

## Education Minnesota

# Floodwood voters reject referendum, triggering layoffs and budget cuts

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*ST. PAUL, Minnesota. April 9, 2019* – Floodwood voters narrowly rejected an operating referendum Tuesday, a decision that will trigger a round of budget cuts that are expected to eliminate the jobs of about a quarter of the district’s educators.

“The state’s investment in its public schools has lagged behind inflation and actual costs for many years. This election shows that local taxpayers are sick and tired of being asked to pick up the tab,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “State lawmakers should pay attention.”

“The outcome of this election will affect the lives of many deserving students and professional educators in Floodwood,” Specht. “Our union will mobilize its resources to help the educators who will lose their jobs and support those who will remain in extremely difficult conditions.”

Amanda Fjeld, a Floodwood math teacher who campaigned for the referendum, said: “I want to say thank you to everyone who came out and supported our kids and our community. As educators, we will continue to do our best for our students every day. The students are our future and without this referendum, it will be that much harder to provide the best for them, but we will do what we can with what we have. Unfortunately, we will be saying goodbye to some amazing teachers and staff. I have always been proud to be a Polar Bear and always will be, but tonight I am saddened by the results.”

Fjeld was a special guest of Gov. Tim Walz during the governor’s State of the State speech last week.

Voters rejected the operating referendum by 16 votes, 352 to 336. The referendum would have authorized a 10-year tax levy on local property worth \$3,350 per pupil. Before the election, administrators said if the referendum failed, they would cut 11.65 full-time employees, combine classes in the elementary school and eliminate elective classes in the high school, among other budget cuts.

### 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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