



## Legislative Priorities 2022 February 14, 2022

### **English Learner Funding**

Create statutory language that recognizes and funds English Language learner programming at the age 3 - 12th grade level so districts can provide more early intervention and programming in an effort help students be ready for Kindergarten and reading at grade level by third grade.

#### *Background*

We currently receive \$704 for each English Learner student. We also get EL concentration funding based on an MDE formula. This is for K- 12 students. Bloomington's current EL cross subsidy amount (the amount we spend to provide the service vs what we receive to fund the service) is roughly 2 million dollars. Additionally, we generate minimum funding for early childhood EL programming.

#### *Rationale*

Full funding for English Learners staffing and programming, ages 3 -21 would allow districts to increase services, particularly at the early childhood and primary grade levels and increase the likelihood of English Language students to be ready for kindergarten and reading well by third grade.

### **Online Students Out of State Funding**

Amend [Minnesota Statutes, section 126C.05, subdivision 8](#), that required districts to unenroll online learning students who leave the state for 15 consecutive days.

#### *Background*

Current MN residency requirements disallows state funding for resident students who leave the state for 15 days - see "Residency" section of [MDE Online Learning web site](#). The interpretation of residency is based on a 1985 Attorney General opinion, prior to the advent of modern online learning. There are exceptions based on " receiving instruction in the home or hospital".

#### *Rationale*

Engagement in online learning can take many forms and is almost never dependent on the geographic location of the student. While engagement in in-person school is challenging for a MN resident student who travels out of state for 15 days, this is not the case for online students.

## **Home School Funding for Online Supplemental Courses**

Amend shared time law (Minnesota Statutes, section 126C.19) that disallows shared time students to generate membership for online courses.

### *Background*

Current MN state law disallows state funding for homeschool students who supplement their education with online courses.

[Procedure 17: Reporting Shared Time Students](#) - MDE MARSS reporting documentation:

*a. Eligible Instruction/Services (page 2)*

- *A nonpublic/home school student generates membership only for instruction provided at the public school site. A nonpublic/home school student is ineligible to generate membership for independent study or work-based, project-based or online learning (OLL) that occurs outside the public school classroom.*

### *Rationale*

State law does allow for shared time students to generate revenue for in person supplemental courses. Having a different application of the law for geographic location of the course isn't justified. We suggest modifications to the "shared-time" law that removes the requirement for shared time students to be physically present.

## **Existing Operating Levies**

Allow locally elected school board to renew an existing operation levy.

### *Background*

School districts, per Statute 126C.17, have the authority to ask taxpayer for additional funding through an operating referendum. This referendum has a maximum duration of 10 years and an amount cap was \$1,779.50 (\$2,079.50 gross authorization-\$300 Board approved referendum) in 2021 and increases annually by annual inflation. Some school districts are at the cap or don't need to increase the amount at the end of the 10- year duration.

### *Rationale*

Since the maintenance of current funding in these difficult economic times is a challenge at best. Running a renewal referendum for a referendum levy that has been previously approved by voters and just maintains current status requires the commitment of significant local financial and human resources to conduct the election and to communicate with and inform the voters of a district. Allowing a renewal by the School Board would allow for the financial and human resources to be used for the main purpose of school to educate the students of the community.