



MINNESOTA'S



COVID-19 RECOVERY BUDGET

ENSURING STUDENTS CATCH UP ON LEARNING

Every child, no matter their race or zip code, deserves a high-quality education that prepares them for success in the workforce and our democracy. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing disparities in education. As schools reopen to in-person learning, we must help students recover and catch up on learning.

Outlined in the Due North education plan, Governor Walz tackles the challenges of the past and present to ensure that each and every student has an educational experience that values who they are and supports them to reach their highest potential both in and out of school. His budget includes a total new state investment in e-12 education of \$745 million, in addition to recent federal investments of \$649 million for COVID-19 education recovery.

HELP STUDENTS CATCH UP



Expand Summer 2021 Programming

Governor Walz's budget provides students with opportunities to catch up on learning by dedicating \$57.5 million of federal funds to expand summer programming with small class sizes, longer programming, and transportation for students. The proposal creates partnerships with community organizations to offer enrichment that supports the academic portion of the program.



Expand Summer 2021 Preschool for 4- and 5-Year-Olds

Governor Walz's budget supports school readiness in 4- and 5-year-old students by providing \$20 million in one-time funding for early learners to attend a star-rated public or private preschool or pre-kindergarten in-person learning program at no cost to them. Programs may be able to extend their school year, build upon summer programs they are already offering, or offer a new summer program.



Expand Mental Health Supports in Summer 2021

Governor Walz’s budget prepares students to learn by providing \$7 million for staff time and supplies to provide access to well-being supports at summer learning programs for youth and adolescents most likely to need supports and expand school-linked mental health services.



Provide Field Trips and Hands-On Learning in Summer 2021

Governor Walz’s budget provides school districts and charter schools expanded opportunities with \$10 million in supplemental one-time funding for students to take advantage of summer field trips for hands-on learning opportunities.



Expand Neighborhood Programs in Summer 2021

Governor Walz’s budget meets students’ academic and mental health needs by bringing school-based summer programs into the community, providing opportunities for enrichment, social and emotional skill-building, mental health supports, and tutoring services at apartment buildings, parks, and community centers by providing \$5 million in grants for schools to create and expand neighborhood programs.



Account for Pandemic Enrollment Loss

Governor Walz’s budget prioritizes maintaining programming that serves all students across the state, including those who are historically underserved, by providing \$25 million in one-time funding to reduce the financial hardship incurred by school districts and charter schools due to a decline in enrollment because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SUPPORT MINNESOTA’S TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS



Increase Funding to Schools

The Governor recommends increasing the general funding formula by 1 percent in the first year of the biennium and 2.5 percent in the second, for a total new investment of \$300 million over the biennium. The general funding formula is the biggest source of state aid to schools in Minnesota and affects every student in the state. It is also the most flexible aid schools receive, allowing them to make local decisions to meet the unique needs of each student and school. Other financial streams build off the formula, multiplying the impact for all students across the state.



Increase Mental Health Support Personnel

Governor Walz’s budget provides \$46 million over the biennium to schools allowing them to hire more student support services personnel who can meet students’ social, emotional, and physical health within Minnesota schools and prepare each student to be career and college ready. This will also support building a pipeline of more mental health personnel.



Establish Statewide Teacher Mentor Program

Governor Walz aims to improve the experiences of and support for early career teachers by providing \$10 million over the biennium to create a Statewide Teacher Mentor Program to support and improve experiences of professional educators, which will help create equitable learning opportunities for students of color,

American Indian students, and children from low-income families.

SUPPORT OUR LITTLEST LEARNERS



Invest in Child Care Economic Development Grant Program

Lack of affordable, quality childcare is a significant barrier to the participation of women, single parents, low-income parents, and rural parents in the workforce. The Governor's proposed budget investment of \$750,000 would provide grant funds to communities to implement innovative and shovel-ready solutions to reduce regional

child care shortages. The program is aimed to reduce barriers to job creation, wealth creation, and business expansion and retention in this critical sector for Minnesota's workforce.



Increase Access to Affordable, Quality Child Care

Families with limited resources often lose access to child care when child care assistance rates don't cover the cost of the care available in their communities. Affordable, quality child care is essential so that parents can work or go to school while their children receive good care and become ready to start school. That's why Governor Walz recommends updating the maximum rates for providers in the Child

Care Assistance Program to align with the most recent survey of market rates, increasing access to child care and reducing out-of-pocket costs for families while keeping the state in compliance with federal regulations.



Keep Prekindergarten Open for 4,000 4-year-olds

Voluntary prekindergarten funding for 4,000 students is set to expire under current law. Governor Walz's proposal invests \$40 million over the biennium to keep these preschool doors open. Free, high-quality preschool programs save families thousands of dollars, and studies have shown preschool participation has impressive

and long-lasting benefits for low-income students, including increased high school graduation rates and employment rates and decreased incidences of special education and incarceration rates. The Governor also recommends requiring programs to conduct Kindergarten Entry Profile (KEP) assessments, implement service and staffing changes that will enhance data collection and analysis, and provide better technical assistance to school districts, charter schools, and partnerships with community providers.

EXPAND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



Expand Indigenous Education for All

Governor Walz’s budget supports all students by ensuring they have the opportunity to learn about the distinct and unique heritage of American Indians in a culturally responsive manner. This builds on the foundation of standards that include the contributions of Minnesota’s American Indian tribes and communities by providing \$1.3 million over the biennium for competitive grants to provide curricular resources to schools, a grant to the Tribal Nations Education Committee (TNEC), and by adding two additional positions in the Academic Standards Division at the Minnesota Department of Education.



Establish an Ethnic Studies Standard

Governor Walz’s budget reduces inequities for Latinx, African American, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Indigenous students by having a focus across all academic standards on the ways in which race and racism have been and continue to be a powerful force in our society. The Governor recommends statutory language to embed ethnic studies in all the standards and curriculum processes and to invest \$292,000 over the biennium to support material and professional development support for districts.



Expand Rigorous Course Work

Governor Walz’s budget fosters opportunities for underserved and underrepresented students throughout the state, including students with a disability, by preparing and training them for a career or college through rigorous course work via a grant program to train teachers and cover curriculum expenses. The proposal includes a total investment of \$10 million over the biennium. Examples of rigorous coursework include Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate Career Program (IBCP), Career and Technical Education (CTE), and Concurrent Enrollment courses.



Increase Resources for Districts with Low Tax Bases

Governor Walz’s investment of \$95 million in fiscal year 2023 increases state resources for districts with low tax bases, particularly in Greater Minnesota, lowering the burden on local taxpayers while ensuring schools have the resources they need for programming and staff to serve students. Improving the levy equalization makes it more equitable for districts with a low tax base per student to raise revenue compared with districts that have a higher tax base per student. The Governor’s investment will simplify school levies and improve equalization by replacing two tiers of Local Optional Revenue (LOR) with one tier, replacing three tiers of operating referendum revenue with one tier, and replacing two tiers of Debt Service Equalization with one tier beginning in the fiscal year 2023.

EMPOWER THE NEXT GENERATION OF OUR WORKFORCE



Expand Emergency Assistance for Postsecondary Students

The COVID-19 pandemic is creating temporary financial hardships for thousands of Minnesota college students, including food and housing insecurity and threatening their ability to stay in school. The Governor's \$1.3 million increased investment in Emergency Assistance grants will help more students weather these hardships so they can continue their education.



Provide Workforce Stabilization Grants

Governor's Walz's \$35 million Workforce Stabilization Grant program will provide tuition-free access to a public or tribal college for workers impacted by COVID-19. This critical support will help displaced workers pursue an education in a high-demand field, leading to future job stability and increased earnings. Persons of color and indigenous persons comprise a significant portion of workers impacted by COVID-19. This grant is an effective, equity-centered strategy to increase the prosperity and economic vitality for Minnesotans statewide.



Establish Direct Admissions Minnesota

Governor Walz's investment of \$1 million for an innovative partnership between K-12 and higher education will create a proactive admissions process for Minnesota public high school students entering their senior year. Students meeting approved benchmarks will receive a notice that they are accepted at a Minnesota State College or University. Bypassing the traditional admissions process shows more students that college is for them. Direct Admissions Minnesota has great potential to reduce equity gaps, provide important college-going information and signals to high school students, alleviate potential access gaps for both rural and urban populations, and eliminate the need for extensive college-going knowledge to navigate the college application process.