	632,000
2010	0	1,381,000	683,000	8,683,000	569,000	1,448,000	632,000
2009	0	1,463,000	1,429,000	6,717,000	559,000	1,379,000	632,000

Income Tax Deductions and Credits

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. For tax years starting after December 31, 2001, the credit equals 75 percent (instead of 100 percent) of the amount of qualified education-related expenses.

The maximum credit is \$1,000 per child, and for tax years starting after December 31, 2004, there is no family cap (prior to 2004 the family cap was \$2,000). The credit is refundable. Any amount that exceeds tax liability is paid to the claimant as a refund. Claimants with incomes under \$33,500 may claim the full credit. The maximum credit is phased out for claimants with household income above \$33,500 depending on the number of children for whom the credit is claimed. The income measure used to determine eligibility for the credit is a broad measure that includes nontaxable interest, Social Security, and public welfare benefits; the same income measure is used under the property tax refund and the dependent care credit.

Tax credits directly offset tax liability (taxes owed), unlike deductions, which reduce taxable income. In the case of refundable credits, the benefit to the taxpayer exactly equals the amount of the credit claimed. If a refundable credit exceeds a taxpayer's income tax liability, the excess is refunded to the taxpayer. This is accomplished by providing an open appropriation to the Commissioner of Revenue to pay refunds allowed under the credit.

A refundable credit provides the same benefit to all claimants, regardless of income. As a result, all filers who claim an education tax credit of \$1,000 will receive a \$1,000 benefit. For those with tax liability, the benefit comes in the form of reduced taxes. Filers without tax liability receive a \$1,000 refund check. Taxpayers may not claim the deduction and credit for the same expenses. Parents who qualify for both the deduction and credit will 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. This authority was initially granted only for tax years 2002 and 2003 but has now been made permanent.

(Minn. Stat. § 290.0674)

Education Income Tax Deductions

For state income tax purposes, taxpayers may deduct from federal taxable 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 deductions are \$1,625 per dependent in grades kindergarten through six, and \$2,500 per dependent in grades seven through 12.

A deduction 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 deduction. Most Minnesota taxpayers are in the 7.05 percent bracket, where a \$2,500 deduction decreases state income taxes by \$176.25 (.0705 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 65:
Estimated Cost to State in Foregone Tax Revenue

Fiscal Year	Tax Expenditure Amount for Credit	Tax Expenditure Amount for Deduction
2015	\$12,900,000	\$18,600,000
2014	13,600,000	18,300,000
2013	14,400,000	18,300,000
2012	14,600,000	18,200,000
2011	13,400,000	14,100,000
2010	13,600,000	14,300,000

Source: Minnesota Department of Revenue tax expenditure estimates

House Research Department

For more detailed information about Minnesota’s K-12 education tax credit and deduction, see the House Research Department publication, *Income Tax Deductions and Credits for Public and Nonpublic Education in Minnesota*, September 2011.

Taconite Revenue for School Districts

There are 15 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 http://www.revenue.state.mn.us/businesses/mineral/Documents/2013_mining_guide.pdf).

Taconite Taxes

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.

The taconite production tax rate is set in statute. For concentrate produced in 2013, the rate is \$2.56 per ton. For 2014 and later, the rate equals the tax rate for 2013 times the change in the implicit price deflator since that time.

Taconite Aid Programs for Schools

The proceeds of the taconite production tax are required to be deposited into a variety of funds, and state statutes also contain formulas to provide for the distribution of revenues. For production year 2012, taconite relief area school districts received about \$15.8 million out of a total of \$102 million raised by the production tax.

The taconite production tax received by school districts is used both to reduce school district levies and provide additional revenue to school districts.

Taconite Aid

Taconite area school districts receive some additional revenue that may be used for any purpose. For fiscal years 2009 to 2013, 2 cents per ton is distributed to all school districts located in the taconite relief area to be used for any purpose. This amount is increased from 2 cents per ton to 11 cents per ton, beginning in fiscal year 2014.

Taconite Referendum Fund

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:

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

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:

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

Table 66:
**Estimated Taconite Revenue Used
 to Equalize Referendum Levies**

Fiscal Year	Equalization Revenue
2015	\$6,179,000
2014	3,091,000
2013	3,077,000
2012	2,975,000
2011	3,067,000
2010	3,324,000

House Research Department

Taconite Money for Facilities Purposes

A portion of the taconite production tax is used for school facilities purposes.

Building Maintenance Fund. Four cents per ton of the production tax is annually reserved for building maintenance and repairs and is distributed to the school districts named in statute where the taconite facilities are located. For facilities with more than one district listed, the 4 cents per ton is distributed among the districts based on each district's share of enrollment.

Table 67:

Taconite Revenue for Building Maintenance: 4 Cents per Ton

Producer	School Districts
Keewatin Taconite	ISD #316, Colerain ISD #319, Nashwauk-Keewatin
Hibbing Taconite Company	ISD #695, Chisholm ISD #701, Hibbing
Mittal Steel Company and Minntac	ISD #712, Mountain Iron-Buhl ISD #706, Virginia ISD #2711, Mesabi East ISD #2154, Eveleth-Gilbert
Northshore Mining Company	ISD #2142, St. Louis County ISD #381, Lake Superior
United Taconite	ISD #2142, St. Louis County ISD #2154, Eveleth-Gilbert

House Research Department

Iron Range School Consolidation and Cooperatively Operated School Account. The 2014 Legislature charged 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 IRRRB is responsible for allocating the funds to qualifying school district projects. The revenue and expenditures are 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, for distributions from 2015 to 2023 and 5 cents per ton each year thereafter;
- (2) an amount equal to 6 cents per ton of the proceeds that would otherwise have been distributed according to the occupation tax;
- (3) for distribution years 2015 to 2017 only, two-thirds of the increased tax proceeds attributable to the increase in the implicit price deflator; 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).

According to early estimates, the account is expected to take in about \$5 million for the current biennium and about \$18 million in the 2016-17 biennium.

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 IRRRB. 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 IRRRB must approve any expenditure from the account.

Minn. Stat. § 298.28, subd. 7a.

Taconite School Bond Payments. Over the last 30 years the legislature has occasionally authorized the use of taconite production tax revenue for the full or partial repayment of locally issued school building bonds. In most cases, the legislation names the districts, specifies the approved bonding authority, and then sets the share of the bond repayment coming from the taconite production tax.

On two occasions, the legislature has authorized the IRRRB 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 68:
Taconite Debt Service Assistance

Year of Legislation	Amount Authorized	Type of Assistance Supported by Production Tax	Citation
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

House Research Department

Taconite Money for School Property Tax Relief

A portion of the taconite production tax 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 district's levies.

Table 69:
**Estimated Taconite Revenue Used
to Reduce School District Levies**

Payable Year	Levy Reduction
2014	\$7,253,000
2013	7,257,000
2012	7,606,000
2011	7,679,000
2010	8,805,000
2009	8,667,000

House Research Department

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

Tax Relief Aids and Aids in Lieu of Taxes

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.⁸ 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.

Homestead Market Value Property Exclusion

Beginning for taxes payable in 2012, a portion of the value of homestead property is excluded from the property's tax capacity (and as such, its value is not subject to taxation). The portion of the value that is excluded equals 40 percent of the first \$76,000 of estimated market value. This exclusion is reduced as the property's value increases above \$76,000 and is fully eliminated once the property value exceeds \$413,800.

Homestead Market Value Credit

The homestead market value credit is a property tax credit first effective for taxes payable in 2002 and provided through taxes payable in 2011. For later years, the state-paid credit is eliminated, and in its place, a portion of the homestead's value is excluded from tax capacity. Each property classified as residential homestead or agricultural homestead receives the credit. The credit was computed as a percentage of the homestead's market value; in the case of an agricultural homestead, only the market value of the house, garage, and surrounding one acre of land was used in the credit computation. The formula for determining each property's credit is 0.4 percent of the first \$76,000 of a property's market value, minus .09 percent of the property's market value over \$76,000.

⁸ 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.

The maximum credit was \$304, which is the amount that a property valued at \$76,000 would receive. A home valued at \$50,000 would receive a credit of \$200 (.4% x \$50,000). A home valued at \$100,000 would receive a credit of \$280.60 (\$304 - (.09% x \$26,000)). Homes valued at \$414,000 and above receive no credit.

The credit was subtracted from each homeowner’s net tax capacity-based 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 was distributed across taxing jurisdictions in proportion to each jurisdiction’s share of the net tax capacity tax. The state made 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. 1)

Table 70:
Homestead Credit

Payable Year	School Share of Homestead Market Value Credit
2014	\$0
2013	0
2012	0
2011	60,794,000
2010	57,042,000
2009	53,815,000

House Research Department

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 agricultural homesteads 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. For taxes payable in 2003 and thereafter, 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 \$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)

Table 71:
Agricultural Credit

Payable Year	School Share of Agricultural Market Value Credit
2014	\$4,900,000
2013	5,134,000
2012	5,435,000
2011	5,078,000
2010	5,468,000
2009	5,624,000

House Research Department

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 new 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 2013, the taconite homestead credit reduced school, city, and county property taxes by approximately \$16,600,000.

(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 72:
**School District Share of Other Property Tax Credits
 Taxes Payable 2014**

Credit	Amount of Credit
Disparity Reduction Credit	\$1,683,000
Power Line Credit*	158,000
Agricultural Preserves/County Conservation Credit	281,000
Disaster Credit	0
Local Option Disaster Credit	0
Total of Other Credits	\$2,122,000
*For all taxing jurisdictions	

House Research Department

(Minn. Stat. §§ 273.119 (County Conservation Credit); 273.123 (Disasters); 273.1398, subd. 4 (Disparity Reduction Credit); 273.42 (Powerline Credit); 473H.10 (Agricultural Preserves))

Teacher Retirement

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 largest 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 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. No separate categorical aid for teacher retirement exists. However, special state aid is paid from the state to the statewide retirement fund for teachers employed by Minneapolis and Duluth and the St. Paul retirement fund, to reduce the unfunded liability in those funds.

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; that is, those plans that also provide Social Security benefits upon retirement.⁹

Employer contributions to the retirement funds are calculated as a percentage of each employee's salary. These rates are recommended by the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement and are set in

⁹ 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 members of the statewide TRA have been required to be covered under the coordinated plan. Minneapolis and St. Paul offered coordinated plans beginning in 1978. All active members of the Duluth association are covered by a coordinated plan.

statute. The following tables show the number of active members for whom employer contributions are made as of July 1, 2013, the fund assets and liabilities as of July 1, 2013, and the employer and employee contribution rates.

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

Table 73:
**Membership Counts, Fund Assets, and Liabilities
by Retirement Plan**

Fund	July 1, 2013 Active Membership	July 1, 2013 Actuarial Assets	July 1, 2013 Liabilities	Fiscal Year 2015 and Later Ongoing Annual Special State Aid Payments**	Annual State Aid for Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015 Only**
Statewide TRA		\$16,774,000,000	\$23,419,000,000	\$15,454,000	
Coordinated Plan	76,750				
Basic Plan*	15				
St. Paul TRFA		\$886,000,000	\$1,467,000,000	\$9,827,000	
Coordinated Plan	4,040				
Basic Plan	21				
Duluth TRFA		\$190,000,000	\$352,000,000	\$14,377,000	\$6,000,000
Coordinated Plan	873				
Basic Plan	0				
<p>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 will be consolidated into the statewide TRA fund.</p> <p>* The "basic" active members in the statewide TRA plan are Minneapolis teachers formerly covered by the Minneapolis TRFA plan.</p> <p>** The state aid payments are designed to reduce the funds' unfunded liability.</p> <p>Source: Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement, valuation reports</p>					

Table 74:
Employee and Employer Contribution Rates (Fiscal Years)

Fund	Employer Contribution Rates								Employee Contribution Rates							
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 and later	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017 and later	
Statewide TRA																
Coordinated Member	5.5	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	5.5	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.5	7.5	7.5	
Basic Member	9.5	10.0	10.5	11.0	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	9.0	9.5	10.0	10.5	11.0	11.0	11.0	
Minneapolis School District*																
Coordinated	9.14	9.64	10.14	10.64	11.14	11.14	11.14	11.14								
Basic	13.14	13.64	14.14	14.64	15.14	15.14	15.14	15.14								
Duluth TRFA**																
Coordinated Plan	5.79	6.29	6.79	7.29	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	5.5	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.5			
St. Paul TRFA																
Coordinated	8.34	8.59	8.84	9.09	9.34	9.84	10.09	10.34	5.5	5.75	6.0	6.25	6.5	7.0	7.5	
Basic	11.64	11.89	12.14	12.39	12.64	13.14	13.39	13.64	8.0	8.25	8.50	8.75	9.0	9.5	10.0	

* 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.
** 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.

House Research Department

Changes in School District Retirement Fund Contribution Rates

The 1997 Legislature significantly modified employer contribution rates and state payments to first-class city teacher retirement funds. Specifically:

- ▶ The additional contribution required of TRA employers was dropped from 3.64 percent of payroll to 1.64 percent of payroll effective July 1, 1997. This savings in employer contribution to the fund is recaptured by the state through a corresponding reduction in each TRA district's general education revenue (see page 27 for details).
- ▶ The remaining additional TRA employer contribution of 1.64 percent of payroll was eliminated March 31, 1998. This savings in employer contribution is a direct savings to each TRA school district and is not offset through a school district aid reduction.
- ▶ The state aid recaptured from school districts attributable to the drop in the additional employer contribution from 3.64 percent to 1.64 percent of payroll is reallocated in payments to first-class city teacher funds.

Social Security and Medicare

The employer’s Social Security contribution is determined by Congress. Beginning in 1991, 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.

Table 75:
Social Security and Medicare Employer Contribution Rates

Calendar Year	Social Security Contribution Rate	Medicare Contribution Rate	Social Security Maximum Salary	Medicare Maximum Salary
2014	6.2%	1.45%	\$117,000	Unlimited
2013	6.2	1.45	113,700	Unlimited
2012	6.2	1.45	110,100	Unlimited
2011	6.2	1.45	106,800	Unlimited
2010	6.2	1.45	106,800	Unlimited
2009	6.2	1.45	106,800	Unlimited

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 and the Public Employee Retirement Association (PERA). 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 Statement No. 45 of 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, subs. 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 the provisions that gave rise to the OPEB obligations. The statewide total amount of this levy is capped at \$9.242 million for taxes payable in 2010, \$29.863 million for taxes payable in 2011, and increases by \$14 million for each year thereafter. The statewide cap was designed to keep the total amount of levy authority for both this levy and the OPEB bonding levy at the same amount as was estimated prior to the legislative changes.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.41, subd. 2)

Added retirement. The Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts may levy for 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)

Health insurance costs for retired teachers, Minneapolis. The Minneapolis school district may levy 0.1 percent of ANTC for purposes of subsidizing health insurance costs for certain retired teachers.

(Minn. Stat. § 126C.41, subd. 4)

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 76:
Postemployment Benefit Levies

Payable Year	OPEB Bonded Debt Levy	OPEB Annual Levy	Retired Employee Health Benefits Levy	Added Retirement	Minneapolis Health	St. Paul Severance
2014	\$70,663,000	\$29,705,000	\$2,656,000	\$20,281,000	\$373,000	\$788,000
2013	69,939,000	23,535,000	2,991,000	19,677,000	373,000	831,000
2012	65,874,000	22,258,000	2,661,000	12,717,000	388,000	870,000
2011	59,845,000	19,517,000	3,262,000	12,045,000	468,000	919,000
2010	57,218,000	9,153,000	2,772,000	11,965,000	452,000	1,004,000
2009	26,969,000	NA	3,353,000	11,601,000	465,000	1,031,000

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 the following funds.

Table 77:
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
09	Agency	Money held as an agent for others
45	Postemployment Benefits Irrevocable Trust Fund	Money held in an irrevocable trust for postemployment benefits

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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.

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. Beginning in fiscal year 1978, a school district in statutory operating debt must limit its expenditures in each fiscal year such that its statutory operating debt is not greater than it was on June 30, 1977, increased by 2.5 percent of the district's operating expenditures for the fiscal year at hand. School districts not in statutory operating debt must limit expenditures so that they do not incur a statutory operating debt. If a district exceeds these expenditure limitations, it 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 2015, a school district may 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 does not affect the school district's state aid or local levy.

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. The state, on the other hand, uses a cash-based 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 2013 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. As Table 78 shows, the aid payment percentage has declined from 90 percent in fiscal year 2009 to 73 percent for fiscal year 2010, 70 percent for fiscal year 2011, and 64.3 percent for fiscal year 2012. The aid payment shift increased to 86.4 percent for fiscal year 2013 and returned to 90 percent for fiscal years 2014 and later. The following table shows the aid payment percentages for a number of years.

Table 78:
Aid Payment Percentage

Fiscal Year of Entitlement	Current Year Aid Payment Percentage	Previous Year Aid Payment Percentage	Appropriation Cost to State
2015	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	90.0	10.0	100.0
2008	90.0	10.0	100.0
2007	90.0	10.0	100.0
2006	90.0	15.7	105.7
2005	84.3	20.0	104.3
2004	80.0	17.0	97.0
2003	83.0	10.0	93.0
2002	90.0	10.0	100.0
2001	90.0	10.0	100.0
2000	90.0	10.0	100.0
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 79:
Example of Appropriation Payments

Appropriation	State Fiscal Year							
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
(a) Aid entitlement	\$3,700	\$3,800	\$3,800	\$3,800	\$4,000	\$4,200	\$4,500	\$4,800
(b) Percent share owed for previous fiscal year	10%	10%	10%	27%	30%	35.7%	13.6%	10%
(c) Share still owed for previous fiscal year	\$350	\$370	\$380	\$1,026	\$1,140	\$1,499	\$571	\$480
(d) Percent share owed for current fiscal year	90%	90%	73%	70%	64.3%	86.4%	90%	90%
(e) Share of entitlement paid during the current fiscal year	\$3,330	\$3,420	\$2,774	\$2,660	\$2,572	\$3,629	\$4,050	\$4,320
Appropriation for the current fiscal year (c) + (e)	\$3,680	\$3,790	\$3,154	\$3,686	\$3,712	\$5,128	\$4,621	\$4,800

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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 2010 Legislature statutorily reimposed the property tax recognition shift beginning in fiscal year 2010.

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 year 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 years 2014 and later.

Table 80 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 80:
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 (Percent Shifted is in bold)
1980	1981	1982	FY 1983	= 1982-83 school year
1981	1982	1983	FY 1983	= 1982-83 school year: 32% of levy
			FY 1984	= 1983-84 school year: 68% of levy
1982	1983	1984	FY 1984	= 1983-84 school year: 32% of levy
			FY 1985	= 1984-85 school year: 68% of levy
1983	1984	1985	FY 1985	= 1984-85 school year: 24% of levy
			FY 1986	= 1985-86 school year: 76% of levy
1984	1985	1986	FY 1986	= 1985-86 school year: 24% of levy
			FY 1987	= 1986-87 school year: 76% of levy
1985	1986	1987	FY 1987	= 1986-87 school year: 24% of levy
			FY 1988	= 1987-88 school year: 76% of levy
1986	1987	1988	FY 1988	= 1987-88 school year: 27% of levy
			FY 1989	= 1988-89 school year: 73% of levy
1987	1988	1989	FY 1989	= 1988-89 school year: 27% of levy
			FY 1990	= 1989-90 school year: 73% of levy
1988	1989	1990	FY 1990	= 1989-90 school year: 31% of levy
			FY 1991	= 1990-91 school year: 69% of levy
1989	1990	1991	FY 1991	= 1990-91 school year: 31% of levy
			FY 1992	= 1991-92 school year: 69% of levy
1990	1991	1992	FY 1992	= 1991-92 school year: 37% of levy
			FY 1993	= 1992-93 school year: 63% of levy
1991	1992	1993	FY 1993	= 1992-93 school year: 50% of levy
			FY 1994	= 1993-94 school year: 50% of levy
1992	1993	1994	FY 1994	= 1993-94 school year: 37.4% of levy
			FY 1995	= 1994-95 school year: 63.6% of levy

Assessment Year	December When Levy is Certified	Calendar Year When Levy is Collected	Fiscal Year	School Year When Levy is Used (Percent Shifted is in bold)
1993	1994	1995	FY 1995 = FY 1996 =	1994-95 school year: 37.4% of levy 1995-96 school year: 81% of levy
1994	1995	1996	FY 1996 = FY 1997 =	1995-96 school year: 19% of levy 1996-97 school year: 93% of levy
1995	1996	1997	FY 1997 = FY 1998 =	1996-97 school year: 7% of levy 1997-98 school year: 93% of levy
1996	1997	1998	FY 1998 = FY 1999 =	1997-98 school year: 7% of levy 1998-99 school year: 100% of levy
1997	1998	1999	FY 1999 = FY 2000 =	1998-99 school year: 0% of levy 1999-00 school year: 100% of levy
1998	1999	2000	FY 2000 = FY 2001 =	1999-00 school year: 0% of levy 2000-01 school year: 100% of levy
1999	2000	2001	FY 2001 = FY 2002 =	2000-01 school year: 0% of levy 2001-02 school year: 100% of levy
2000	2001	2002	FY 2002 = FY 2003 =	2001-02 school year: 0% of levy 2002-03 school year: 100% of levy
2001	2002	2003	FY 2003 = FY 2004 =	2002-03 school year: 0% of levy 2003-04 school year: 100% of levy
2002	2003	2004	FY 2004 = FY 2005 =	2003-04 school year: 47% of levy 2004-05 school year: 53% of levy
2003	2004	2005	FY 2005 = FY 2006 =	2004-05 school year: 48.6% of levy 2005-06 school year: 51.4% of levy
2004	2005	2006	FY 2006 = FY 2007 =	2005-06 school year: 0% of levy 2006-07 school year: 100% of levy
2005	2006	2007	FY 2007 = FY 2008 =	2006-07 school year: 0% of levy 2007-08 school year: 100% of levy
2006	2007	2008	FY 2008 = FY 2009 =	2007-08 school year: 0% of levy 2008-09 school year: 100% of levy
2007	2008	2009	FY 2009 = FY 2010 =	2008-09 school year: 0% of levy 2009-10 school year: 100% of levy
2008	2009	2010	FY2010 = FY2011 =	2009-10 school year: 48.6% of levy 2010-11 school year: 51.4% of levy
2009	2010	2011	FY2011 = FY2012 =	2010-11 school year: 48.6% of levy 2011-12 school year: 51.4% of levy
2010	2011	2012	FY2012 = FY2013 =	2011-12 school year: 48.6% of levy 2012-13 school year: 51.4% of levy
2011	2012	2013	FY2013 = FY2014 =	2012-13 school year: 48.6% of levy 2013-14 school year: 51.4% of levy
2012	2013	2014	FY2014 = FY2015 =	2013-14 school year: 0% of levy 2014-15 school year: 100% of levy
2013	2014	2015	FY2015 = FY2016 =	2014-15 school year: 0% of levy 2015-16 school 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 81:
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%	

For fiscal years 2014 and later, the 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 (for the fiscal year 2012 aid entitlement, this amounts to 3 percent of the aid entitlement)
- ▶ September 30: 40 percent of the remaining aid payments for the previous fiscal year (for the fiscal year 2012 aid entitlement, this amounts to 4 percent of the aid entitlement)
- ▶ October 30: 30 percent of the remaining aid payments for the previous fiscal year (for the fiscal year 2012 aid entitlement, this amounts to 3 percent of the aid entitlement)

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) 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. Beginning in fiscal year 2016, the authority to accelerate the cleanup payment for charter schools is eliminated.
- (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.

For more information about education financing, visit the education area of our website, www.house.mn/hrd/.