

## Education Minnesota

# Education Minnesota supports historic funding increase for public schools

*ST. PAUL, Minn. Feb. 19, 2019* – Gov. Tim Walz and Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan released their proposed state budget Tuesday, which included the largest biennial increase in education funding in state history.

Education Minnesota President Denise Specht released the following statement in response.

“Educators want to give their students a safe and happy place to learn; schools where children are welcomed, supported and encouraged; and classes small enough for educators to know every child as a person,” Specht said. “Gov. Walz is a teacher and he wants that too. He made public schools his top priority. The budget he presented Tuesday would bring our state closer to offering this vision of great public schools to every single student.”

The governor’s budget presentation on Tuesday followed a news conference on Friday in which Education Minnesota presented its estimate for fully funding the needs of public education and educators in the state. The range was \$3.7 billion to \$4.3 billion for the biennium and includes \$1.5 billion in unfunded mandates for special education.

“The gap between the needs of Minnesota students and the revenue provided by the state and federal governments has been growing for 15 years,” Specht said. “The governor’s first budget shows he agrees with us on the scale of the problem and the need for new taxes to pay for the solution. Education Minnesota will work with his administration and the Legislature to pass a historic funding increase that brings education costs and public support back in sync.”

Specht cautioned that a budget is just numbers on a page until the governor signs it into law.

“The numbers in a budget don’t mean much until they are translated into things we can see and feel in our schools – counselors, social workers, smaller classes, free pre-K, more teachers of color and educators living with less financial stress,” Specht said. “Parents, educators and anyone who cares about public education need to keep pressuring their elected representatives until the session is over.”

### **About Education Minnesota**

Education Minnesota is the voice for professional educators and students. Education Minnesota’s members include teachers and education support professionals in Minnesota’s public school districts, faculty members at Minnesota’s community and technical colleges and University of Minnesota campuses in Duluth and Crookston, retired educators and student teachers. Education Minnesota is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association and AFL-CIO.

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