



Association of Metropolitan School Districts

Board of Directors Meeting
Friday, May 21, 2021, 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Conducted via Zoom

I. Welcome

Chair Curtis Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m. and welcomed everyone and asked if there were any introductions. A few introductions were made.

II. Routine Business

Approval of Minutes of May 7 Meeting

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the May 7 meeting. The motion was approved.

III. Executive Committee Report

Approval of 2021-2022 AMSD Budget and Membership Fees

Chair Johnson explained that the current year budget expenditures will come in close to \$30,000 under budget due to the effects of the pandemic. A significant share of the savings was due to the decision to postpone the update of the strategic plan last year. Johnson reported that the review and update will proceed this summer and that Board Member Lisa Anderson has generously offered to share her expertise and facilitate the updating of the strategic plan in the coming months. Johnson further reported that the 2020-21 budget did not include an allocation for performance pay for AMSD staff but given the healthy status of the budget, the executive committee approved reinstating a 2 percent performance pool for the current year budget. Johnson explained that the proposed budget and dues are cognizant of the budget challenges facing member school districts and that it was a priority to hold dues flat. A motion was made and seconded to approve the 2021-2022 AMSD budget and membership fees. The budget and membership fees were approved.

Election of AMSD Treasurer

Chair Johnson shared that with the coming retirement of Roseville Superintendent Aldo Sicoli, who has served as AMSD Treasurer for 6 years, AMSD needs to elect a new treasurer. The Executive Committee approved the nomination of incoming Roseville Superintendent Dr. Jenny Loeck as the new AMSD Treasurer. A motion was made and seconded to elect Dr. Loeck as the new AMSD Treasurer. The motion was approved and Dr. Loeck was elected AMSD Treasurer.

IV. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Scott Croonquist reported that with the Legislature failing to adopt the biennial budget in the regular session, the scheduled guest speakers, Adosh Unni and Terri Yetter from the MN Department of Education, will be rescheduled to join us at a future meeting. Croonquist reported that

once again the Legislature will need a special session to adopt the biennial budget. He noted that several complicating factors contributed to the stalled budget negotiations including the ongoing fight over the Governor's emergency powers, disagreements over how the federal funding should be allocated and disagreements over several policy issues. While Gov. Walz, Speaker Hortman and Majority Leader Gazelka announced an agreement on global budget targets for the finance committees on the final day of the regular session, much work remains to be done. Croonquist explained that the leadership agreement directs the chairs of the various finance committees and the appropriate commissioners to work cooperatively to reach agreement within their target. Sen. Chamberlain, Rep. Davnie and Commissioner Mueller will be working to determine the specific finance and policy provisions that will be included in the final Education Bill. They will decide how much the formula will increase, whether special education funding and English language learner funding will be included, whether VPK seats will be retained, grants for programs to increase the number of teachers of color and if school boards will have the ability to renew and existing operating referendum among other issues.

Croonquist reviewed several budget scenarios based on the funding targets for E-12 Education -- \$525 million for the 2022-23 biennium and \$675 million for the 2024-25 biennium. He noted that the target for the 2024-25 biennium is particularly limiting. For example, the target is not sufficient to even allow for a 2% per year formula increase and funding sufficient to hold the special education cross-subsidy flat.

Croonquist also reported that on the final day of the session, a new version of the Page Amendment was introduced in the Senate -- S.F. 2563. While the previous language remains the same, there was new language added:

“The duty of the state established in this section does not infringe on the right of a parent to choose for their child a private, religious, or home school as an alternative to public education.”

While it did not advance this session, it is very likely that the proposed Page constitutional amendment will be on the table again in the 2022 legislative session.

Croonquist noted that he included the 2021-22 AMSD meeting calendar in a recent email and reminded board members to include the meeting dates on their calendars.

V. Recognition of Retiring Superintendents

Executive Director Croonquist noted that we have eight retiring AMSD superintendents who we want to recognize and thank for their support and service to AMSD, their school district and public education. Chair Johnson added his thanks for their incredible work and devotion to public education. Johnson named all of the retiring superintendents and invited each to share any comments or thoughts. The AMSD superintendents who are retiring: John Schultz (Edina), Les Fujitake (Bloomington), Karen Orcutt (Orono), Stephanie Burrage (Robbinsdale), Connie Hayes (NE Metro 916), Mark Zuzek (Intermediate 917), Michael Munoz (Rochester) and Aldo Sicoli (Roseville).

VI. Adjourn

Chair Johnson thanked everyone for their attendance. There being no further business, Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:20 a.m.