



League of Women Voters of Minnesota Records

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HIGHLIGHTS OF 1989 OMNIBUS SCHOOL AIDS BILL

Article 1 - General Education Revenue

- . 1989-90 General education revenue \$2,838 (3% increase).
 - . 1990-91 General education revenue \$2,953 (4.1% increase).
- (The formula allowance was \$2,755 for the 1988-89 school year, and in prior law, was set at \$2,800 for 1990. The \$38 increase for 1989-90 will come entirely from appropriations - i.e., general education levies will not increase.)
- . Teacher contracts must be settled by January 15, 1990 for districts to receive their full share of general education revenue for 1989-90. (If not, they will lose \$25 of their formula allowance.)
 - . Referendum levies, beginning July 1, 1989, may be held only one time per year and must be held on the fall general election day. Signatures needed to increase or revoke a district's referendum authority changed to 15 percent of registered voters (from 5 percent of the residents).

Article 2 - Pupil Transportation

- . Provides for increased funding and adds flexibility to what may qualify for regular transportation funding, including a pupil who is a custodial parent and that pupil's child between home and child care provider and between provider and school. In certain cases, a day care facility may be designated as home for transportation purposes.

Article 3 - Special Programs

- . State board of education directed to adopt rules on eligibility. District required to conduct and document strategies while student is in regular classroom. State's portion of salaries decreased slightly.
- . Assurance of mastery - state revenue provided for direct instructional services after policy is adopted on what will be done to assure mastery of outcomes in communications and mathematics K-8 for FY 1991 and after. Law specifies eligible pupils and services. State matches district share.
- . Individualized Learning and Development Aid - for achieving smaller classes in kindergarten and grade 1. Eligibility depends on following procedures set in law. Aid is \$62.25 times district's average daily membership in kindergarten and grade 1.

Article 4 - Community and Adult Education

- . Beginning 1989-90, one credit may be awarded for participation in youth service program as part of community education and youth development program. Requirements are specified - Department of Education creates list of acceptable projects.
- . Early childhood screening - districts begin process to implement new requirements in 1989-90 - program in place by July 1, 1993.
- . Increases maximum early child family education revenue in FY 1991. In 1990 only, district receiving aid will receive additional aid.
- . Interagency Adult Learning Advisory Council dealing with adult literacy and training programs established.

Article 5 - Facilities and Equipment

- . Reduces maximum capital expenditure facilities and equipment revenue per WADM beginning in FY 1990.
- . Allows districts to enter lease purchase agreements for land or buildings without elections under certain conditions.

Article 6 - Education Organization and Cooperation

- . Cooperation and Combination for small districts who may combine after period of cooperation. Plan must be adopted according to specifications in law. State board and voters must approve combination. Revenues provided as well as grants.
- . Education Districts - to include cooperation and coordination among school districts and post-secondary institutions. Plan must be adopted.

Districts which are members of ed. districts may discontinue any grades K-12 and provide for them through education district.

- . Interdistrict cooperation - districts with I.C. agreement must discontinue at least grades 10-12 in all but one cooperating district. Each district must operate a school with at least three grades.

Article 7 - Access to Excellence

- . State board directed to adopt goals and supervise schools and develop plan to achieve goals.

- . Office of Educational Leadership established within department to assist districts, ed. districts and other ed. organizations to maximize learning. Office to develop plan for two-year research project for determining effectiveness of learner outcome-based system in improving pupil's learning.

- . Research and development sites (10) to be selected by October 1, 1989 by state board to examine and implement learner outcome-based policies. Office of Ed. Leadership to set up application process and report progress to education committees of legislature.

- . Planning, Evaluation and Reporting - State learner goals defined (knowledge, skills, processes, values and attitudes pupils can expect to attain). State board to adopt learner goals and "essential and integrated learner outcomes" for curriculum areas and for career vocational curriculum. Department to make available to districts model learner outcomes including thinking and problem solving skills.

- . Minnesota Career Teacher Act - present law broadened to include emphasis on learning and the development of a child.

Article 8 - Other Education Programs

- . Categorical aid programs - appropriations are continued for abatement aid, integration grants, nonpublic school aid, school lunch aid, school milk aid, tobacco use, and alcohol-impaired driver education programs.

- . School Breakfast Program and Survey. Certain school districts are required to offer a school breakfast program in every school building beginning September 1, 1991.

- . Sexual Harassment and Violence Policy must be adopted on or before September 1, 1991. Commissioner will develop a model. High School League must also adopt a policy.

Article 9 - Miscellaneous

- . Enrollment Options Program - Pupil and parent or guardian must confer with staff member from resident district to identify reason for transfer to nonresident district. Timelines specified and minimum enrollment period of one school year is established. Separate procedure established for applications involving a desegregation district.

- . Learning Year Program - Area Learning Centers must offer throughout school year. Ten additional sites may be designated by state board.

- . Staff exchange program (two-year) established beginning 1989-90 to provide participants better understanding of concerns of other districts.

- . Extended Day Programs - standards responsibility of local boards.

- . Career Information - may be provided by department provided costs are recovered through fees and grants.

- . Beginning August 1, 1989, State Board of Education may adopt rules only when specifically authorized by legislative action.

Article 10 - Libraries

- . State appropriations for public library programs continued and some new funding provided.

Article 11 - Education Agencies

- . Academic Excellence Foundation placed under state board; Academic League authorized.

Article 12 - State Agencies' Appropriations for Education

. Sets levels for Department of Education, Faribault Academies and the Minnesota Center for Arts Education (new name).

Article 13 - Technical Changes for School District Property Taxes

. District Property Taxes - Conforms terminology to new system adopted in 1988.

(The total percent change in education property tax levies created by the Omnibus Bill for Pay 1990 is 8.6%. The Governor's proposal had been 10.7%. The percent change for Pay 1989 was 10.6%)

* * * * *

Other education-related measures:

. Ch. 282 - State Human Services appropriation bill includes funds for several programs for children's health, mental health and child welfare. Requires custodial parents under age 20 who have not received diploma or equivalent to attend school if they are receiving AFDC benefits.

. Ch. 300 - Bonding bill includes \$2 million for desegregation capital improvement grants.

. Ch. 335 - State departments bill provides \$300,000 supporting cooperative effort between Science Museum of Minnesota, Freshwater Foundation and Department of Education to develop a program to inform Minnesotans about issues of water use and quality. Requires governor to study growing costs of major state expenditure programs including elementary and secondary education as the 1992-93 budget is prepared.

. Ch 191 - provides that district may enroll as provider in Medical Assistance Program and receive MN payments for covered special education services under certain conditions.

Sources: Education Finance Bill Summary, House Education staff and Senate Education staff.

Minnesota School Boards Association - Summary of Education Legislation Enacted During 1989 Session

Public Policy Newsletter (MN Extension Service), No. 125, June 30, 1989.

Prepared by J. B. McWilliams, 9-7-89.

September 1, 1987
LWVMN Action Committee
Multicultural/Gender Fair Education

Definition: (Paraphrased from 1986 rule draft) "that educational process from early childhood through adult education by which individuals gain knowledge, skills, respect and appreciation for the language patterns, history, heritage, culture, values and contributions to society of minority groups, women and handicapped persons so as to enable all individuals to live better in a pluralistic society. The process is not to be construed as additional courses in the curriculum, but rather approaches integral to all curriculum."

Chronology:

- 1972 - Guidelines (recommended to State Board of Education by Sex Bias Advisory Committee) adopted by Board and disseminated
- 1984 - Task Force appointed by Board - study conducted and recommendations made to Board in May 1985. Recommended that Board go to rule (rather than guidelines) because (from the recommendations) "without some mechanism to require multicultural gender fair approach as integrated component of all curriculum areas, current omission as identified in statewide survey will continue."
Board postponed action pending further study by Sex Equity Advisory Committee, SEAC.
- 1986-87 - SEAC study and recommendations to Board in May 1987. Members of committee met with legislators, Women's Consortium, NOW, MSBA and other groups to build support.
- June 9, 1987 - SBE unanimously passed resolution:
"The State Board of Education directs the Minnesota Department of Education to proceed with development of a proposed multicultural gender fair curriculum and instruction rule, with the proposed rule to reflect the recommendations of the Sex Equity Task Force."
SBE adopted as one of their goals for the year "Develop and implement a strategy to reduce substantially culture and gender bias in Minnesota school curriculum, instruction, and hiring practices prior to the start of the 1990-91 school year."
- August 10, 1987 - SBE Special Populations Committee agenda - presentation by SDE staff on MC/GF rule.

FUTURE?

- 1987-88 - MCOSEE has chosen MC/GF as this year's agenda
- What should LWVMN role be?
- Possible stumbling blocks:
 - Lack of follow-through from Board because of plethora of issues
 - Lack of enthusiasm for rule - Commissioner Randall
 - Possible (probable) resistance to rule during hearings from school administrators, school boards?
 - If rule is passed - need for assistance for and pressure on local school districts.
- Possible ways to keep momentum going -
 - Monitor Board and SDE process including hearings
 - Notify interested groups about process - especially minority groups.
 - Solicit support - form coalition
 - After rule is passed, monitor local district implementation.

What can LWVMN do?

October 1989

MEMO: Education Issues in Local League Communities

TO: Local League Presidents and or Education Chairs

FROM: Jane McWilliams

In order to help me become familiar with education issues in your communities, please complete the following questionnaire and return it to me at the state office.

Thank you!

* * * * *

1. Current local education position(s):
2. Current local education study:
3. Local issues of interest to League members which might become targets for study/action:
4. We do do not (circle one) have a regular school board observer.
5. We do do not (circle one) have an education study committee.
6. Here are some names of League members who may be interested in being on a state committee, observing legislature, state Board of Education, doing some lobbying, etc.:
7. Here are some ways LWVMN Education Chair can assist my League with education study and action:
8. Here some ways I/we think LWVMN can and should become involved in education issues:
9. Other comments or suggestions:

Signed _____

Address _____

Position _____

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA TO: Local Leagues



PHONE: (612) 224-5445

MEMO

FROM: Jane McWilliams, LWVMN Education
Director

SUBJECT: 1988 Omnibus Education Bills

DATE: March 21, 1988

I have enclosed a chart showing the comparison of the House and Senate Education bills. I have particularly highlighted the parts of the bills the League is following. Watch for the next Capitol Letter which will describe the progress of these parts of the bills and any necessary local action. I hope you can share this information with your members.

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TO: Members of the Education Conference Committee

FROM: Jane McWilliams, Education Director, 507/645-8423
Carolyn Hendrixson, Legislative Coordinator, 612/925-5079

DATE: April 7, 1988

Members of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota urge you to support the following as you reconcile the issues contained in the House and Senate omnibus bills:

Basic Revenue 1988-89 and 1989-90: Support the House proposal increasing the 1988-89 formula by \$50 per pupil unit to \$2,785 and setting the 1989-90 formula at \$2,820. This will add equally to all districts and won't add to the disparities in funding. It will help fund special education deficiencies. It will make districts where funding is inadequate less reliant on passage of referendum levies which exacerbate the tax burden inequities. We strongly support the Senate's proposal to study the cost of living differences among Minnesota's communities.

Desegregation/Integration: We support the metropolitan area desegregation approach to solving the problems of racial balance. We also support a study of the real costs of desegregation/integration as well as the compensatory appropriation for the FY 1989 desegregation costs to Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth.

We urge the legislature to broaden its focus on the problem of racial imbalance in the schools taking into consideration possible changes in public policy in other than education which will foster a more balanced multicultural society. This might include evaluation of housing policies, commercial and industrial development incentives and other practices which have a bearing on where people live.

Indian Education: We support measures to strengthen Indian teacher preparation and more participation of Indian families in their children's schools, in particular in development of curriculum which is appropriate for Indian children. We support designing schools or school systems which assure Indian control of Indian education.

Categorical Programs: We support the House proposal for a study of the use of general revenue money allocated for formerly categorical programs. Until such a study is completed and documents how these programs have fared under the new approach, we don't support reinstating programs such as the gifted and talented money in the House bill.

Open Enrollment: As we did in 1985 when this idea was first introduced, the League supports a statewide expansion of open enrollment.

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA**

PHONE: (612) 224-5445

MEMO

TO: Local League Presidents
and Education Chairs
FROM: Jane McWilliams

SUBJECT: State Board of Education

DATE: November 23, 1987

In the December Board Memo, there was an article suggesting that your members contact the State Board of Education about AIDS education. In that purpose and for future reference, here is a list of current SBE members. There will be a change in that membership after January 1st and we'll pass the new list on when it is available.

MINNESOTA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Name and Address	Telephone	District
Ruth Myers American Indian Program School of Medicine - Room 112 University of MN Duluth, MN 55812	218 726-8878 (w) 218 724-3966 (h)	8
Erling Johnson 832 Eastwood Lane Anoka, MN 55303	612 427-1442 (h)	6
Marjorie Johnson, Pres. Box 224 Lake Park, MN 56554	218 238-5911 (w) 218 238-5426	7
Thomas Lindquist 12393 Flag Ave. So. Savage, MN 55378	612 456-4541 (w) 612 445-2129 (h)	3
Douglas Wallace 5009 Wentworth Ave. So. Minneapolis, MN 55419	612 823-2854 (h) 612 690-6045 (w)	5
Patricia Allen 306 Woodley, Northfield, MN 55057	507 645-9298 (h)	1
John Plocker Route 3 Blue Earth, MN 56013	507 526-5479 (w)	2
Al Zdon 3825 3rd Ave. E. Hibbing, MN 55747	218 262-1011 (w) 218 262-8759 (h)	At Large
(Open)		4

1987 Legislative Priorities in Education

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization which encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Study and discussion precede LWV action. In 1983, after a two year study of the Minnesota School Finance Law, the League arrived at the following position:

"All Minnesota Children should have equal access to a good education. A student's access to a good education should not depend on the wealth of his or her school district nor upon the willingness of local voters to tax themselves. State funding for education should be at a level that makes programs of comparable substance and quality available to all.

- . The League of Women Voters of Minnesota supports the concept of the foundation formula program. Any revisions in the current school finance law should:
 - support provision of adequate funding to meet the real costs of education
 - support encouragement of financial efficiencies
 - support continuing the concept of state-provided categorical aids for children with physical and mental problems, and children with other learning disabilities. Support of funding for gifted and high potential students
 - support reorganization of districts with extremely low enrollments
 - support allowing local districts to raise a limited amount of additional funds for supplemental programs through local levies to maintain local choice and to ensure local accountability
 - support using income tax as the mainstay of school funding
 - support maintaining most social and recreational services now offered at schools but seek alternate funding sources for many.
- . League members are opposed to continuation of the current tuition tax deduction."

The League supports the concept of student/parent enrollment choices for 11th and 12th graders, based on League's support of equal access to education and increased state responsibility in creating equal public educational opportunities for all Minnesota children. Equality of educational opportunity means the provision of educational

(Over)

that meet individual needs and interests of all children so that they may develop fully their own potential, whatever it may be, at the rate and in the environment in which they learn best.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota opposes "educational vouchers" which could be redeemed at private educational institutions of a student's choice. This, and the position on tax deduction for tuition are taken because of League's opposition of the use of public monies for private uses.

During the 1987 Legislative Session. League observers and lobbyists will monitor legislation dealing with school funding, enrollment choice programs, desegregation programs and school district reorganization.

June 5, 1987

MEMO: Education Issues in Local League Communities

TO: Local League Education Chairs and/or Presidents

FROM: Jane McWilliams

In order to help me become familiar with education issues in your communities, please complete the following questionnaire and return it to me (stick a stamp on it if you need to take it home for completion, and drop it in mail).

Thank you.

1. Current local education positions:
2. Current local education study:
3. Local issues of interest to League members which might become targets for study/action:
4. We do do not have a regular school board observer
(circle one).
5. We do do not have an education study committee.
6. Here are names of Leaguers who may be interested in being on state education committee, observing legislature, doing some lobbying:
7. Here are some ideas of ways State Board Education Chair can assist local Leagues with education study and action:
8. Here are some ways I/we think LWVMN can and should become involved in education issues:
9. Other comments or suggestions:

Signed _____

Address _____

LWV Position _____

May 22, 1986

Joan Higinbotham, President
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
555 Wabasha
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Joan:

Thanks for encouraging me to send on to you and the board my idea for a Fall Focus Meeting.

One of the major activities of the 1987 Legislative Session will be a review of and considerations for changes in school funding. Traditionally, the issue has been adequacy. It still is. However, a new issue is equity. (In a way, this issue is not new. As many League members know, the 1971 Legislature dealt with this issue when it enacted the well-known "Minnesota Miracle." During the past decade and a half, however, ^{attention to} equity has faded into the background.)

Many people feel that even though the purpose of the "Miracle" was to assure educational equity by separating the amount of money available for students from the property wealth of a school district, legislated changes in school funding during the past 15 years have caused great disparities in dollars available per pupil among the 432 school districts in the state. Many people feel that some of the reasons for the disparities may be justified, but they also think that many of the reasons for disparities are not defensible. This issue is being studied by a number of groups, including a legislative commission, the State Department of Education, and others. During the recent legislative session, a bill was introduced by Rep. Tom Rees, the purpose of which was to provide equal dollars, but for a number of reasons, primarily because there wasn't time to deal carefully with the equity issue, it never went anywhere. At least one lobbying group (Association of Stable and Growing School Districts) has established attention to funding equity as its primary legislative focus for the '87 session.

As you know, the League has had a long-standing interest in school finance, and concern for equal educational opportunity. Because of this, I think we could provide an important, impartial forum for discussing the many and varied issues and solutions to this important question. This should be scheduled before the legislative session so that people will have information during the session when the dialogue will intensify. Possible speakers or panelists are Van Mueller of the University of Minnesota, Gary Farland of the State Department of Education, Representative Rees, possibly representatives from districts with various types of funding patterns (small rural, large city, suburban (declining population), suburban (increasing enrollment), Rep. Gordon Voss who chaired a study several years ago on revamping the school funding law and Joyce Krupey who has done research for the legislature on school funding. (I'm sure that there are lots of other

Higinbotham
May 22, 1986

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possibilities. These come to mind as I type this letter to you.)

At a minimum, we need to update our own members on the current school finance law and how it got to be ~~how it is~~. It is a complex area, and even those who participated in our study several years ago may have lost touch with the fundamental components of school finance, and may need updating on recent changes. If the idea for a Focus meeting doesn't work out, I hope that we can develop a brief article for members and some outlines of various solutions under consideration.

I urge the Board to discuss this ^{public} issue and to look seriously at how we can serve to raise the ~~visibility~~ of the issue and the level of the dialogue. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss it further.

One last thought. In order to broaden the participation and to encourage shared responsibility for planning, how about a joint-sponsored meeting with AAUW which also is interested in equal educational opportunity? Perhaps some of the education organizations might be interested in planning. Finally, maybe there is a grant out there somewhere which would provide planning assistance!

This letter is disorderly, I realize, but I hope my message is clear.

Thank you for your interest,



Jane B. McWilliams