

Management Report

for

Independent School District No. 833  
South Washington County Schools  
Cottage Grove, Minnesota

June 30, 2018

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PRINCIPALS

Thomas A. Karnowski, CPA  
Paul A. Radosevich, CPA  
William J. Lauer, CPA  
James H. Eichten, CPA  
Aaron J. Nielsen, CPA  
Victoria L. Holinka, CPA/CMA  
Jaclyn M. Huegel, CPA

To the School Board and Management of  
Independent School District No. 833  
Cottage Grove, Minnesota

We have prepared this management report in conjunction with our audit of Independent School District No. 833's (the District) financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2018. We have organized this report into the following sections:

- Audit Summary
- Funding Public Education in Minnesota
- Financial Trends of Your District
- Legislative Summary
- Accounting and Auditing Updates

We would be pleased to further discuss any of the information contained in this report or any other concerns that you would like us to address. We would also like to express our thanks for the courtesy and assistance extended to us during the course of our audit.

The purpose of this report is solely to provide those charged with governance of the District, management, and those who have responsibility for oversight of the financial reporting process comments resulting from our audit process and information relevant to school district financing in Minnesota. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

*Malloy, Montague, Karnowski, Radosevich & Co., P.A.*

Minneapolis, Minnesota  
December 21, 2018

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## AUDIT SUMMARY

The following is a summary of our audit work, key conclusions, and other information that we consider important or that is required to be communicated to the School Board, administration, or those charged with governance of the District.

### **OUR RESPONSIBILITY UNDER AUDITING STANDARDS GENERALLY ACCEPTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS*, AND TITLE 2 U.S. CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS PART 200, *UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS* (UNIFORM GUIDANCE)**

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the District as of and for the year ended June 30, 2018. Professional standards require that we provide you with information about our responsibilities under auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, *Government Auditing Standards*, and the Uniform Guidance, as well as certain information related to the planned scope and timing of our audit. We have communicated such information to you verbally and in our audit engagement letter. Professional standards also require that we communicate to you the following information related to our audit.

### **PLANNED SCOPE AND TIMING OF THE AUDIT**

We performed the audit according to the planned scope and timing previously discussed and coordinated in order to obtain sufficient audit evidence and complete an effective audit.

### **AUDIT OPINION AND FINDINGS**

Based on our audit of the District's basic financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2018:

- We have issued an unmodified opinion on the District's basic financial statements. The opinion included a paragraph emphasizing the District's implementation of new Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) guidance for reporting other post-employment benefits (OPEB) obligations of the District, which reduced the District's beginning government-wide net position by \$13,473,303. Our opinion was not modified with respect to this matter.
- We reported no deficiencies in the District's internal control over financial reporting that we considered to be material weaknesses. It should be understood that internal controls are never perfected, and those controls, which protect the District's funds from such things as fraud and accounting errors, need to be continually reviewed by your management and modified as necessary.
- The results of our testing disclosed no instances of noncompliance required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.
- We reported that the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the basic financial statements.
- The results of our tests indicate that the District has complied, in all material respects, with the types of compliance requirements that could have a direct and material effect on each of its major federal programs.
- We reported no deficiencies in the District's internal controls over compliance that we considered to be material weaknesses with the types of compliance requirements that could have a direct and material effect on each of its major federal programs.
- We reported no findings based on our testing of the District's compliance with Minnesota laws and regulations.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS**

In accordance with Minnesota Statutes, the District's School Board has elected not to exercise control over the transactions of the extracurricular student activity accounts maintained at various district sites. Consequently, the cash receipts and disbursements of the District's extracurricular student activity accounts are reported in a separate set of financial statements, rather than being reported within the District's General Fund. We have issued an opinion on these separate financial statements, stating that they fairly present the cash balances and cash receipts and disbursements of these accounts as of and for the year ended June 30, 2018, in accordance with the financial reporting provisions of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) (regulatory basis of accounting). Our opinion was qualified for a limitation related to the completeness of cash receipts reported.

We reported one deficiency (item 2018-001) involving internal control over financial reporting for the District's extracurricular student activities that we consider to be a material weakness. The District reports student activities on a cash basis, and has not established procedures to assure that all cash collections are recorded in the accounting records. Procedures such as the use and reconciliation of prenumbered receipts, prenumbered admission tickets for events, and inventory controls over items sold for fundraisers would help strengthen the controls in this area.

We also issued a report on compliance with the MDE's *Manual for Activity Fund Accounting*, in which we reported no findings.

## **FOLLOW-UP ON PRIOR YEAR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

As part of our audit of the District's financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2018, we performed procedures to follow-up on any findings and recommendations that resulted from our prior year audit. We reported the following findings that were corrected by the District in the current year:

### District Financial Statement Audit:

- 2017-001 – Internal Controls over Compliance with Federal Suspension and Debarment Requirements
- 2017-002 – Internal Controls over Compliance with Federal Allowable Costs Requirements
- 2017-003 – Insufficient Collateral
- 2017-004 – Sale of Surplus Supplies, Materials, or Equipment

### Extracurricular Student Activity Audit:

- 2017-002 – Timely Deposit of Cash Receipts

## **GENERAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

As we previously discussed, internal controls, processes, and procedures are never perfected and need to be continually reviewed to make sure transaction cycles are performing properly and efficiently. During our testing, we discussed with staff that internal controls over payroll and benefits processing would be enhanced with a review of systems currently in place. This review should ensure benefits are properly split between employee and employer for withholding and expenditure purposes, and that system capabilities are utilized to the full extent possible in order to minimize the potential for manual processing exceptions.

## **SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The significant accounting policies used by the District are described in Note 1 of the notes to basic financial statements.

No new accounting policies were adopted, and the application of existing policies was not changed during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018. However, the District implemented the following governmental accounting standards during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018:

- GASB Statement No. 74, *Financial Reporting for Post-Employment Benefit Plans Other Than Pension Benefits*, which established new accounting and financial reporting requirements for OPEB plans.
- GASB Statement No. 75, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Post-Employment Benefits Other Than Pensions*, which established new accounting and financial reporting requirements for governments whose employees are provided with OPEB.
- GASB Statement No. 85, *Omnibus 2017*, which addresses issues that have been identified during implementation and application of certain GASB statements.
- GASB Statement No. 86, *Certain Debt Extinguishment Issues*, which improves the consistency in accounting and financial reporting for in-substance defeasances of debt.

We noted no transactions entered into by the District during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period.

## **ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND MANAGEMENT JUDGMENTS**

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from those expected. The most sensitive estimates affecting the financial statements were:

General education revenue and certain other revenues are computed by applying an allowance per student to the number of students served by the District. Student attendance is accumulated in a state-wide database—MARSS. Because of the complexity of student accounting and because of certain enrollment options, student information is input by other school districts and the MARSS data for the current fiscal year is not finalized until after the District has closed its financial records. General education revenue and certain other revenues are computed using preliminary information on the number of students served in the resident district and also utilizing some estimates, particularly in the area of enrollment options.

Special education state aid includes an adjustment related to tuition billings to and from other school districts for special education services, which are computed using formulas derived by the MDE. Because of the timing of the calculations, this adjustment for the current fiscal year is not finalized until after the District has closed its financial records. The impact of this adjustment on the receivable and revenue recorded for state special education aid is calculated using preliminary information available to the District.

The District has recorded a liability in the Statement of Net Position for severance benefits payable for which it is probable employees will be compensated. The “vesting method” used by the District to calculate this liability is based on assumptions involving the probability of employees becoming eligible to receive the benefits (vesting), the potential use of accumulated sick leave prior to termination, and the age at which such employees are likely to retire.

The District has recorded activity for other post-employment benefits (OPEB) and pension benefits. These obligations are calculated using actuarial methodologies primarily described in GASB Statement Nos. 68, 73, 74, and 75. These actuarial calculations include significant assumptions, including projected changes, healthcare insurance costs, investment returns, retirement ages, proportionate share, and employee turnover.

The depreciation of capital assets involves estimates pertaining to useful lives.

We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used by management to develop the estimates discussed above in determining that they are reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

The financial statement disclosures are neutral, consistent, and clear.

#### **DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN PERFORMING THE AUDIT**

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing our audit.

#### **CORRECTED AND UNCORRECTED MISSTATEMENTS**

Professional standards require us to accumulate all known and likely misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are clearly trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. There were no misstatements detected as a result of audit procedures that were material, either individually or in the aggregate, to each opinion unit’s financial statements taken as a whole.

#### **DISAGREEMENTS WITH MANAGEMENT**

For purposes of this letter, a disagreement with management is a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditor’s report. We are pleased to report that no such disagreements arose during the course of our audit.

#### **MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIONS**

We have requested certain representations from management that are included in the management representation letter dated December 21, 2018.

#### **MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS**

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a “second opinion” on certain situations. If a consultation involves application of an accounting principle to the District’s financial statements or a determination of the type of auditor’s opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.



## **OTHER AUDIT FINDINGS OR ISSUES**

We generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, with management each year prior to retention as the District's auditors. However, these discussions occurred in the normal course of our professional relationship and our responses were not a condition to our retention.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

We applied certain limited procedures to the management's discussion and analysis and the pension and OPEB-related required supplementary information (RSI) that supplements the basic financial statements. Our procedures consisted of inquiries of management regarding the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We did not audit the RSI and do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the RSI.

We were engaged to report on the supplemental information accompanying the financial statements, and the separately issued Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards and the Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS) Compliance Table, which are not RSI. With respect to this supplementary information, we made certain inquiries of management and evaluated the form, content, and methods of preparing the information to determine that the information complies with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the method of preparing it has not changed from the prior period, and the information is appropriate and complete in relation to our audit of the financial statements. We compared and reconciled the supplementary information to the underlying accounting records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves.

We were not engaged to report on the introductory and statistical sections, which accompany the financial statements but are not RSI. Such information has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, accordingly, we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.

## FUNDING PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MINNESOTA

Due to its complexity, it would be impossible to fully explain the funding of public education in Minnesota within this report. A summary of legislative changes affecting school districts and charter schools included later in this report gives an indication of how complicated the funding system is. This section provides some state-wide funding and financial trend information.

### BASIC GENERAL EDUCATION REVENUE

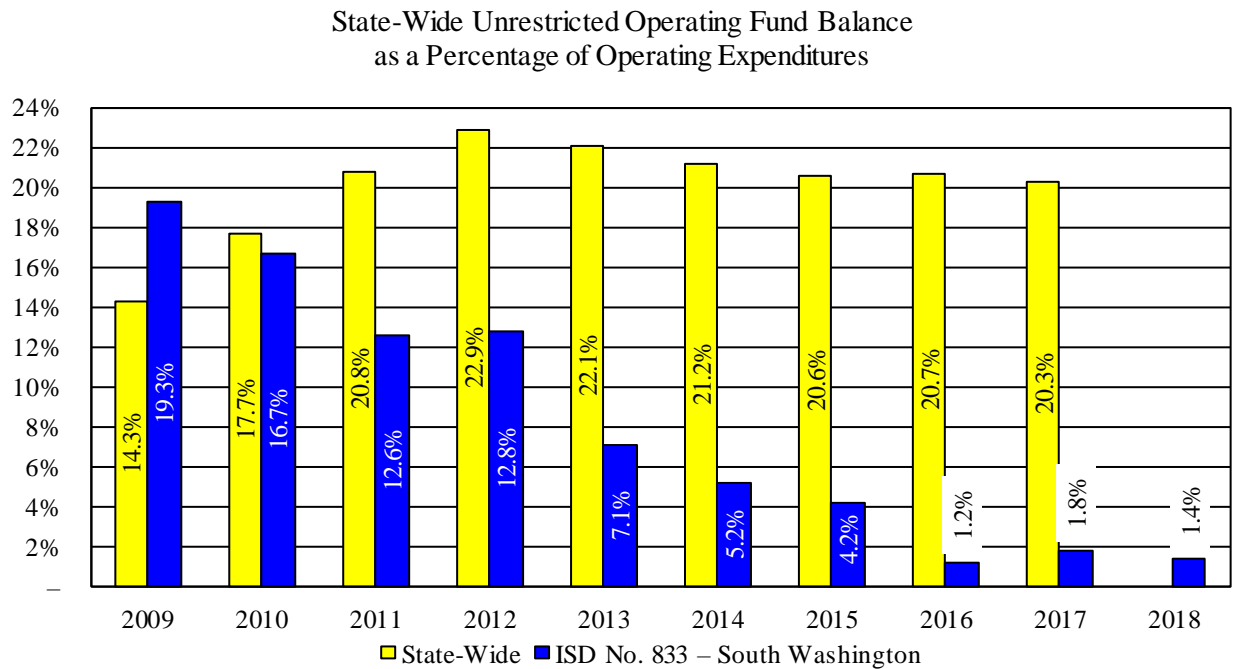
The largest single funding source for Minnesota school districts is basic general education aid. Each year, the Legislature sets a basic formula allowance. Total basic general education revenue is calculated by multiplying the formula allowance by the number of pupil units for which a district is entitled to aid. Pupil units are calculated using a legislatively determined weighting system applied to average daily membership (ADM). Over the years, various modifications have been made to this calculation, including changes in weighting and special consideration for declining enrollment districts.

The table below presents a summary of the formula allowance for the past decade and as approved for the 2019 fiscal year. The amount of the formula allowance and the percentage change from year-to-year excludes temporary funding changes, the “roll-in” of aids that were previously funded separately, and changes that may vary dependent on actions taken by individual districts. The \$529 increase in 2015 was offset by changes to pupil weightings and the general education aid formula that resulted in an increase equivalent to approximately \$105, or 2.0 percent, state-wide.

Fiscal Year Ended June 30,	Formula Allowance	
	Amount	Percent Increase
2009	\$ 5,124	1.0 %
2010	\$ 5,124	– %
2011	\$ 5,124	– %
2012	\$ 5,174	1.0 %
2013	\$ 5,224	1.0 %
2014	\$ 5,302	1.5 %
2015	\$ 5,831	2.0 %
2016	\$ 5,948	2.0 %
2017	\$ 6,067	2.0 %
2018	\$ 6,188	2.0 %
2019	\$ 6,312	2.0 %

## STATE-WIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCIAL HEALTH

One of the most common and comparable statistics used to evaluate school district financial health is the unrestricted operating fund balance as a percentage of operating expenditures.



Note: State-wide information is not available for fiscal 2018.

The calculation above reflects only the unrestricted fund balance of the General Fund, and the corresponding expenditures, which is the same method the state uses for the calculation of statutory operating debt. We have also included the comparable percentages for your district.

During the economic downturn that began in 2008, the average unrestricted fund balance as a percentage of operating expenditures maintained by Minnesota school districts increased, peaking at 22.9 percent at the end of fiscal 2012. This trend reflected districts' efforts to limit budget cuts, retain educational programs, and maintain adequate operating cash flow during a period of uncertain funding. As the state's economic condition improved in subsequent years, this ratio has gradually decreased to 20.3 percent at the end of fiscal 2017.

As of June 30, 2017, this ratio was 1.8 percent for the District, as compared to a state-wide average of 20.3 percent. The District's unrestricted operating fund balance as a percentage of operating expenditures was 1.4 percent at the end of the current year.

Having an appropriate fund balance is an important factor in assessing the District's financial health because a government, like any organization, requires a certain amount of equity to operate. As noted in the graph above, the District had been utilizing available fund balance since 2009. It is important to review fund balance levels on an ongoing basis to ensure a sufficient equity reserve is available to support programs and cash flow of the District.

The table below shows a comparison of governmental fund revenue per ADM received by Minnesota school districts and your district. Revenues for all governmental funds are included, except for the Capital Projects – Building Construction and Post-Employment Benefits Debt Service Funds. Other financing sources, such as proceeds from sales of capital assets, insurance recoveries, bond sales, loans, and interfund transfers, are also excluded.

<b>Governmental Funds Revenue per Student (ADM) Served</b>								
	State-Wide		Seven-County Metro Area		ISD No. 833 – South Washington			
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2018	
<b>General Fund</b>								
Property taxes	\$ 1,777	\$ 1,933	\$ 2,342	\$ 2,516	\$ 1,607	\$ 2,338	\$ 2,346	
Other local sources	495	515	392	423	207	371	263	
State	9,271	9,386	9,357	9,387	8,870	8,923	9,350	
Federal	432	450	447	480	229	260	239	
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>11,975</b>	<b>12,284</b>	<b>12,538</b>	<b>12,806</b>	<b>10,913</b>	<b>11,892</b>	<b>12,198</b>	
<b>Special revenue funds</b>								
Food Service	548	561	545	557	509	518	516	
Community Service	591	628	692	733	743	769	779	
Debt Service Fund	1,053	1,119	1,084	1,118	1,572	1,692	1,633	
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>\$ 14,167</b>	<b>\$ 14,592</b>	<b>\$ 14,859</b>	<b>\$ 15,214</b>	<b>\$ 13,737</b>	<b>\$ 14,871</b>	<b>\$ 15,126</b>	
ADM served per MDE School District Profiles Report (current year estimated)					<u>17,858</u>	<u>18,436</u>	<u>18,568</u>	
Note: Excludes the Capital Projects – Building Construction and Post-Employment Benefits Debt Service Funds.								
Source of state-wide and seven-county metro area data: School District Profiles Report published by the MDE								

ADM used in the table above is based on enrollments consistent with those used in the MDE School District Profiles Report, which include extended time ADM, and may differ from ADM reported in other tables. Changes in enrollment also impact comparisons in the table above and on the next page when revenue and expenditures are based on fixed costs, such as debt levies and principal and interest on outstanding indebtedness.

The mix of local and state revenues vary from year to year primarily based on funding formulas and the state’s financial condition. The mix of revenue components from district to district varies, due to factors such as the strength of property values, mix of property types, operating and bond referendums, enrollment trends, density of population, types of programs offered, and countless other criteria.

The District earned \$280,817,383 in the governmental funds reflected above in fiscal 2018, an increase of \$6,657,856 (2.4 percent) from the prior year. Total revenue per ADM served increased by \$255 per student. The increase in the basic formula allowance, as discussed earlier, more special education aid and long-term facilities maintenance funding contributed to the overall revenue growth in state sources in the General Fund.

The following table reflects similar comparative data available from the MDE for all governmental fund expenditures, excluding the Capital Projects – Building Construction and Post-Employment Benefits Debt Service Funds. Other financing uses, such as bond refundings and transfers, are also excluded.

<b>Governmental Funds Expenditures per Student (ADM) Served</b>							
	State-Wide		Seven-County Metro Area		ISD No. 833 – South Washington		
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2018
<b>General Fund</b>							
Administration and district support	\$ 960	\$ 991	\$ 958	\$ 996	\$ 655	\$ 649	\$ 768
Elementary and secondary regular instruction	5,466	5,539	5,849	5,887	5,493	5,780	5,810
Vocational education instruction	158	166	146	153	129	119	123
Special education instruction	2,182	2,225	2,330	2,334	1,945	2,136	2,248
Instructional support services	622	660	725	765	544	559	569
Pupil support services	1,019	1,074	1,104	1,165	1,108	1,140	1,165
Sites, buildings, and other	890	906	847	870	896	1,178	1,276
<b>Total General Fund – noncapital</b>	<b>11,297</b>	<b>11,561</b>	<b>11,959</b>	<b>12,170</b>	<b>10,770</b>	<b>11,561</b>	<b>11,959</b>
General Fund capital expenditures	600	627	532	592	1,113	521	267
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>11,897</b>	<b>12,188</b>	<b>12,491</b>	<b>12,762</b>	<b>11,883</b>	<b>12,082</b>	<b>12,226</b>
<b>Special revenue funds</b>							
Food Service	542	550	539	545	479	506	510
Community Service	577	611	676	713	742	809	778
Debt Service Fund	1,522	1,359	1,453	1,323	1,598	1,781	1,786
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 14,538</b>	<b>\$ 14,708</b>	<b>\$ 15,159</b>	<b>\$ 15,343</b>	<b>\$ 14,702</b>	<b>\$ 15,178</b>	<b>\$ 15,300</b>
ADM served per MDE School District Profiles Report (current year estimated)					<u>17,858</u>	<u>18,436</u>	<u>18,568</u>
Note: Excludes the Capital Projects – Building Construction and Post-Employment Benefits Debt Service Funds.							
Source of state-wide and seven-county metro area data: School District Profiles Report published by the MDE							

Expenditure patterns also vary from district to district for various reasons. Factors affecting the comparison include the growth cycle or maturity of the District, average employee experience, availability of funding, population density, and even methods of allocating costs. The differences from program to program reflect the District’s particular character, such as its community service programs, as well as the fluctuations from year to year for such things as capital expenditures.

The District spent \$284,089,854 in the governmental funds reflected above in fiscal 2018, an increase of \$4,264,425 (1.5 percent) from the prior year. On a per-student basis, this represents an increase of \$122. Expenditure increases were spread across nearly every category presented. The growth over prior year was largely as anticipated in final budgets for natural contractual and inflationary increases. The largest change in the table above was in capital expenditures of the General Fund, which decreased by \$254 per ADM from the prior year. The District currently has a number of capital projects ongoing at the District, which are financed through other sources in the Capital Projects – Building Construction Fund that is not included in the above table.

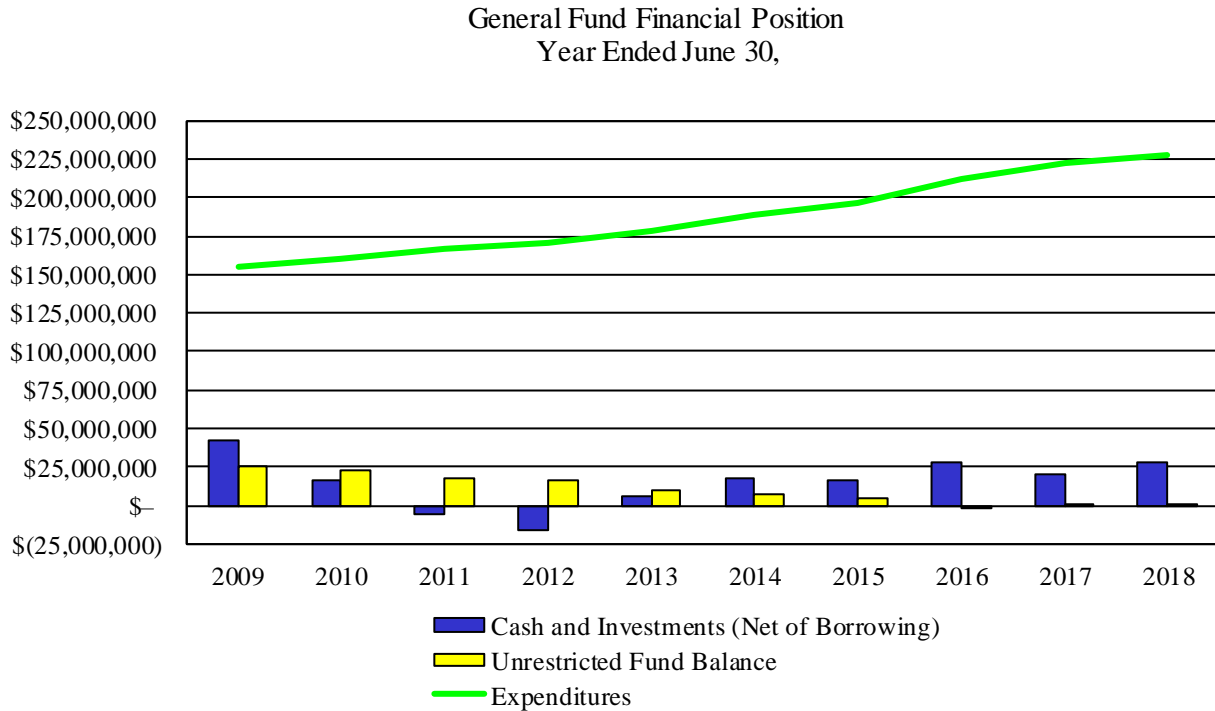
## SUMMARY

Funding for Minnesota school districts generally has not kept pace with inflation, despite recent enhancements to the basic general education state aid formula. This has often increased districts reliance on local revenue sources like voter-approved operating referenda and user fees to maintain programs. Many districts are also beginning to experience delays in collecting property tax revenues due to higher abatements, as more commercial property taxpayers are appealing the assessed values of brick-and-mortar facilities in light of the rapid evolution of e-commerce. School boards and district administrators continue to face many challenges in providing the best education within the limits of the resources available.

## FINANCIAL TRENDS OF YOUR DISTRICT

### GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL POSITION

The following graph displays the District's General Fund trends of financial position and changes in the volume of financial activity. Unrestricted fund balance and cash balance are two indicators of financial health or equity, while annual expenditures are often used to measure the size of the operation.



The District ended fiscal year 2018 with a General Fund cash balance of \$27,485,749 (net of interfund borrowing), an increase of \$7,888,347 from the prior year. The unrestricted fund balance in the General Fund at year-end was \$1,294,475 (excluding restricted fund balance deficits), an increase of \$1,236,743.

Total fund balance of the General Fund increased by \$994,552, compared to a decrease of \$2,089,435 as approved in the final budget.

Changes in the metering of state aid payments to school districts and in the tax shift, as legislatively-approved, has significantly impacted cash and investment balances in the years presented in the above graph.

## GENERAL FUND EQUITY COMPONENTS

The following table presents the components of the General Fund balance for the past five years:

	June 30,				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Nonspendable fund balances	\$ 1,135,917	\$ 2,949,314	\$ 3,139,510	\$ 3,257,797	\$ 1,396,426
Restricted fund balances (1)	1,155,136	3,250,381	5,232,246	4,102,168	5,721,348
Unrestricted fund balances					
Committed	3,531,073	1,611,060	2,848,063	2,349,140	2,698,868
Assigned	1,068,692	2,506,731	-	-	-
Unassigned	2,594,734	-	(3,916,752)	(2,291,408)	(1,404,393)
<b>Total fund balance</b>	<b>\$ 9,485,552</b>	<b>\$ 10,317,486</b>	<b>\$ 7,303,067</b>	<b>\$ 7,417,697</b>	<b>\$ 8,412,249</b>
Unrestricted fund balances as a percentage of total expenditures	<u>3.8%</u>	<u>2.1%</u>	<u>(0.5%)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>0.6%</u>
Unassigned fund balances as a percentage of total expenditures	<u>1.4%</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1.8%)</u>	<u>(1.0%)</u>	<u>(0.6%)</u>
(1) Includes deficits in restricted fund balance accounts allowed to accumulate deficits under UFARS, which are part of unassigned fund balance on the accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America-based financial statements.					

The table above reflects the total General Fund unrestricted fund balance and percentages, which differs from those used in the previous discussion of state-wide fund balances, which are based on a state formula.

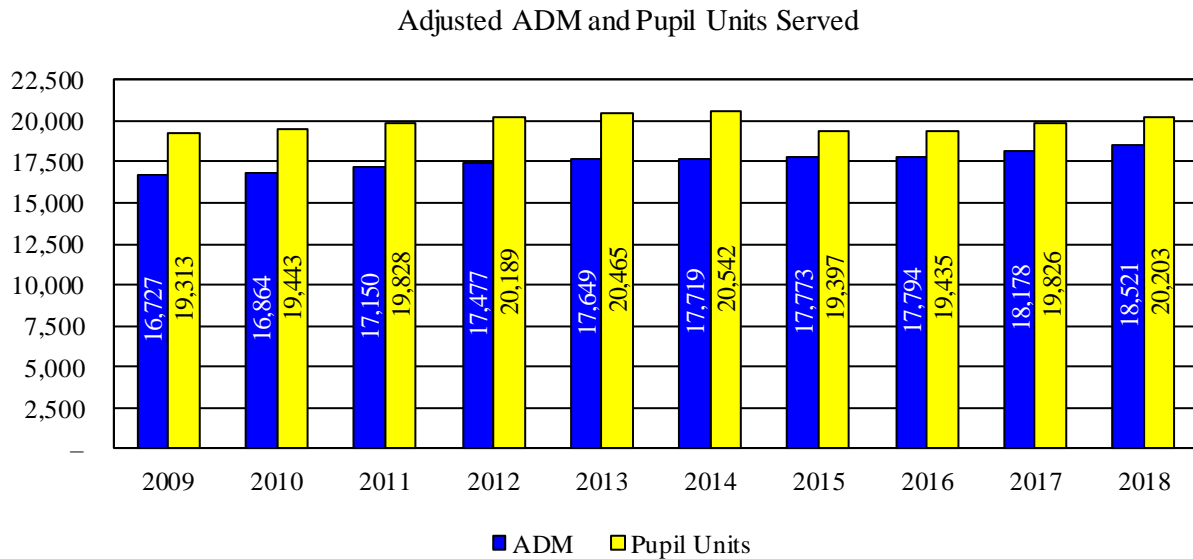
The School Board-approved fund balance policy states that the District will endeavor to maintain an unrestricted fund balance each year of 5.0 percent to 9.0 percent of the General Fund unrestricted operating expenditure budget.

The resources represented by this fund balance are critical to a district's ability to maintain adequate cash flow throughout the year, to retain its programs, and to cushion against the impact of unexpected costs or funding shortfalls. At June 30, 2018, the unrestricted fund balance in the General Fund calculated to 0.6 percent of total expenditures and has decreased in recent years as presented in the table above.

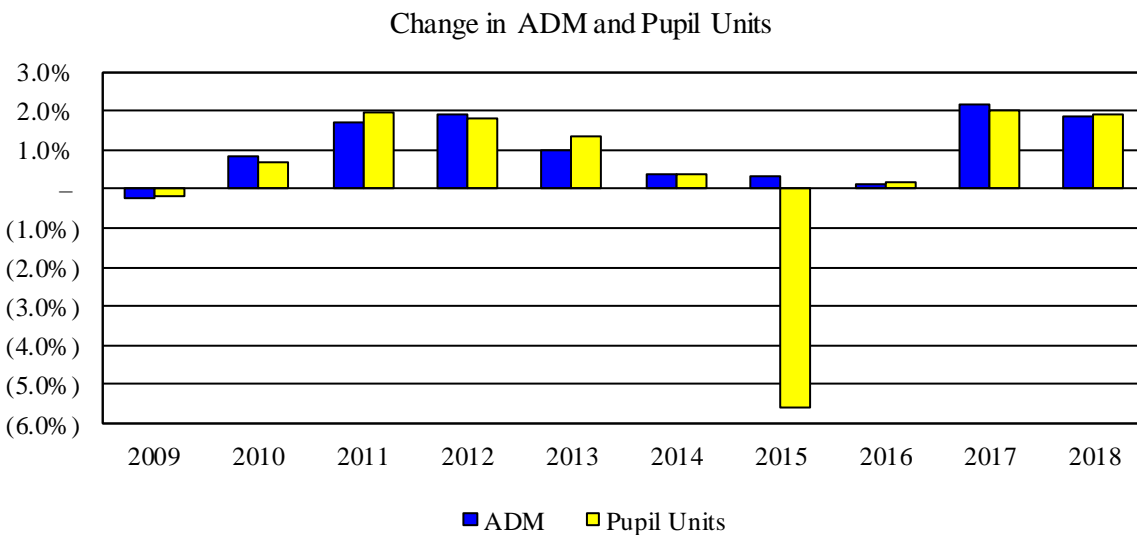
Through legislative changes in funding, public school districts have become extremely dependent on state revenues to finance operations. Considering the demands placed on the state's limited resources, we believe it is particularly important to maintain an adequate level of fund balance. We want to emphasize the importance of maintaining an adequate fund balance and the importance of reviewing these fund balance levels on a continuing basis.

## AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (ADM) AND PUPIL UNITS

The following graph presents the District's adjusted ADM and resulting pupil units for the past 10 years:



The following graph shows the rate of change in ADM served by the District from year to year, along with the change in the resulting pupil units:



The change in pupil units for 2015 includes the effect of legislative reductions to pupil units.

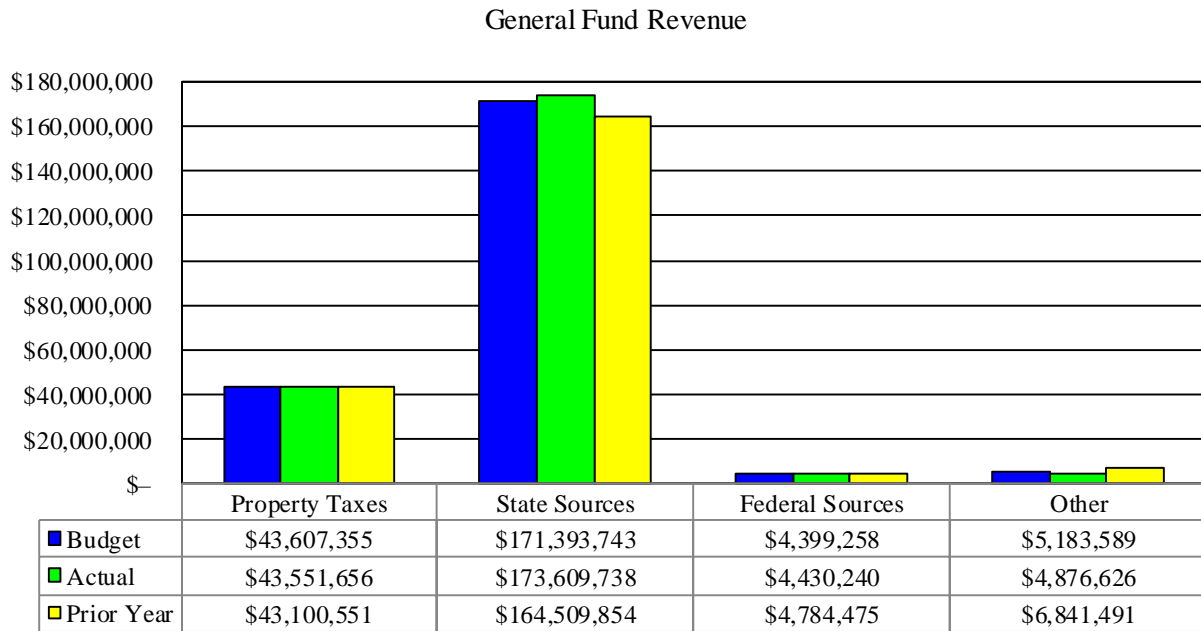
ADM is a measure of students attending class, which is then converted to pupil units (the base for determining revenue) using a statutory formula. Not only is the original budget based on ADM estimates, the final audited financial statements are based on updated, but still estimated, ADM since the counts are not finalized until around January of the following year. When viewing revenue budget variances, one needs to consider these ADM changes, the impact of the prior year final adjustments which affect this year's revenue, and also the final adjustments caused by open enrollment gains and losses.

The District served an estimated ADM of 18,521 in 2018, an increase of 343 ADM (about 1.9 percent) from the prior year. The resulting pupil units served by the District increased by 377 (1.9 percent) to 20,203.



## GENERAL FUND REVENUES

The following graph presents the District's General Fund revenues for 2018:



Total General Fund revenues were \$226,468,260 for the year ended June 30, 2018, which was \$1,884,315 (0.8 percent) over the final budget and \$7,231,889 (3.3 percent) more than the prior year.

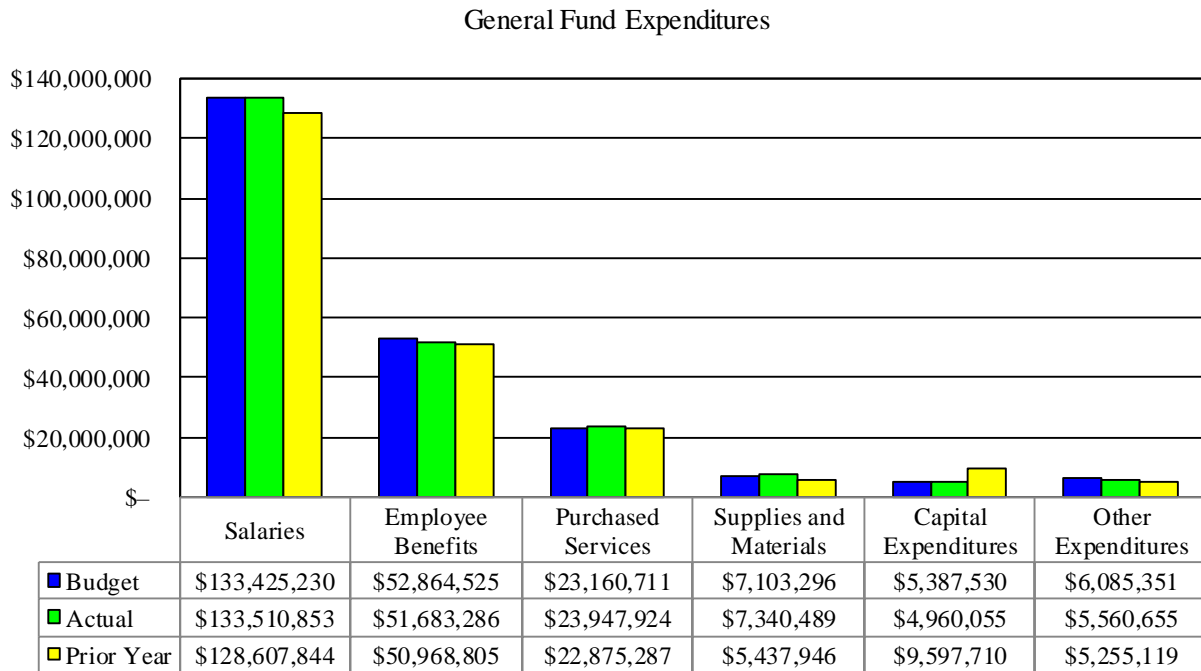
The variance to budget was mainly in state sources, which were \$2,215,995, or 1.3 percent, over budget. This favorable variance was due, in part, to the District recognizing more state special education funding than anticipated. The District also served more students than projected, which generated additional sources under the general education funding formula.

The increase from the prior year was also primarily in state sources. The increase in state sources was due to the District serving more students in the current year along with funding improvements in general education and special education funding formulas. Additional funding for long-term facilities maintenance aid also contributed to the increase in state sources. The decrease in other local sources is largely due to the change with certain students that were attending the Valley Crossing School. In the prior year, certain students served were managed through tuition agreements (other local funding source) that are now funded through general education funding (state sources) as students served by the District.

The graph above reflects the concentration of state sources (76.7 percent), followed by property taxes (19.2 percent) received to finance General Fund operations.

## GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES

The following graph summarizes the District's General Fund expenditures for 2018:



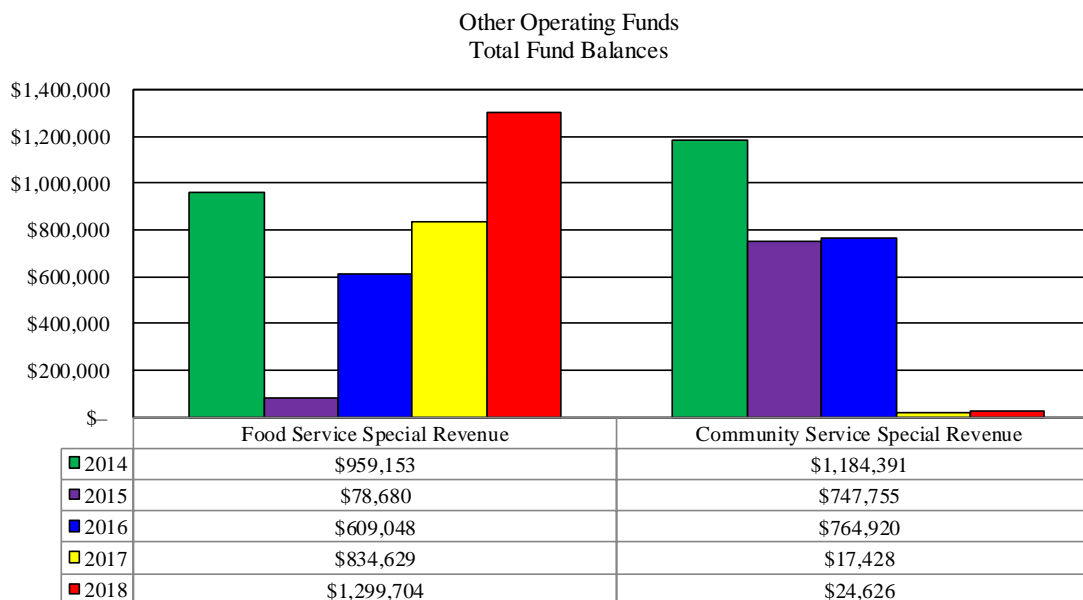
Total General Fund expenditures were \$227,003,262 for the year ended June 30, 2018, which was \$1,023,381 (0.4 percent) under the final budget and \$4,260,551 (1.9 percent) more than the prior year.

Salaries and benefits, which account for approximately 81.6 percent of General Fund expenditures, increased by \$5,617,490, or 3.1 percent, over the prior year. This increase included additional costs for serving more students in the current year and for normal pay raises, including step and lane changes within employment contracts. Salaries and employee benefits were \$1,095,616 under budget, or 0.6 percent, of appropriations.

After considering the change in revenues, expenditures, and other financing sources/uses (not pictured), the District reported a year-end fund balance of \$8,412,249, which was \$3,083,987 more than the ending fund balance projected in the final budget.

## OTHER FUNDS OF THE DISTRICT

The following graph shows what is referred to as the other operating funds. The remaining nonoperating funds are only included in narrative form below, since their level of fund balance can fluctuate significantly due to such things as issuing and spending the proceeds of refunding or building bonds and, therefore, the trend of fund balance levels are not necessarily a key indicator of financial health. It does not mean that these funds cannot experience financial trouble or that their fund balances are unimportant.



### Food Service Special Revenue Fund

The District's Food Service Special Revenue Fund equity increased \$465,075 from the prior year, compared to a planned increase of \$47,700. Revenues were \$61,586 under budget, mainly federal sources. Expenditures were \$124,350 under budget. A one-time transfer of \$354,611 from the General Fund also improved the year-end fund balance. The Food Service Special Revenue Fund had a year-end fund balance of \$1,299,704, representing 13.7 percent of annual expenditures totaling \$9,469,507.

Over the years, we have emphasized to our school district clients that food service operations should be self-sustaining, and should not become an additional burden on general education funds. This would include the accumulation of fund balance for future capital improvements to food service facilities and to provide a cushion in the event of a negative trend in operations.

### Community Service Special Revenue Fund

The District's Community Service Special Revenue Fund equity increased \$7,198 from the prior year, compared to a planned increase of \$138,099. Revenues were \$123,370 under budget, mainly in tuition and fees. Expenditures were \$7,531 over budget. The Community Service Special Revenue Fund had a year-end fund balance of \$24,626, representing 0.2 percent of annual expenditures totaling \$14,449,097.

Year-end equity of the Community Service Special Revenue Fund is further divided through restricted fund balance components operating in this fund. While total equity is positive, the categories restricted for school readiness and community service are negative as of June 30, 2018. While deficit balances are permitted for these restricted categories, we recommend the District review the programs to determine the best way to finance these operations if future revenue streams are insufficient to eliminate year-end deficits.

The Community Service Special Revenue Fund, like the Food Service Special Revenue Fund, needs to be self-sustaining. In addition to cost controls, financial analysis of the costs of providing programs, including overhead, is important. Fees and tuition charges should be sufficient to cover these costs as well as potential funding shortfalls from state, federal, or property tax sources.

### Capital Projects – Building Construction Fund

The activity of this fund is largely controlled by various debt issues used for the acquisition or construction of major capital facilities. The Capital Projects – Building Construction Fund has a fund balance of \$59,314,025 at June 30, 2018. Total fund balance decreased by \$33,487,621, with capital spending totaling \$57,907,554, exceeding investment earnings and facility maintenance bond proceeds in the current year.

### Debt Service Fund

The funding of debt service is controlled in accordance with each outstanding debt issue’s financing plan. It is important to remember that resources of the Debt Service Fund are dedicated to the payment of outstanding debt obligations of the District.

Total Debt Service Fund expenditures and other financing uses exceeded revenues and other financing sources by \$121,367,317 in the current year. At year-end, the District has \$5,379,219 of remaining fund balance restricted for future debt service payments. The District has actively reviewed outstanding debt, issuing refunding bonds in recent years. These refunding transactions were completed in order to reduce future debt levies to taxpayers of the District. The District refunded \$118,850,000 of outstanding bonds in fiscal 2018.

### Proprietary Fund – Internal Service Funds

The District uses the internal service funds to account for the activity of the District’s severance and health benefit obligations. The following table presents the activity reported for the past three fiscal years for the internal service funds:

	June 30,		
	2016	2017	2018
Operating revenue			
Contributions from governmental funds	\$           –	\$           –	\$           –
Operating expenses			
Post-employment severance and health benefits	2,363,511	2,205,681	4,197,334
Operating income (loss)	(2,363,511)	(2,205,681)	(4,197,334)
Nonoperating revenue			
Investment earnings	13,722	64,661	96,669
Change in net position	(2,349,789)	(2,141,020)	(4,100,665)
Net position			
Beginning of year, as previously reported	11,290,827	8,941,038	3,549,169
Change in accounting principle	–	(3,250,849)	3,165,928
Beginning of year, as restated	11,290,827	5,690,189	6,715,097
End of year	<u>\$ 8,941,038</u>	<u>\$ 3,549,169</u>	<u>\$ 2,614,432</u>

The District underwent an actuary study dated July 1, 2017 to determine its severance and health benefit liabilities based on current contracts and employees in place. A number of variables and estimates are used to determine these obligations. Additional details of these studies are included in the notes to basic financial statements and the RSI immediately following the notes in the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

During recent years, the District planned for reduced contributions received in the internal service funds, which are paid by the governmental funds. The District has also reduced General Fund expenditures by financing the implicit rate subsidy expense, with resources of the OPEB Internal Service Fund.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America permit internal service funds to be used to report any activities that provide goods or services to other funds on a cost-reimbursement basis. Internal service funds are specifically designed to operate on a cost-reimbursement basis, with the goal to measure the full cost of providing goods or services to fully recovering that cost through fees or charges. If a government does not intend to recover the full cost of providing goods or services, the use of internal service funds would not be appropriate.

The District reported a change in accounting principle for the District's OPEB plan as required in the current year.

The District established an irrevocable trust in the current year and is in the process of transferring assets of the Other Post-Employment Internal Service Fund between the other internal service fund operations and the newly created OPEB Trust Fund. This process is anticipated to be completed by June 30, 2019, and the Other Post-Employment Internal Service Fund would be closed.

#### **Other Post-Employment Benefits Trust Fund**

The District has established the Other Post-Employment Benefits Trust Fund to account for an irrevocable trust account established to finance the District's liability for post-employment healthcare benefits. At year-end, trust net position of \$3,098,281 is available for future OPEB payments.

## GOVERNMENT-WIDE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The District's financial statements include fund-based information that focuses on budgetary compliance, and the sufficiency of the District's current assets to finance its current liabilities. The governmental reporting model also requires the inclusion of two government-wide financial statements designed to present a clear picture of the District as a single, unified entity. These government-wide financial statements provide information on the total cost of delivering educational services, including capital assets and long-term liabilities.

Theoretically, net position represents district resources available for providing services after its debts are settled. However, those resources are not always in expendable form, or there may be restrictions on how some of those resources can be used. Therefore, this statement divides net position into three components: net investment in capital assets, restricted, and unrestricted. The following table presents a summarized reconciliation of the District's governmental fund balances to net position, and the separate components of net position for the last two years:

	June 30,		Change
	2018	2017	
Net position – governmental activities			
Total fund balances – governmental funds	\$ 74,429,823	\$ 227,817,936	\$(153,388,113)
Total capital assets, net of depreciation	423,294,044	375,583,643	47,710,401
PERA and TRA pension adjustments	(250,559,802)	(186,476,061)	(64,083,741)
OPEB adjustments	(14,466,546)	–	(14,466,546)
Other long-term debt	(380,447,144)	(497,594,634)	117,147,490
Other adjustments	(2,092,169)	(3,756,505)	1,664,336
Total net position – governmental activities	<u>\$ (149,841,794)</u>	<u>\$ (84,425,621)</u>	<u>\$ (65,416,173)</u>
Net position			
Net investment in capital assets	\$ 105,081,336	\$ 97,078,662	\$ 8,002,674
Restricted	10,386,276	8,559,909	1,826,367
Unrestricted	<u>(265,309,406)</u>	<u>(190,064,192)</u>	<u>(75,245,214)</u>
Total net position	<u>\$ (149,841,794)</u>	<u>\$ (84,425,621)</u>	<u>\$ (65,416,173)</u>

Some of the District's fund balances translate into restricted net position by virtue of external restrictions (statutory restrictions) or by the nature of the fund they are in (e.g., Food Service Special Revenue Fund balance can only be spent for food service program costs). The unrestricted net position category consists mainly of the General Fund unrestricted fund balances, offset against noncapital long-term obligations such as vacation, severance payable, pension liabilities, and net OPEB liabilities.

Total net position decreased \$65,416,173 during fiscal 2018. The District's net investment in capital assets increased \$8,002,674 this year. The change in this category of net position typically depends on the amount of capital asset additions, and the relationship between the rate at which the District's capital assets are being depreciated and the rate at which the District is repaying the debt issued to purchase or construct those assets. The restricted portion of the District's net position increased \$1,826,367, due to an increase in net position restricted for capital asset acquisition, debt service, food service, and other state funding purposes.

Unrestricted net position decreased \$75,245,214. The District reported a \$13,473,303 change in accounting principle for the implementation of a new OPEB accounting standard that reduced unrestricted net position. A change in the District's share of the Public Employees Retirement Association and the Teachers Retirement Association state-wide pension obligations also caused unrestricted net position to decrease in the current year.

## LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

The 2018 legislative session, falling in the second half of the state's fiscal biennium, was a short session in which only two major finance-related bills were passed, an omnibus bonding bill and an omnibus pensions bill. The following is a brief summary of specific legislative changes from the 2018 session or previous legislative sessions impacting Minnesota school districts in future years.

**Basic General Education Revenue** – The Legislature approved annual increases of 2 percent to the basic general education formula allowance for the 2018–2019 biennium. The per pupil allowance will increase \$124 to \$6,312 for fiscal year (FY) 2019.

**Compensatory Revenue** – The \$5 million previously allocated for compensatory pilot grants was permanently added to the allocation for regular compensatory revenue beginning in FY 2018. The portion of compensatory revenue required to be used for extended time activities will increase from 1.7 percent of total compensatory revenue for FY 2018 to 3.5 percent in FY 2019, and 3.5 percent plus the percentage change in the basic formula for FY 2020 and beyond.

**Early Learning** – The Legislature made a number of changes to early learning programs, including appropriating funding of \$71.75 million for the 2018–2019 biennium. Other changes include:

- The creation of a new School Readiness Plus (SR+) program for FY 2018 and FY 2019 only, with the following student eligibility requirements:
  - A child who is four years of age as of September 1, and who demonstrates one or more risk factors is eligible to participate in the program free of charge,
  - A child who is four years of age as of September 1, and who does not demonstrate any risk factors is eligible to participate on a fee-for-service basis, and
  - A district must adopt a sliding fee schedule for students not demonstrating risk factors, but must waive the fee for students unable to pay.
- Changing the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) cap from a limit on the total state aid entitlement to a limit on the number of participants, as follows:
  - A combined cap of 7,160 participants for VPK and SR+ for FY 2019, and
  - A cap of 3,160 participants for VPK for FY 2020 and later (SR+ program sunsets).
- All applications submitted in January to renew an existing VPK program will be funded first (3,160 slots). Applications for expanded VPK programs, and new VPK or SR+ programs will be ranked and approved based on various criteria. The number of new participants allowed in each new or expanded program will depend on how the programs are ranked.

**Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue** – Long-term facilities maintenance revenue will increase from \$292 to \$380 per adjusted pupil unit (APU); multiplied by the lessor of one, or the ratio of the district's average building age to 35 years for FY 2019 and thereafter.

**School Building Bond Agricultural Tax Credit** – Effective for taxes beginning with the payable 2018 levy (FY 2019), a tax credit on all property classified as agricultural (excluding the house, garage, and one acre of an agricultural homestead) is provided equal to 40 percent of the tax on the property attributable to school district building bond levies. The legislative appropriation for this tax credit is \$34.8 million for FY 2019, \$45.2 million for FY 2020, and \$52.5 million for FY 2021.

**School Safety Grants** – The 2018 bonding bill included an appropriation of \$25 million for school safety grants to be funded from the state's General Fund for FY 2019. These grants may be used to design, construct, furnish, or equip school facilities, including renovating or expanding existing facilities. Grants will be awarded by the MDE on a first come – first served basis, up to a limit of \$500,000 for each qualifying school building. At least half the grants must be awarded to school districts outside of the metro area.

**Pension Benefit Reforms** – The 2018 pension bill included a number of reforms to the various defined benefit pension plans across the state, including the plans administered by the Teachers Retirement Association (TRA), St. Paul Teachers Retirement Fund Association (SPTRFA), and the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA). The reforms include:

- Elimination of augmentation (annual percentage increases to pension benefits accrued by individuals leaving public service prior to retirement). For the TRA plan, augmentation is eliminated for all members after December 31, 2017, but does not eliminate augmentation previously credited to member accounts.
- Early retirement subsidies (augmentation an early retiree would have received had they waited until the normal retirement age to begin receiving the pension) are phased out.
- Post-retirement cost of living adjustments (COLAs) are reduced. For the TRA plan, the COLA was reduced from 2.0 percent to 1.0 percent for five years, with the rate increasing by 0.1 percent annually thereafter, to a maximum of 1.5 percent. For the SPTRFA plan, there will be no COLA increase for two years, and a 1.0 percent annual COLA thereafter. For the PERA plans, the COLA will be equal to 50.0 percent of the annual increase for Social Security, but not less than 0.5 percent and not more than 1.5 percent.
- For early retirees that retire on or after January 1, 2024, COLAs are deferred until the retiree reaches the normal retirement age.
- The rate of interest paid on refunds of employee contributions to former public employees was reduced from an annual rate of 4 percent to 3 percent.
- The actuarial assumption for investment rate of return was reduced to 7.5 percent for all plans.
- Employer contribution rates were increased for the TRA plan (a total increase of 1.25 percent phased in over a 6-year period beginning in FY 2019) and the SPTRFA plan (a total increase of 2.50 percent phased in over a 6-year period beginning in FY 2019). Employee contribution rates were also increased by 0.25 percent beginning in FY 2024 for the TRA plan and beginning in FY 2023 for the SPTRFA plan. The pension adjustment component of the general education aid formula was increased by an amount equal to the product of the salaries paid to members of these two plans times the district's pension adjustment rate for the fiscal year to help offset the cost of the employer contribution increases.

**Competitive Bidding Threshold** – Effective for contracts awarded on or after August 1, 2018, the dollar threshold at which Minnesota Statutes require the use of a sealed bidding process was raised from \$100,000 to \$175,000. This extends the dollar range for which contracts may be awarded using direct negotiation (obtaining two quotations) contracts between \$25,000 and \$175,000. By reference, this change also increased the dollar threshold at which public contractors' performance and payment bonds are required for contracts over \$175,000.



## ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING UPDATES

### **GASB Statement No. 83, *Certain Asset Retirement Obligations***

At times, state and local governments are required to take specific actions to retire certain tangible capital assets, such as the decommissioning of nuclear reactors, removal and disposal of wind turbines in wind farms, dismantling and removal of sewage treatment plants, and removal and disposal of x-ray machines. Obligations to retire certain tangible capital assets also arise from contracts or court judgments. Accounting and financial reporting standards exist for costs of the closure and post-closure care of municipal solid waste landfills, but those standards do not address retirement obligations associated with other types of tangible capital assets.

This statement addresses accounting and financial reporting for certain asset retirement obligations (AROs) that were not addressed in GASB standards by establishing uniform accounting and financial reporting requirements for these obligations. An ARO is a legally enforceable liability associated with the retirement of a tangible capital asset. A government that has legal obligations to perform future asset retirement activities related to its tangible capital assets should recognize a liability based on the guidance in this statement. The requirements of this statement are effective for reporting periods beginning after June 15, 2018.

### **GASB Statement No. 84, *Fiduciary Activities***

This statement is intended to enhance consistency and comparability of fiduciary activity reporting by state and local governments. It is also meant to improve the usefulness of fiduciary activity information primarily for assessing the accountability of governments in their roles as fiduciaries.

This statement establishes criteria for identifying fiduciary activities of all state and local governments. The focus of the criteria generally is on (1) whether a government is controlling the assets of the fiduciary activity and (2) the beneficiaries with whom a fiduciary relationship exists. An activity meeting the criteria should be reported in a fiduciary fund in the basic financial statements. This statement describes four fiduciary funds that should be reported, if applicable: (1) pension (and other employee benefit) trust funds, (2) investment trust funds, (3) private-purpose trust funds, and (4) custodial funds. Custodial funds generally should report fiduciary activities that are not held in a trust or equivalent arrangement that meets specific criteria. The requirements of this statement are effective for reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2018.

### **GASB Statement No. 87, *Leases***

A lease is a contract that transfers control of the right to use another entity's nonfinancial asset as specified in the contract for a period of time in an exchange or exchange-like transaction. Examples of nonfinancial assets include buildings, land, vehicles, and equipment. Any contract that meets this definition should be accounted for under the leases guidance, unless specifically excluded in this statement.

Governments enter into leases for many types of assets. Under the previous guidance, leases were classified as either capital or operating depending on whether the lease met any of four tests. In many cases, the previous guidance resulted in reporting lease transactions differently than similar nonlease financing transactions.

The goal of this statement is to better meet the information needs of users by improving accounting and financial reporting for leases by governments. It establishes a single model for lease accounting based on the principle that leases are financings of the right to use an underlying asset. This statement increases the usefulness of financial statements by requiring recognition of certain lease assets and liabilities for leases that previously were classified as operating leases and recognized as inflows of resources or outflows of resources based on the payment provisions of the contract.

Under this statement, a lessee is required to recognize a lease liability and an intangible right-to-use lease asset, and a lessor is required to recognize a lease receivable and a deferred inflow of resources, thereby enhancing the relevance and consistency of information about governments' leasing activities.

To reduce the cost of implementation, this statement includes an exception for short-term leases, defined as a lease that, at the commencement of the lease term, has a maximum possible term under the lease contract of 12 months (or less), including any options to extend, regardless of their probability of being exercised. Lessees and lessors should recognize short-term lease payments as outflows of resources or inflows of resources, respectively, based on the payment provisions of the lease contract. The requirements of this statement are effective for reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2019.

### ***GASB Statement No. 88, Certain Disclosures Related to Debt, Including Direct Borrowings and Direct Placements***

The primary objective of this statement is to improve the information that is disclosed in notes to government financial statements related to debt, including direct borrowings and direct placements. It also clarifies which liabilities governments should include when disclosing information related to debt.

The requirements of this statement will improve financial reporting by providing users of financial statements with essential information that currently is not consistently provided. In addition, information about resources to liquidate debt and the risks associated with changes in terms associated with debt will be disclosed. As a result, users will have better information to understand the effects of debt on a government's future resource flows.

This statement defines debt for purposes of disclosure in notes to financial statements as a liability that arises from a contractual obligation to pay cash (or other assets that may be used in lieu of cash) in one or more payments to settle an amount that is fixed at the date the contractual obligation is established. The statement requires that additional essential information related to debt be disclosed in notes to financial statements, including unused lines of credit; assets pledged as collateral for the debt; and terms specified in debt agreements related to significant events of default with finance-related consequences, significant termination events with finance-related consequences, and significant subjective acceleration clauses. It also requires that existing and additional information be provided for direct borrowings and direct placements of debt separately from other debt. The requirements of this statement are effective for reporting periods beginning after June 15, 2018.

### **Uniform Guidance, Micro-Purchase Threshold**

Under the Uniform Guidance for federal programs, a micro-purchase is one for goods or services that, due to its relatively low value, does not require the government to abide by many of its ordinary competitive procedures, including small business set-asides. Because the contract is theoretically, such a low amount, the contracting officer can pick virtually whatever company and product he or she wants to satisfy the procurement, so long as the price is reasonable. The standard micro-purchase threshold has been amended to increase the threshold to \$10,000, effective June 20, 2018. Entities are not required to increase the micro-purchase and simplified acquisition thresholds but, if they wish to do so, they must update their procurement policies and procedures to reflect the change in thresholds. They cannot retroactively make these changes effective prior to June 20, 2018.