



EDUCATION MINNESOTA STRATEGIC PLAN
Approved by Governing Board February 4, 2006

(Shaded boxes are for description only – not action statements.)

Assumptions

The assumptions are based on the responses to the question:

What assumptions will we make about the external environment that will influence the direction of education and schools in Minnesota over the next few years?

A. Assumptions about the social environment – The societal/cultural context of America will always influence the role and expectations of public schools.

- The demographics of Minnesota will continue to change.
 - ◆ An aging population
 - ◆ Smaller percentage of the public with school-age children
 - ◆ Decreasing population in some areas and increasing population in other areas
 - ◆ Larger population of immigrants and minorities
 - ◆ Increase in transient students
- Expectations of schools will continue to be shaped by societal challenges such as:
 - ◆ Violence
 - ◆ Drugs and alcohol
 - ◆ Declining role of extended family influence
 - ◆ Delivery of education to increasingly diverse students
 - ◆ Lack of affordable housing and health care
 - ◆ Underemployment, unemployment and poverty
- Society will question the acceptance of diversity and the value of tolerance.
- The public debate regarding expectations of public schools in society will continue; increasingly, parents, students, and citizens will want schools to be flexible in meeting their particular needs and interests.

B. Assumptions about the technological environment.

- Technology will change the way schools deliver education and may change learning locations from schools to home via intra-networks and the Internet.
- Technology will affect how students learn, how teachers teach, and how schools, teachers, and Education Minnesota will interact with its various constituencies.
- The technological explosion will fundamentally change the way information is accessed and the ways in which people will communicate.
- Technology will require that educators assess and access the quality of information on the web.
- Technology will be a basic component in every classroom. Schools will be expected to develop training, provide resources, and continuous staff development on the use of new hardware/software.
- Both in school and at home, student access to technology will vary greatly.
- Understanding technology will become a major component in:
 - ◆ Teacher preparation at both the undergraduate and graduate levels
 - ◆ Continuing education
 - ◆ Licensure requirements
 - ◆ Collaboration among professionals
 - ◆ Reporting educational outcomes
- Technological change will raise important ethical issues.

C. Assumptions about the economic environment.

- The strength of the economy will impact public education and educators by increasing or decreasing resources, creating more pressures on parents and students, and intensifying dialogue on resource priorities.
- Constantly changing political philosophies among majority representatives in state and national governments and an aging demographic inclined to resist taxes will lead to periods of limited taxpayer revenue and make predictable and consistent funding of schools a persistent challenge.

- The various needs of learners and members will escalate in the face of an uncertain economic environment.
- Members will be linked to each other, the organization, and the economic environment which will allow greater collaboration and more mutual support.
- There will be increased competition for available governmental resources and like-minded groups may compete with each other instead of working together.
- In a global economy, the competitiveness of the U.S. will be influenced by the quality of education. Additionally, the global economy will impact the skills students need in order to be prepared for the future.
- The demographics of the workforce will result in heightened competition for highly skilled workers like teachers and other education employees which will change education employment practices including compensation systems and other benefits.
- Considerable dollars will need to be invested in buildings and other elements of infrastructure to replace and modernize deteriorating infrastructures.

D. Assumptions about the governmental/regulatory environment.

- The increased demand for accountability based on student performance will drive policies regarding funding and teacher compensation.
- Constantly changing legislative initiatives will increase the struggle among federal, state, and local governing bodies over control of educational decision making.
- Increasingly educational decisions will be determined at the site level by direct democracy (educators, parents, community) rather than representative democracy (school board).
- The legislature will continue to have a significant impact on education in Minnesota.
- Governmental policymakers will seek to provide alternatives and choices for parents and students while continuing to mandate expectations and controls for existing schools.

- Real and perceived inequities across urban, rural and suburban districts will be addressed by governmental policy and possible court action in an inconsistent manner.
- Site-related variables, such as levels of poverty and special needs will continue to influence funding.
- Driven by research, there will continue to be a focus on early childhood education and lifelong learning.
- There will be an increase in organized, promotional activities by interest groups on public issues that affect education.
- The growing teacher shortage in many specialty areas will influence enacted decisions regarding standards, licensure and incentives for education employees.

E. Assumptions about the future structure of education.

- Public scrutiny of education will continue. There will be continued pressure for accountability while a variety of diverse interests will seek to influence educational goals and objectives.
- Consumers and policymakers will increasingly demand involvement in the educational process.
- There will be a multiplicity of models rather than one-size-fits-all in response to ongoing debates on such issues as:
 - ◆ Alternative programs and schools, increased privatization and home schooling, choice, vouchers, charter schools
 - ◆ Increased options for students within schools
 - ◆ Increased accountability, which will be defined in multiple ways
 - ◆ Different ways of teaching and learning using technology
 - ◆ Year-round schools, extended days, school-community centers
 - ◆ Changes in employment structures, e.g. shift work hours for teachers
 - ◆ “Schools” not restricted to buildings
 - ◆ Expanded perception of pre-K-12 education to include family
 - ◆ Broader based funding or grants
 - ◆ Safety in our schools
- There will be conflicting pressures on which to focus:
 - ◆ Classical education
 - ◆ Schools addressing employer needs in teaching life skills and/or job-related skills
 - ◆ Career and technical education vs. liberal arts

- Students will be increasingly mobile through:
 - ◆ Post-secondary enrollment options
 - ◆ Open enrollment
 - ◆ On-line learning
 - ◆ Moving due to family situations

- Public schools will continue to provide services expanding beyond traditional education, including health care and social services while simultaneously facing political pressure to curtail other services

- Educators will continue to address the changing needs of students and families.

- Educators will need to build stronger relationships with community organizations and businesses.

- Educators will need to be more global in their thinking; will need to understand broad issues and influences, and will need to accept and utilize multiple approaches to teaching and learning.

- The public image and self-image of educators and their organizations will be increasingly important in an environment where the question of “*who is and who should be in charge of education?*” will be debated.

- The availability of qualified, licensed educators will continue to diminish.

- The demographics of the teaching profession in Minnesota will become less ethnically diverse compared to the student population. Educators will be increasingly younger and more female. Many will not remain in the profession for a career.

- The recruitment of educators of diverse ethnic backgrounds, especially in greater Minnesota will continue to be a challenge.

- Post-secondary technical and community college education will continue to go through major changes.

- New competition will be found in teachers organized around philosophies (i.e., charter school educators, Waldorf, etc.)

- Tuition costs for all post secondary education will continue to rise, and student access will be negatively impacted.

ENVISIONED FUTURE

Audacious Goal is a ten to fifteen year goal that describes what the organization will seek to become. It is tangible, energizing, and highly focused.

Education Minnesota's Audacious Goal: Be the preeminent source of excellence in teaching and learning in Minnesota.

Vivid Description is a vibrant, energizing and specific description of what it will be like to achieve the Audacious Goal. This description paints a picture of the future vision.

Education Minnesota's Vivid Description.

- ◆ Education Minnesota, as a visionary organization will shape the future of education in order to produce the highest quality graduates and citizens.
- ◆ The schools of choice will be those that are accessible to all.
- ◆ Unionism will be redefined as a driving force to achieve high standards of economic and professional excellence.
- ◆ Educators will be working in environments that are conducive to learning and are equipped with the tools required to meet the needs of all students.
- ◆ Education Minnesota will champion efforts, which increase student learning and achievement.
- ◆ Education Minnesota will be an equal partner in all educational funding and policy decisions.
- ◆ Education Minnesota will be recognized and respected as a caring, creative, and dynamic organization that contributes to society and the public good.
- ◆ All parents recognize Education Minnesota as the seal of approval for ensuring high quality: the highest student standards and the highest staff standards.
- ◆ Education Minnesota sustains and promotes professional zeal and the highest standards of educational practice.
- ◆ Education Minnesota determines standards of conduct and practice within education.
- ◆ Members of Education Minnesota are respected as professional educators.

- ◆ The salaries, benefits, and working conditions of Education Minnesota members will contribute to an optimum learning climate.

CORE IDEOLOGY

Core Purpose describes the fundamental purpose of the organization; answers the question “*what would be lost if the organization ceased to exist?*”

Education Minnesota’s Core Purpose: Be responsible for quality teaching and learning opportunities through democratic unionism.

Core Values are the essential and enduring tenets of the organization; a small set of timeless guiding principles.

Core Values (I²ED)

- ◆ **Integrity**
- ◆ **Inclusive**
- ◆ **Excellence**
- ◆ **Dynamic**

GOALS

Goals are timeless, unbounded statements that describe the conditions or attributes to be attained; what the world will be like as a result, at least in part, of what the organization will do.

Goal 1:

Every learner in Minnesota will have caring and competent teachers and school-related personnel who hold themselves accountable to the standards they have set.

Goal 2:

Education Minnesota will be the model of a diverse and dynamic*union.

Goal 3:

Members will achieve professional salaries, benefits (including health care and pensions), educational policies, working conditions, and high standards of professional excellence through collective bargaining and unified actions.

Goal 4:

Public education will provide a continuum of educational programs for learners throughout their lives, which will enable them to be successful in a changing world.

Goal 5:

Education Minnesota and Minnesota communities will form ongoing public education partnerships that will increase the assets of all learners (i.e. Search Institute).

Goal 6:

Members and their communities will use Education Minnesota to access research, best practices, and skills to enhance professional performance and the performance of schools.

Goal 7:

Education Minnesota will represent and serve all non-administrative education personnel in Minnesota.

* Flexible, progressive, engaging, active, taking charge, strong