

FACT SHEET | Education: Engine of Opportunity and Success

An Opportunity Agenda for a Better Minnesota

The opportunity to succeed in life and create jobs in our economy is built on a world-class education. That is why Governor Dayton is committed to improving educational opportunities for every Minnesotan, everywhere in Minnesota. From making important investments from early childhood to technical school and college, the Dayton Administration is committed to helping working Minnesotans access excellent educations to out-innovate the competition and succeed in a modern economy. Governor Dayton is working to expand voluntary preK, deliver excellent educations for every student, increase child care access and choice, and offer college and career readiness to Minnesotans across our state.

Expanding Early Childhood Access & Choice

- **Expanding Voluntary PreK** – Last year, Governor Dayton secured a historic investment to offer free, voluntary preschool at Minnesota school districts. That \$25 million investment allowed 74 school districts across the state to offer this opportunity for Minnesota families, but more than twice that many schools applied. Every family ought to have the opportunity to give their kids the best start – that’s why Governor Dayton is calling for \$75 million to expand voluntary preK for Minnesota families. Voluntary preschool options are especially important in Greater Minnesota, where transportation challenges make accessing other early education and child care options difficult for Minnesota families. Thanks to Minnesota’s past investments in early education, [the state secured an “A” ranking](#) for “early foundations” in a national survey of states’ education policies this year.
- **Increasing Access to Quality, Affordable Child Care** – Right now, only 33,000 Minnesota families have access to tax credits for child care, which costs Minnesota families over \$10,000 per year for each child, on average – some of the highest costs in the country. Governor Dayton wants to expand access to these tax credits to a total of 95,000 Minnesota families, providing \$60 million in tax cuts and giving more child care choices to more Minnesota families. Another 75,000 families, who were already eligible, would save an additional \$379 per year. The Dayton Opportunity Agenda also includes \$85 million to increase child care provider payment rates and remove red tape for low-income families and their providers. These investments would result in more stable assistance for families and increase the number of child care providers who participate in the Child Care Assistance Program, improving care for more than 30,000 children from low-income families, especially in Greater Minnesota.
- **Strong Families, Strong Futures** – Minnesota teenagers gave birth to 2,406 babies in 2015. These new parents often lack family support, high school diplomas, and parenting skills. To help teen parents and their newborns get off to a strong start, Governor Dayton is proposing a \$31 million investment in the Department of Health’s highly effective Home Visiting Program, which helps young parents of at-risk children develop the skills they need to care for their children. Economists have found that home visiting programs can return \$5.70 for every \$1.00 invested, by increasing graduation rates, decreasing incarceration rates, improving school readiness, and supporting child health. The proposal also will improve access to evidence-based home visiting for all high-risk mothers by increasing Medical Assistance payments for these services.

Supporting Strong Schools & Student Success

- **Investing in Student Success** – Minnesota is falling behind the rest of the nation in educational opportunities. Right now, we rank only 19th out of the 50 states in our investments in students. When Governor Dayton was elected in 2010, he committed to investing in better opportunities for Minnesota students every year – no excuses, no exceptions. To keep that promise, Governor Dayton has proposed a \$609 million boost for Minnesota school kids to ensure better opportunities for every student and family, everywhere in Minnesota.
- **Engaging Teachers, Engaging Minds** – Good teachers can make all the difference for kids accessing opportunity and achieving success in their lives. But each year, Minnesota schools lose about 5,800 teachers to retirement, relocation to other states, and career changes, with Greater Minnesota communities hit especially hard. Teaching is engaging and important work – good teachers help close the achievement

gap, and serve as advocates and role models. To expand opportunities for teachers, students, and communities across our state, the Dayton Opportunity Agenda includes a \$5 million investment to help train and attract more than 800 potential teachers by 2021.

- **Strong Schools, Healthy Communities** – Community schools offer great opportunities for children and their families to succeed in school and life. Schools are increasingly responsible for providing support services to students beyond the traditional classroom. This year, Governor Dayton has proposed \$2 million to give more schools the opportunity to partner with communities to offer health and dental clinics, mental health services, family resource centers, college access information, out-of-school program information, and other family support services around the state.
- **Homework Starts with Home** – Approximately 167,000 Minnesota households with children face housing instability. Research shows that homeless and mobile children are more likely to be absent from school, perform worse on math and reading tests, and eventually drop out. Through the Homework Starts with Home program, the Dayton Opportunity Agenda includes \$6 million to provide rental assistance to Minnesota families with children to ensure that students have stable housing throughout the school year. Governor Dayton also has proposed a \$2 million investment to reduce homelessness for families with children.
- **Special Education Funding** – Many Minnesota schools face significant financial burdens that hinder their ability to support all students. Governor Dayton has proposed a \$40 million investment in special education funding, which would ensure that every student has access to the same great education opportunities, everywhere in the state

College & Career Readiness

- **Making College More Affordable for Minnesota Students** – Accessing the opportunities of our economy increasingly requires college or career training. But paying for school can be tough, especially with many incomes still not rising for Minnesota families. That is why Governor Dayton has proposed \$62 million for the State Grant Program. This investment would increase grants for 82,400 students and allow an additional 6,400 students to get grants. The Dayton Opportunity Agenda also includes additional support for Minnesota State and University of Minnesota schools, to ensure their continued excellence in serving Minnesota students.
- **Connecting Hardworking Minnesotans with Careers** – The economy is changing around the world, and it is changing career opportunities available here in Minnesota. To connect hardworking Minnesotans with these new opportunities, the Governor's budget would invest \$125 million to support career readiness at Minnesota State campuses around the state. These investments will make sure more Minnesotans, no matter where they live, can get the career readiness they need to access the opportunities available in our economy.
- **Stable Lives, Successful Learners** – To do homework, get a good night's sleep, and be ready to succeed in the classroom, every college student needs a safe, stable home. But more college students experience homelessness than many Minnesotans realize, with hundreds of Minnesota college students experiencing housing instability each year. That is why the Governor's Opportunity Agenda would invest \$250,000 to ensure more Minnesota college student have a safe and stable place to live. Governor Dayton also is proposing a \$300,000 investment to hire a Campus Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator at the Office of Higher Education, who will support efforts to reduce sexual violence at campuses around the state.