

Education Minnesota

Senate majority budget will trigger layoffs and other cuts to neighborhood schools

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ST. PAUL, Minnesota. March 28, 2019 – The majority party in the Minnesota Senate presented an education budget Thursday that fails to keep pace with inflation and would trigger cuts and layoffs in neighborhood schools throughout Minnesota.

“One of the biggest obstacles to student success and the main cause of the teacher shortage is the chronic underfunding of Minnesota schools,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “The Senate majority just said it wants to continue the trend and doesn’t care about the consequences.”

Specht said the three proposals for state budgets show a stark contrast in priorities. The proposals from Gov. Tim Walz and the House majority put investments in children and working families before the interests of corporations and millionaires. The Senate budget does the opposite.

“The richest Americans and most powerful corporations received a massive and irresponsible tax cut at the federal level last year,” Specht said. “It is just astounding that some Senate leaders refuse to ask them to pay a little more in state taxes to educate the students of Minnesota and pay for the state services every business depends on.”

Specht said the members of the largest labor union in Minnesota stood ready to help Gov. Tim Walz and the leadership in the state House and Senate reconcile their budgets for the benefit of working families and students all over the state.

“State investments that support schools, families and highly trained educators can give our students the freedom to go as far as their talent and hard work will take them,” Specht said. “We must fully fund public education in Minnesota.”

Earlier this year, Education Minnesota released its definition of fully funding E-12 public education, including reducing class sizes so students can get individual attention, bringing the state’s ratio of counselors to students in line with national standards, giving every 4-year-old access to a high-quality pre-K program, raising educator pay and reducing educators’ education debt. The cost was \$3.7 billion to \$4.3 billion for the biennium.

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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