STATE OF MINNESOTA
L'Étoile du Nord

Office of
Governor Tim Walz &
Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan

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Following Minnesota House Passage, Governor Walz Calls on Senate to Pass Summer Learning Package

Plan will help students catch up following year of unprecedented learning disruptions caused by COVID-19

March 26, 2021

[ST. PAUL, MN] – After the Minnesota House passed Governor Tim Walz's summer learning package this week, Governor Walz is calling on the Senate to pass the legislation to ensure schools have the support they need to help students recover from COVID-19. The Governor's $150 million plan would address opportunity gaps and expand summer learning opportunities. While the Senate has taken action on parts of the plan, the entire proposal must be passed by April 15 in order for schools to have time to plan for summer learning.

"I applaud the Minnesota House for acting with urgency to make our students whole after a year that brought unprecedented challenges for our educators, our families, and our students," said Governor Walz. **"I urge the Minnesota Senate to finish the job and act quickly so we can ensure our students aren't left behind."**

The Governor's proposal includes school and community-based learning opportunities, field trips and hands-on learning, mental health support, summer preschool, and college courses for graduating seniors.

"As more and more Minnesotans get vaccinated, we need to focus our efforts on getting back to better," said Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. **"That means helping our students make up for the lost in-person learning that so many experienced over the last year. Our plan would do that, but the legislature needs to act quickly to give our schools the time they need to plan."**

As school leaders finalize plans and set budgets for programming, staffing, health and safety protocol, and transportation, they require guidance from the state by mid-April in order to thoughtfully and accurately plan. Without immediate action by the Legislature, hundreds of thousands of Minnesota students and their families will face uncertainty about access to academic support over the summer.

On February 18, Governor Walz sent a letter to legislative leaders requesting they take swift action to pass HF1064/SF973, his summer learning package. The proposal:

- **Expands summer 2021 programming** by providing students with opportunities to catch up on learning. It dedicates $57.5 million in federal funds to expand summer programming with small class sizes and transportation for students. The proposal creates partnerships with community organizations to offer academic enrichment. The legislature must approve federal spending, which occurred Monday.
- **Expands summer 2021 preschool for 4- and 5-year-olds** by providing $20 million in one-time funding for early learners to attend a star-rated public or private preschool or pre-kindergarten in-person learning program at no cost to them. Programs may be able to extend their school year, build upon summer programs they are already offering, or offer new summer programs.
- **Expands mental health support in summer 2021** by providing $7 million to expand school-linked mental health services and provide access to well-being support at summer learning programs.
- **Provides field trips and hands-on learning in summer 2021** by providing school districts and charter schools with $10 million in supplemental one-time funding for students.
- **Accounts for pandemic enrollment loss** by maintaining programming that serves all students across the state, including those who are historically underserved. The proposal would provide $25 million in one-time funding to reduce the financial hardship incurred by school districts and charter schools due to a decline in enrollment because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

More details can be found here (https://mn.gov/mmb-stat/documents/budget/2022-23-biennial-budget-books/governors-recommendations-january/education.pdf) , under “Priorities for COVID-19 Federal Funding and Summer Programming,” “Pandemic Enrollment Loss,” and “Summer 2021.”

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