

CONNECTIONS



News from the Association of Metropolitan School Districts

September 2022

Volume 19

Number 11

ISD 199 Student Success Coaches & Learning Partners Provide Support for Return to School

September 9, 2022

Board of Directors Meeting

7 a.m. - 9 a.m.

Quora Education Center

NE Metro 916

Little Canada

September 30, 2022

Executive/Legislative Committee Meeting

7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.

Anderson Center

Bethel University

Arden Hills

October 7, 2022

Board of Directors Meeting

7 a.m. - 9 a.m.

Quora Education Center

NE Metro 916

Little Canada

October 28, 2022

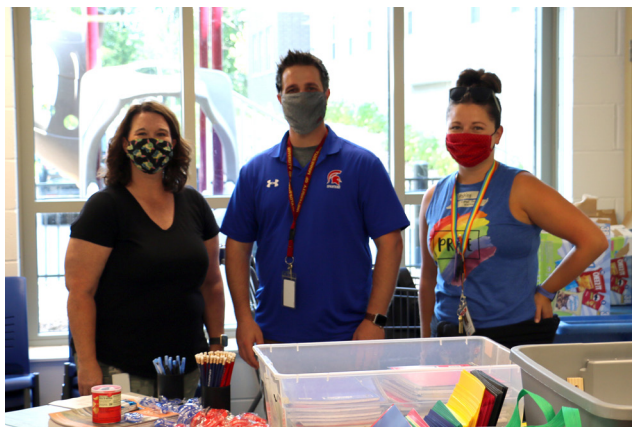
Executive/Legislative Committee Meeting

7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.

Anderson Center

Bethel University

COVID-19 and its disruptions left students around the world with unfinished academic and social-emotional learning. Inver Grove Heights Schools students showed above-average academic growth during the pandemic, but staff knew that students and families would still need additional support to get learning for all students back on track. During the 2021-2022 school year, ISD 199 used some federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) funds to introduce Learning Partners and Student Success Coaches at each school. The new positions provide additional student support inside and outside of the classroom. After the first year of having these educators in place, students became even more successful in the school setting, both in terms of academics and social-emotional learning.



Hilltop Elementary School Student Success Coach Sarah Zaiser (left) visited the local permanent supportive housing site before the first day of school to build relationships with families.

Before the start of the 2021-2022 school year, ISD 199 prioritized assessing students so staff could accurately address what each student needed in order to learn at or above grade level. Learning Partners were put in place to collaborate with teachers on assessing and identifying student needs. They used the assessment information to plan, design, and provide extra targeted small group instruction or enrichment to students to accelerate their learning and increase teaching time during the school day.

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In addition to the state constitutional offices, congressional races, and all 201 state legislative seats, there are school board races and important referendum questions on the ballot this fall. This month's newsletter highlights the eight AMSD school districts that have referendum questions on the Nov. 8 ballot. It can be very challenging for school leaders to break through the 'noise' of high-profile races and political advertisements to ensure communities and voters have the information they need about their school referendum questions. Hopefully AMSD as a collective and each of us as individuals can support our communities in getting the information they need to make informed choices this fall. If there is a way for us to help, please be in touch. Wishing all of you the best of luck as you advocate for public education in your communities this election season!

From the AMSD Chair, Crystal Brakke, Richfield Public Schools Board Member

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Efforts Resulted in Better Outcomes and More Success For Students

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After assessing students, Learning Partners worked side-by-side with teachers in the classroom. They used evidenced-based strategies to support student understanding of core instruction and strengthen student engagement. They assisted with and modeled high quality core instruction, lessons personalized to student needs, targeted small groups, support, and best practices to help students succeed in class.

Student Success Coaches complemented the work of Learning Partners by providing support outside of the classroom. They worked with the larger school community, providing additional support to teachers, introducing schoolwide lessons and activities, connecting with families, and directly teaching students in small groups. They also shared best practices for managing student behavior with teachers. They worked alongside teachers to identify ways to further produce positive outcomes that kept students in class and focused on learning.



Kindergarten students built block cities to engage in cooperative play. The curriculum, Incredible Flexible You, was led by elementary-level Student Success Coaches.

On the student side, Student Success Coaches worked with their schools to develop students' core life skills. Staff paired students in third, fourth, and fifth grade with students in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade for buddy projects. Matching up older and younger students provided leadership opportunities and built schoolwide peer relationships. At Inver Grove Heights Middle School, they gave students role models by inviting local professionals to speak to eighth graders about how to be successful. Student Success Coaches at the middle and high school levels also connected with students in fifth and eighth grade to guide them through their upcoming transition to a new school.

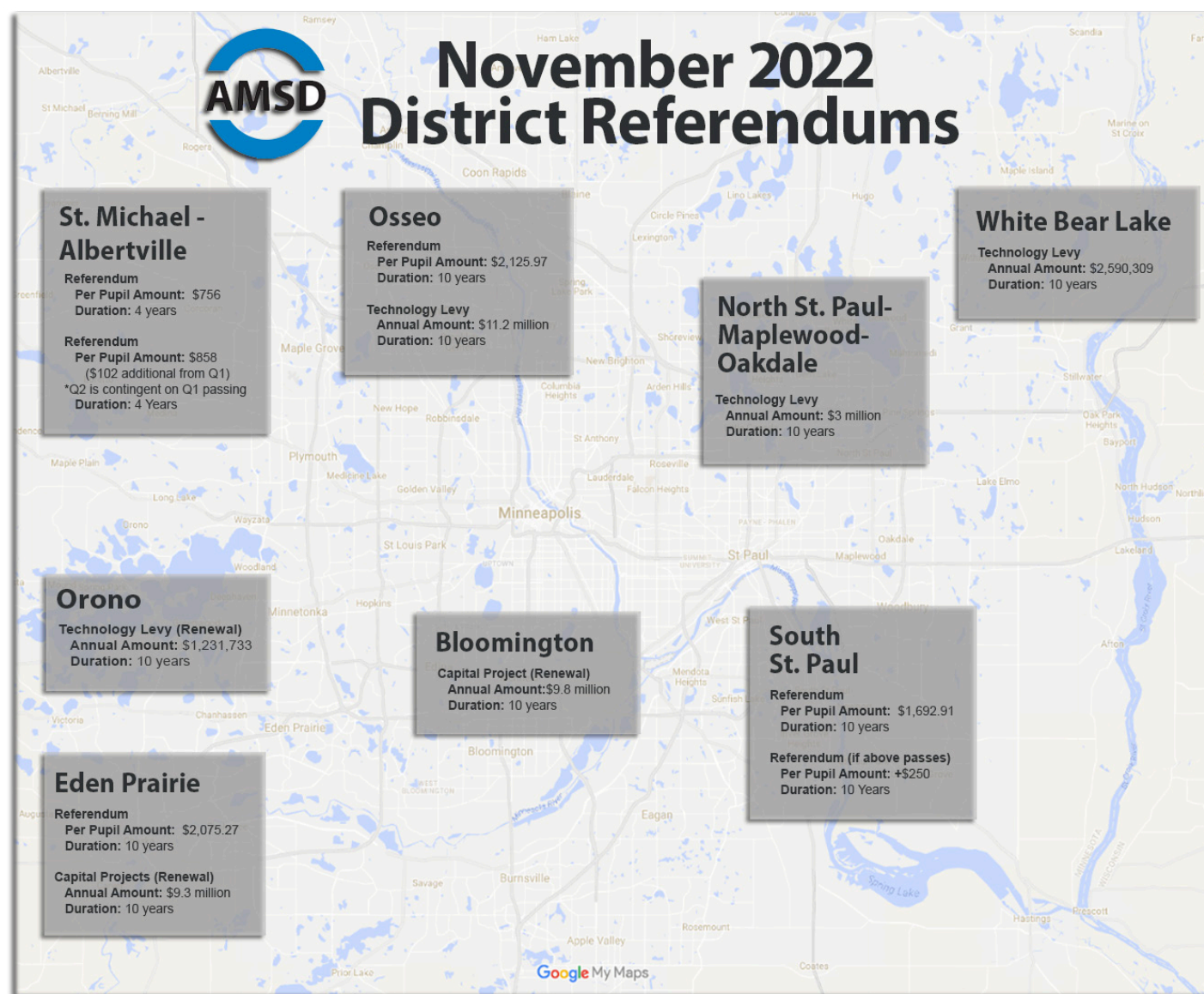
In addition to building relationships with students, Student Success Coaches worked with parents to remove any obstacles to learning. They sought out families who had disengaged with school, held listening sessions with families to better understand student needs, and organized community events to strengthen connections between school and home.

All of the efforts of the Student Success Coaches and Learning Partners resulted in better outcomes and more success for students. Increased positive relationships between students and between the schools and parents led to higher attendance, fewer tardies, and more engagement in the classroom. Students with previous negative behaviors decreased those behaviors and their referrals, choosing to use self-regulation techniques more often. All of these positive changes and the additional support provided for core instruction also led to improved grades.

ISD 199 has taken intentional steps to reduce the impacts of the pandemic on student learning, including introducing Learning Partners and Student Success Coaches. In their first year of work, both student support positions created the conditions for students to be successful in school. They helped remove barriers to academic learning and improved peer relationships and social-emotional skills with the help of families and teachers. ISD 199 staff continue to go above and beyond to maintain the district's culture of high expectations that accelerates learning for all students rather than remediating learning. The work of Learning Partners and Student Success Coaches has further helped students achieve success with the tools, teaching, and relationships they have provided. ISD 199 is lucky to have these versatile educators in our buildings to offer personalized support for student learning and be additional bridges between families and our schools.

This month's member feature was submitted by Katie Sheridan, Communications & Marketing Manager, Inver Grove Heights Schools.

Eight AMSD Districts on the November Ballot with Referendums



Eight AMSD school districts will have referendum questions on the ballot on Tues., Nov. 8. The ballot questions include operating referendum renewals or increases and/or capital project levy renewals or increases. A [chart on www.amsd.org](http://www.amsd.org) outlines the AMSD member district referendum questions and includes a link to the school district website where detailed information about the referendum questions can be found. Voters are encouraged to contact their local school officials if they have questions about their school district's referendum.

Why referendums are necessary

Education funding is primarily a state and local partnership in Minnesota with the federal government providing a modest level of aid. The importance of the local component of that partnership is illustrated in the graph on the following page. Basic revenue, provided by the state, is the most important funding stream for school districts, accounting for just over 70 percent of general education revenue. However, two key local levies, voter approved referendum revenue (9 percent) and local optional revenue (6.9 percent), provide nearly 16 percent of general education revenue. Metropolitan

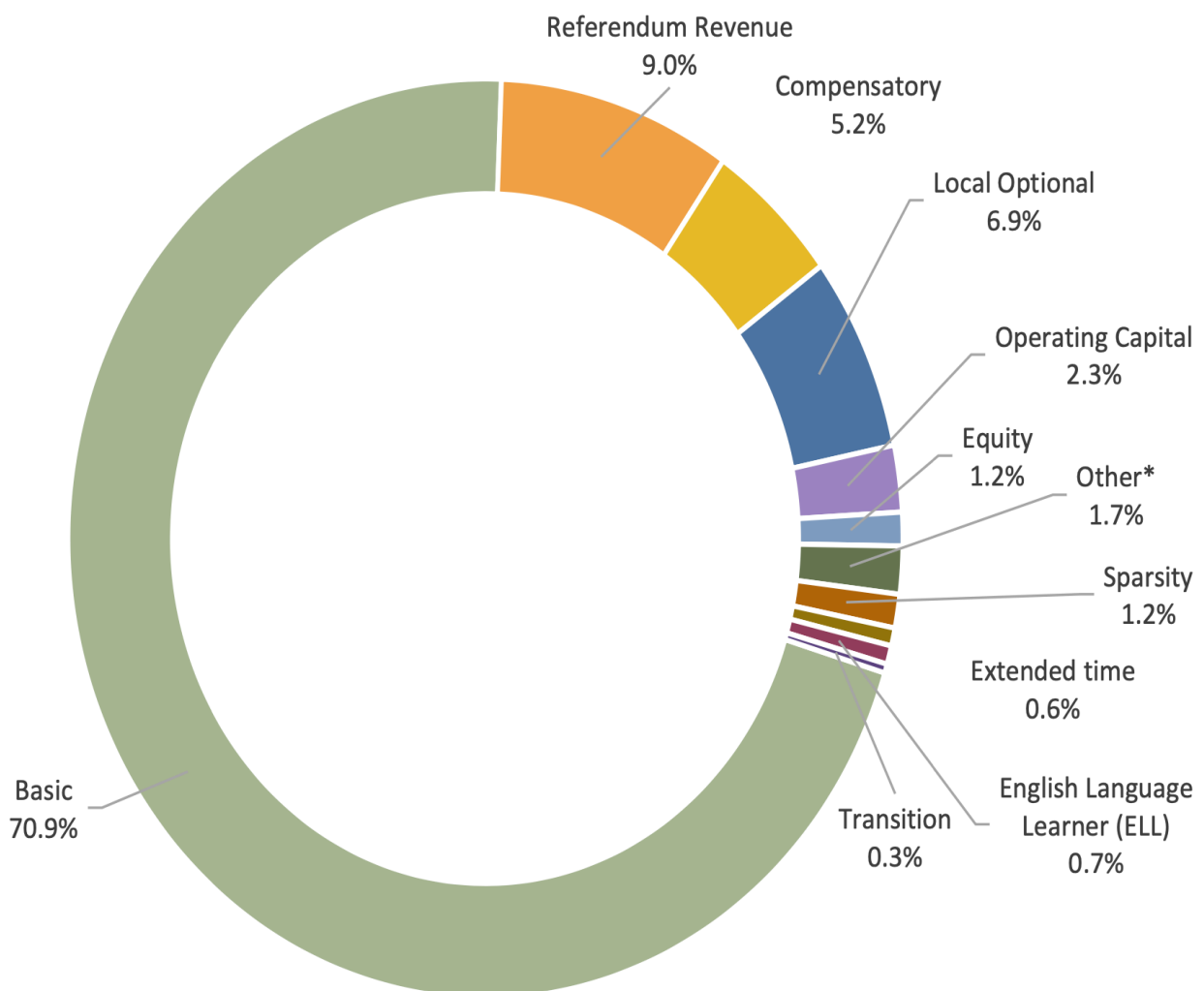
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Education Funding is a State/Local Partnership

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and regional center school districts are particularly reliant on voter-approved referenda because Minnesota, unlike many other states, does not account for regional variations in labor costs. AMSD member districts rely on the operating referendum to cover the market-driven labor cost differentials. Some member districts receive 20 percent or more of their operating revenue from a voter approved referendum.

FY2023 General Education Program Components (2022-23 School Year)



*Other includes Declining Enrollment, Small Schools, Gifted & Talented, PSEO and various other Adjustments.

Source: Minnesota House of Representatives Fiscal Analysis Department, July 2022

Referendum Revenue Supports Essential Programming

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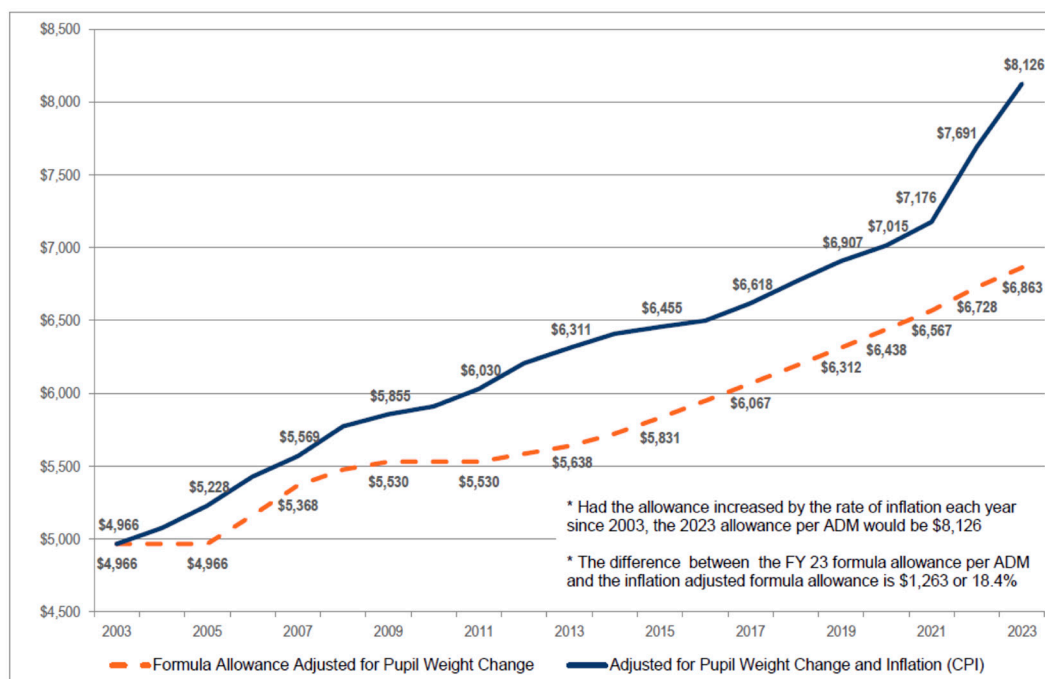
Adding to the importance of referendum revenue, the federal and state governments continue to significantly underfund the special education and English learner programs. Similarly, the general education formula continues to lag far behind inflation. Based on updated calculations from the Minnesota Department of Education, the general education formula would be \$1,263 per pupil higher today if it had kept pace with inflation since 2003 — and that is using the Consumer Price Index which understates the inflationary pressures school districts face.

With the Legislature failing to address the growing special education cross-subsidy or provide any supplemental funding for education in the 2022 session, referendum revenue will be essential in helping school districts recover from the pandemic. While the federal government provided emergency funding over the past three years to help school districts address the enormous challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the funds were one-time and do not continue.

Capital projects referendums provide school districts with revenue to address needs related to classroom technology, cybersecurity assessments, building security, including cameras, door lock systems, visitor management systems, and emergency response structures. The State does not provide a dedicated funding stream for technology which is critical to ensuring students have the opportunities they need to reach their full potential and graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary or career.

General Education Formula Allowance, 2003-2023

Adjusted for Pupil Weight Change and Inflation (CPI)



Source: MDE June 2022 Inflation Estimates

