

FEBRUARY BUDGET AND ECONOMIC FORECAST

This week MN Management and Budget released the February forecast which showed Minnesota has a projected budget surplus of \$329 million in FY18-19, an improvement over the \$188 million deficit predicted in November. According to MMB, the most significant contributors to the budget surplus were higher than expected revenue for the federal Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), short-term stimulus from federal tax law changes and \$167 million in reduced spending estimates. The forecast also showed that spending in the E12 budget is expected to be \$54 million less, largely due to a lower forecast in special education and compensatory aid spending.

With the release of this updated forecast, Governor Dayton will finalize his supplement budget recommendations. Expect to see these come out mid-March.

COMMITTEE DEADLINES ANNOUNCED, OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Every session, the legislature agrees to joint committee deadlines in which bills must meet to move on through the legislative process. These deadlines create a timeline, and typically set the pace, for the session.

First deadline: Thursday, March 22

Bills must be out of all policy committees in one body.

Second deadline: Thursday, March 29

Bills having met the first deadline must be out of all policy committees in the other body.

Third deadline: Friday, April 20

Omnibus budget bills must be passed out of all finance divisions in both bodies.

Governor's State of the State: Wednesday, March 14

Easter/Passover break: Friday, March 30 through Sunday, April 8.

Constitutional adjournment deadline: Monday, May 21

Looking to next week

On Wednesday, the House Education Finance Committee will hear an [overview](#) on community education programs. The purpose of the hearing is to help house members understand the various programs, outside of school readiness, that school districts offer through community education. MCEA will be testifying and providing an overview on CE programs and discuss some of the issues facing community education. If you are interested in watching the hearing online, the hearing most likely will be live-streamed on House TV. If it is, an updated [link](#) will be available the day of the hearing.

Early Learning Evaluation

The Office of the Legislative is continuing to work on a [program evaluation](#) of early learning in Minnesota. The report was expected to be released in February but it has been delayed. The office has not announced a date certain but we are hearing late April.

Advocacy for Children Day

Advocacy for Children Day is scheduled for Thursday, March 29. Click [here](#) for more details.