

Education Minnesota

Rising graduation rates could improve even faster with sufficient education funding

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ST. PAUL, Minnesota. March 5, 2020 – The educators of Education Minnesota on Thursday applauded all the students who earned their high school diplomas on time in 2019, a class that set a new graduation rate record for the state.

“Minnesota families and schools are doing many of the right things to help students earn their high school diplomas,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “There’s obviously more to do, but it’s also good to celebrate the hard work and sacrifice of thousands of educators, students and their families.”

The Minnesota Department of Education reported Thursday that 57,171 students graduated in four years in 2019 for a historic graduation rate of 83.7 percent. Another 3,806 students also earned their diplomas in 2019, graduating in five to seven years after starting high school.

“Some of the most dedicated and inspiring students you’ll meet are the young people who found a way to earn a diploma after something in their lives knocked them off the path,” Specht said. “Congratulations to them and the educators who supported them on their journey, even if it took more than four years. Improving statistics is important, but educators go to work every day to help real students achieve their dreams.”

The department reported small increases in the graduation rate for most racial and ethnic student groups, but the already low rate for American Indian students did not improve. Disparities remained between white students and students of color.

“Small improvements in the graduation rate are welcome, but educators believe our schools could do even better for students of color with the additional resources we need to give every student the support they need to thrive,” Specht said. “It’s time to fully fund public education in this state.”

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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