

Education Minnesota

Forecast gives state room to rebuild and improve public education after COVID-19

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ST. PAUL, Minnesota, Dec. 1, 2020 – The unexpectedly strong state budget forecast gives the state’s leaders funds to support the people who have suffered the most during the ongoing pandemic and begin to fully fund public education in the next budget, said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota.

“If we’re serious about making sure every child can pursue their dreams regardless of what they look like or where they’re from, we need to get serious about what we can do for all our students when we get past this crisis,” Specht said. “Real learning can’t happen when kids arrive at school hungry, stressed, or afraid. Educators can’t give individual attention in packed classrooms and when they’re exhausted. It’s time for the 2021 Legislature to make real progress toward fully funding public education, with smaller class sizes, more counselors and living wages for everyone who works with kids. We also need lawmakers to give educators the tools and freedom to make their schools more effective and welcoming to all students.”

Specht continued, “Our schools can’t do any of this unless the richest Minnesotans and the biggest corporations start paying their fair share. Minnesotans must insist our lawmakers make students a top priority and fully fund our public schools, even if it takes a while, so schools have the resources they need to deliver the education our children deserve.”

The budget forecast released Tuesday predicted a \$641 million surplus for the current two-year state budget. In the budget cycle starting July 1, costs are predicted to exceed revenue by about \$1.27 billion, a smaller figure than anticipated. The state has about \$2.4 billion in its reserves.

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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