



Emily Anne Staples Tuttle papers.

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# Staples comments on proposed school bills

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Proposed legislation to change the method by which the state helps school districts to compensate for declining enrollments would result in significant aid increases for the Hopkins and Golden Valley school districts, Sen. Emily Anne Staples (D-43) said.

"The proposal, sponsored by Sen. Bob Lewis of St. Louis Park, would allow districts to receive state assistance for enrollment declines averaged over three-year periods, rather than under the existing one-year formula," Staples said. "Under the new formula, Hopkins would receive approximately \$327,000 in additional aid over the next two years, while Golden Valley would receive about \$95,000 over the same period.

"Since declining enrollments do not result in corresponding declines in programs costs, this new formula will be especially necessary for districts in our area over the next few years," the senator added.

STAPLES ALSO discussed other recently introduced legislation that

would compensate districts for declining enrollments and rising costs by reorganizing school district administration.

"One proposal would mandate reducing the number of school districts in the state from the present 438 to 92 countywide units," Staples said. "The purpose of this measure would be to apply the savings in administrative costs toward maintaining and expanding educational programs.

"I want to emphasize to residents of our area that this measure will be judged on the basis of how well it would preserve existing schools and programs in a period of declining enrollments," Staples said.

The senator also addressed another measure, proposed in response to the reorganization plan, which would allow existing school districts to decide for themselves whether to combine with other districts.

"SOME DISTRICTS have already attempted to combine out of financial need, but have been prevented from doing so because of existing state laws," Staples said. "While some districts may need to combine, others may be better off in their present administrative structure, and it may be best to allow districts to choose their own course of action."

Staples said that continued enrollment declines, coupled with high expenditures due to inflation, demand that districts be assisted in providing continued, quality programs.

"Any new legislation concerning school district organization, personnel, and funding will safeguard that community schools remain open and local control over school districts is preserved," Staples said.



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