

June 2022
Volume 19
Number 9

Support for Centennial Students Through Community Partnerships

June 10, 2022

Executive/Legislative Committee Meeting

7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.
Anderson Center
Bethel University
Arden Hills

July 29, 2022

Executive/Legislative Committee Meeting

7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.
Anderson Center
Bethel University
Arden Hills

August 5, 2022

Board of Directors Meeting

7 a.m. - 9 a.m.
Quora Education Center
NE Metro 916
Little Canada

August 26, 2022

Executive/Legislative Committee Meeting

7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.
Anderson Center
Bethel University
Arden Hills

The Centennial School District (ISD 12) serves the cities of Blaine, Centerville, Circle Pines, Lexington, and Lino Lakes and is referred to as the “glue that holds the communities together.” Centennial’s community education department has stepped in to make connections with students and their families, and with federal dollars, the department works with community partners on programming to ensure learning and support opportunities are available beyond the school day.



Cori Sendle (left), director of community education at Centennial Schools, coordinated the student support programs at The Landings and Centennial Square. Amy Nordlund, preschool teacher, extends her day as a tutor at The Landings.

Students who reside at Centennial Square, a manufactured home community located in the district, head after school to the Youthway, a safe place for youth located in the center of the development. The loss of a community partner had closed Youthway’s doors, and it reopened this school year thanks to the support of federal funding along with the help of the district’s community education program and Bethel University student volunteers who provide homework support and lead activities designed to engage youth.

Continued on page 2

To say the 2022 legislative session was a disappointment would be a major understatement. With a historic budget surplus available to help our students recover from the pandemic, and mitigate looming budget cuts in our school districts, state policymakers failed to approve a supplemental funding bill for education. We need lawmakers to return for a special session to use this once in a generation opportunity to address the growing special education cross-subsidy and help stabilize funding for our schools. I urge AMSD members to contact Gov. Tim Walz, Senate Majority Leader Jeremy Miller, and House Speaker Melissa Hortman to ask them to convene a special session to finish their work. In addition, make sure your local legislators understand the implications of inaction on a supplemental budget bill — what it will mean for your students and staff next school year. Thank you in advance for your continued advocacy!

From the AMSD Chair, Kelsey Dawson Walton, Osseo Area Schools Board Member

Centennial's Pride is on Making Connections

Continued from page 1

"Centennial Square is an amazing community that blends a diverse group of students," said Danielle Anderson, Student Assistant Coordinator at Centennial High School and site lead for the program. "It has been so rewarding to have students coming back to the Youthway," she added.

Similarly at the Landings of Lexington, an apartment complex located in the district, a community of teachers and paraprofessionals from Centennial Elementary and Bethel University student volunteers tutor learners. Working in small groups and one-on-one with students, the building's community room transforms into a tutoring environment.

Bethel student volunteers are enrolled in the course, "Educational Equity," and are learning while volunteering. "Overwhelmingly, Bethel students report that they enjoy their service-learning experiences," said Elisabeth Lefebvre, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Bethel University. "Beyond the connections between course content focused on educational equity and the opportunity to work with students who attend local schools, students value the relationships they have a chance to build."

Our young learners are not the only ones who benefit from the experience. "I have really enjoyed being a part of the program at the Landings," said Joan Anderson, kindergarten teacher at Centennial Elementary. "The program has allowed us to target kids who need extra support to get their homework completed."

The program is popular with families, too. "The program has also supported parents who are unable to help their kids with homework due to the language barriers, or they can't afford private tutoring," said Ramla Iman, paraprofessional and cultural liaison for Centennial Schools and a parent of children enrolled in the district.

Centennial's pride is on making connections. "When one door closed, another one opened," said Cori Sendle, director of community education at Centennial Schools. "In a district our size, we really lean on each other to provide support for our families and members of the communities," she added. "The power of partnerships created these learning support opportunities for our students and families."

"Ultimately, good partnerships require time to develop and should be mutually beneficial," said Lefebvre. "In this case, Bethel students have a unique opportunity to support the Centennial School District in providing after school programming, while also learning about some of the practical implications of what we talk about in Educational Equity," she added. "I'm thankful for Cori Sendle and the rest of the Centennial team's work in making this partnership possible!"

This month's member feature was submitted by Krista Bergert, Director of Public Information and Community Outreach, Centennial Schools.



Joan Anderson, kindergarten teacher at Centennial Elementary, volunteers at The Landings as a tutor. Anderson works with Bilquees Mohamud, kindergarten student. The program has allowed teachers and staff to connect with students in a different setting.

Lawmakers Fail to Approve Supplemental Funding for Education Despite Historic Surplus

More than two weeks after the 2022 Legislature adjourned on May 22 without passing a supplemental education funding bill, the prospects for a special session to provide critically needed funding for schools are in doubt.

As a result — and despite a record budget surplus that could mitigate significant school district deficits — school boards across Minnesota have begun the now seemingly annual process of trimming programs and reducing staff to balance their increasingly challenged budgets. Inflationary cost pressures, supply chain issues, and the persistent underfunding of special education and other programs has taken a toll on school district budgets. A survey conducted in March showed that AMSD members projected combined budget shortfalls of more than \$240 million for the 2022-2023 school year if no additional funding was approved in the session.



Several of the state's leading educational organizations advocated at the Capitol on May 9 for the Legislature to fund the growing special education cross-subsidy.

In early May, the state's leading education organizations, including AMSD, called on the Governor and legislators to fund the significant, and growing, special education cross-subsidy – the gap between mandated special education programs and services and the revenue provided by the state and federal governments.

Legislators from both parties acknowledged the state was not meeting its obligation and expressed vocal support to address the growing special education funding shortfall. The state's leadership — Speaker of the House Melissa Hortman, Senate Majority Leader Jeremy Miller and Gov. Tim Walz — agreed to a budget framework that included an additional \$1 billion for education.

The \$1 billion agreement, however, was just a broad framework, and it was left to the education conference committee led by Rep. Jim Davnie (DFL-Minneapolis) and Sen. Roger Chamberlain (R-Lino Lakes) to work out the details. After two weeks of conference committee work, the two sides appeared to come close — agreeing to significant amounts of special education aid, literacy funding and some mental health supports (totalling \$320 million for FY2022-23 and \$680 million for FY2024-25) — but in the end, a final agreement was not reached.

Continued on page 5

Without Additional Funding from the State, School Districts Face Significant Cuts in Programming and Staff

E-12 Education Bills Major Spending Categories FY22-23 Biennium | State Appropriations

GENERAL FUND	Key Spending Areas			FY2022-23	Final Offers 5/21/22	
\$ in Thousands	Governor	House	Senate	Agreement	House	Senate
Special Education Cross-Subsidy	47,516	422,613			196,139	260,598
Literacy	8,000	6,250	30,700		56,200	54,400
Student Support Personnel Aid	19,190	95,862			30,760	
Early Learning Scholarships	56,177	131,177			14,567	
School Meals Aid + CEP Compensatory Adjustment		23,546			13,314	
Level 4 Mental Health Innovation Grants	4,900	9,000			9,000	5,000
Computer Science Blueprint					20	
Hourly School Workers UI Levy (CTE Levy Equ)					-	
Subtotal, Final Offers:	135,783	688,448	30,700	320,000	320,000	319,998

Source: Minnesota Department of Education, May 2022

E-12 Education Bills Major Spending Categories FY24-25 Biennium | State Appropriations

GENERAL FUND	Key Spending Areas			FY2024-25	Final Offers 5/21/22	
\$ in Thousands	Governor	House	Senate	Agreement	House	Senate
Special Education Cross-Subsidy	112,224	992,505			464,645	666,192
Literacy	16,000	13,240	1,400		5,400	3,800
Student Support Personnel Aid	48,903	212,295			75,462	
Early Learning Scholarships	103,920	43,920			44,000	
School Meals Aid + CEP Compensatory Adj		27,938			16,493	
Level 4 Mental Health Innovation Grants		18,000			18,000	10,000
Computer Science Blueprint		40			-	
Hourly School Workers UI Levy (CTE Levy Equ)		-			56,000	
Subtotal, Final Offers	281,047	1,307,938	1,400	680,000	680,000	679,992

Source: Minnesota Department of Education, May 2022

AMSD Urges a Special Session to Address Special Education Funding

Continued from page 3

The Tax Conference Committee reached an agreement, but its passage was contingent on agreements being reached on all of the supplemental budget bills, so it also was not passed. The Tax agreement included:

- \$66.3M in property tax relief through enhanced equalization of the Local Optional Levy.
- Beginning in FY24, the first tier LOR equalization is changed to use an equalizing factor of 154.79% of the state average referendum market value per resident pupil.

The agreement would address federal conformity for 529 savings plans, expand eligibility for the K-12 Education Credit and provide a sales tax exemption on construction materials for identified school districts.

A few education-related bills did pass and were signed into law, specifically:

- **SF 2677 (Pelowski/Pratt)** repaid federal unemployment insurance trust fund loans, replenished state unemployment insurance trust fund, \$500 million appropriated for bonuses for frontline workers, including education staff. ([Chapter 50](#))
- **HF 2725 (Edelson/Draheim)** appropriates \$92.7M to fund mental health programs and initiatives, including \$2 million in FY23 for school-linked behavioral health grants. ([Chapter 99](#))
- **SF 3107 (Duckworth/Howard)** will increase the amount of yearly earnings that a school board member may receive from the school district for employment from \$8,000 per fiscal year to \$20,000 per fiscal year. ([Chapter 78](#))
- **HF2353 (Feist/Limmer)** Student Data Privacy Act, which will limit tracking abilities of private companies on student devices, except under certain exemptions. Will also prohibit vendors and districts from selling or using student data for the purposes of marketing and advertising. The act also classifies educational support services data as private data. ([Chapter 69](#))

At this point, the only way to approve supplemental funding for education is in a special session. House Speaker Hortman has urged the Governor to call a special session to finish the work and the Governor has indicated he would call a special session if an agreement is reached. Senate Majority Leader Jeremy Miller has not ruled out a special session but thus far, a deal has not been reached.

AMSD and other education organizations are continuing to advocate for a special session to address the critical underfunding of special education costs.

AMSD members and citizens concerned about public education can contact the Governor, legislative leaders and your local legislators to urge them to finish their work and pass a supplemental budget bill for E-12 Education in a special session. Contact information is below.

- [LINK: View the Contact Information of Gov. Walz, House and Senate Leadership](#)