



STATE OF MINNESOTA
L'Étoile du Nord

Office of Governor Mark Dayton & Lt. Governor Tina Smith

A Better E-12 Education Bill

This session, the Republican-led Legislature initially passed an E-12 Education Budget that failed to adequately support the success of all Minnesota children. Their initial bill did not provide sufficient funds for our schools, which would have resulted larger class sizes and higher property taxes. It would have also eliminated preKindergarten for four-year-olds and cut funding for American Indian schools on reservations in northern Minnesota. Governor Dayton [vetoed that bill](#). Working with lawmakers from both parties, Governor Dayton convinced the Republican-led Legislature to pass a better E-12 Education Budget, and [signed that bill into law](#). The following is a summary of the revised budget bill. Still, Governor Dayton has strong concerns about changes to teacher licensure laws included in this bill, and is urging Republicans to return to the table to repeal measures that would diminish the qualifications of Minnesota teachers.

Good Things for Minnesota

The final bill included these provisions that will support our children, families, teachers, and schools.

Investing in Strong Schools and Student Success	<p>Minnesota currently ranks 19th out of the 50 states in per-pupil funding for our students. When Governor Dayton was elected in 2010, he committed to investing in better opportunities for Minnesota students every year – no excuses, no exceptions. Governor Dayton kept that promise again this session, working with the Republican-led Legislature to increase basic school funding by 2 percent in each of the next two years to ensure better opportunities for every student and family, everywhere in Minnesota.</p> <p>In total, this budget invests an additional \$483 million in E-12 education over the next two years. That means since 2011, Governor Dayton has worked with the Legislature to invest nearly \$2 billion in E-12 education – making important progress to help ensure every child receives a world class education in our public schools.</p>
Investing in High Quality PreKindergarten	<p>High-quality early learning programs have impressive, long-lasting benefits, including higher graduation and employment rates, and decreased incarceration rates. Governor Dayton and the Legislature previously invested \$60 million in Early Learning Scholarships and \$25</p>

	<p>million in voluntary preKindergarten programs in our public schools – benefiting thousands of students statewide.</p> <p>This session, Governor Dayton, and the Legislature continued those important investments in Early Learning Scholarships and voluntary preKindergarten. They invested an additional \$50 million to be used to expand access to preKindergarten – a top priority of Governor Dayton. They also provided an additional \$20.6 million for early learning scholarships.</p> <p>The budget originally passed by the Republican-led Legislature would have eliminated funding for voluntary preKindergarten.</p>
<p>Funding for American Indian Schools</p>	<p>Minnesota has four federal Bureau of Indian schools, which serve more than 750 students on tribal reservations. These schools operate in aging, often decrepit facilities, with limited financial resources. This session, Governor Dayton worked with the Legislature to invest \$3.7 million to help ensure students at these schools receive the same state aid that students at other public schools enjoy. Without this investment, state funding for these schools would have dropped 45 percent next year.</p>
<p>Additional Resources for Teacher Workforce Development</p>	<p>Great teachers can make all the difference for kids, helping them achieve success in school and in life. But each year, Minnesota schools lose an estimated 5,800 teachers to retirement, relocation to other states, and career changes – with Greater Minnesota communities hit especially hard. To expand opportunities for teachers, students, and communities across our state, the Governor and Legislature invested \$2.7 million in teacher workforce programs.</p>
<p>Testing for Lead Contamination at Minnesota Schools</p>	<p>School districts will now be required to test for the presence of lead in school building drinking water to help ensure that students and staff have safe drinking water. Testing is required beginning in 2018 and must be conducted at least once every five years.</p>
<p>Expansion of Math and Reading Corps</p>	<p>Minnesota Reading Corps members annually provide assistance to 30,000 students learning to read. The Minnesota Math Corps helped over 4,700 students develop fundamental math skills last school year. Governor Dayton and the Legislature invested \$3.1 million to expand the reach and impact of the Reading and Math Corps.</p>
<p>Mental Health Grants for Intermediate Schools</p>	<p>Mental health problems are common in our schools, affecting one in every five young learners. In Minnesota, nine percent of school-age children have a serious emotional disturbance that significantly</p>

	<p>affects their success in school. This session, Governor Dayton and the Legislature invested \$4.9 million in school-based mental health grants to improve mental health outcomes for Minnesota students.</p>
<p>New Support for Students with Dyslexia</p>	<p>About five percent of all children nationwide have a learning disability that impacts their ability to read. Overall, about 15 to 20 percent of all Americans exhibit some symptoms of dyslexia. To help Minnesota students with dyslexia succeed, Governor Dayton and the Legislature invested \$246,000 to fund a dyslexia specialist at the Minnesota Department of Education. The new specialist will coordinate and support efforts in school districts across Minnesota to create better outcomes for our students.</p>
<p>Funding for Community Partnerships</p>	<p>The Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ) in Minneapolis and the St. Paul Promise Neighborhood are transforming outcomes for children in two of Minnesota’s poorest neighborhoods. Both programs provide important wrap-around services like healthy meals and mental health services. Community partnerships in Northfield, Red Wing, and St. Cloud also are addressing issues that affect student success. This year, Governor Dayton and the Legislature allocated \$1.3 million to continue these critical initiatives.</p>
<p>Upgrading Obsolete Computer Systems</p>	<p>The Minnesota Department of Education’s mainframe computer system, which is used to distribute aid to school districts, dates back to the 1970s. This year, Governor Dayton and the Legislature allocated \$3.3 million to replace this aging infrastructure with a modern, more secure computer system.</p>
<p>Bad Things the Governor Prevented from Becoming Law <i>Governor Dayton convinced Republicans to remove these bad provisions from the bill.</i></p>	
<p>Blocking Attempts to Close the Perpich Center for Arts Education</p>	<p>This session, Governor Dayton stopped attempts by the Republican-led Legislature to close the Perpich Center for Arts Education. Since 1985, the Perpich Center for Arts Education has provided thousands of Minnesota children from across the state a world-class arts education, while preparing them for bright future. The school regularly enjoys a 98 to 100 percent graduation rate, while more than 60 percent head directly to higher education.</p>
<p>Stopping Efforts to Create a School Voucher Program</p>	<p>School vouchers create a two-tiered education system, while diverting critical resources from the public schools most Minnesota children attend. This year, Governor Dayton stopped the Republican-led Legislature’s attempts to create a school voucher-like tax credit that would have undermined public education, with little impact on Minnesota’s educational disparities.</p>

Missed Opportunities

Unfortunately, the Republican Legislature did not fund the following priorities in the Governor's budget.

Further Expansion of PreKindergarten

Last year, Governor Dayton secured a historic investment to offer preKindergarten programs to thousands of kids in our public schools. This year, Governor Dayton proposed investing an additional \$175 million to expand preKindergarten programs for Minnesota families, which would have benefited nearly 17,100 four-year-olds. preKindergarten options are especially important in Greater Minnesota, where transportation challenges make accessing other early education and child care options difficult.

Unfortunately, this year the Republican Legislature chose to prioritize huge tax cuts over significant new investments in preKindergarten programs. Instead, they funded only \$50 million of the Governor and Lt. Governor's request. Initially, the Republican-led Legislature passed a budget that eliminated current funding for preKindergarten programs already in place across Minnesota, and would have provided \$0 in new funding to expand the program to 260 school districts that want and need the programming statewide.

Funding for Special Education

Minnesota school districts continue to serve students eligible for special education, yet they face large funding gaps of approximately \$800 per student statewide. This session, Governor Dayton proposed a \$44 million investment in special education to help close this gap, which would have eased funding pressures in every school district across Minnesota. Unfortunately, the Republican-led Legislature declined to fund this proposal.

Investing in Modern Classrooms for Greater Minnesota Students

In school districts without high-value land, the burden of paying for modern schools can fall disproportionately on just a few businesses, farmers, or homeowners. This session, Governor Dayton proposed a \$59 million investment over four years to help school districts repay school bond levies without overly burdening private property owners, including farmers. Unfortunately, the Republican-led Legislature failed to fund the proposal.

Additional Funding for the Help Me Grow Initiative

The Help Me Grow Initiative helps identify young children with developmental and emotional concerns to connect them with appropriate services, and give them a great start in school and life. This session, Governor Dayton proposed investing \$3 million to expand the program. Unfortunately, the Republican-led Legislature failed to provide additional funding this session for the Help Me Grow initiative.

Bad Things the Governor Has Asked the Legislature to Remove

Governor Dayton has called on the Republican-led Legislature to rescind these policies in a special legislative session.

Policies that Jeopardize the Quality of Teachers in Our Children's Classrooms

The Republican-led Legislature included a provision in the E-12 education budget bill that would jeopardize the quality of teachers in our classrooms, and undermine the teaching profession. Governor Dayton has insisted that lawmakers re-open, and re-negotiate the Teacher Licensure provisions they included in the bill. The integrity of Minnesota's professional teaching standards is of paramount importance to all of our state's licensed teachers, and to ensuring the quality of teachers who educate all of our children. While the Governor supports improving Minnesota's teacher licensure system, some provisions undermine the high professional standards that have served Minnesota's schoolchildren extremely well.