

## **House and Senate announce budget targets**

The House and Senate released their budget targets this week. As expected, the House and Senate are far apart on their overall budget priorities, including E-12 education. The House increases spending for E-12 education by \$900 million while the Senate set a \$207 million target. The Governor's overall E-12 spending level falls is at \$719 million.

The House Education Finance committee will move its finance bill this week. The Senate E-12 Education Finance and Policy Committee is scheduled to begin work on its budget bill the week of April 8.

## **House Education Finance Committee begins work on appropriations bill**

The draft [\*Omnibus E-12 Education Finance and Policy Bill\*](#) was posted this weekend. Below is a short summary of the provisions of interest to MCEA and MNAFFE and attached is a more detailed summary (note that this summary could change based on any changes in the committee process this week). MCEA/MNAFFE has weighed in on some of these proposals and in the coming days we will be addressing some questions and concerns that have been raised.

- Makes the one-time funding for School Readiness Plus, which expires at the end of this fiscal year, permanent.
- Removes the freeze on Pathway II scholarships.
- Lowers the eligibility age for early learning scholarships from birth to age three instead of ages three to four.
- Appropriates an additional \$12 million for early learning scholarships.
- Establishes a competitive statewide after-school community learning grant program and appropriates \$2 million per year.
- Changes the ABE growth factor allowing ABE revenue to grow by the greater of the annual growth contact hours or the growth in the general education basic formula allowance.
- Appropriates \$15 million for full-service community schools.
- Requires teacher licensure for a person providing instruction in a school district preschool, school readiness, school readiness plus but allows for a five-year phase-in period.
- Includes ABE and ECFE teachers within the definition of "teacher" under the continuing contract and tenure statutes.
- Prohibits a school district from dismissing a child participating or enrolled in a prekindergarten program.

### **Snow day bill to become law**

On Monday, Governor Walz will sign the snow day bill, which was passed by the House and Senate last week. The final [agreement](#) includes the following provisions:

- A school board may count any days canceled due to health and safety concerns as instructional days for purposes of calculating the number of hours and days required by law. This applies only to the 2018-19 school year.
- The district must report to the commissioner the number of days and hours the district counted and are encouraged to adopt an e-learning day plan.
- If a school board chooses to count a canceled day as an instructional day, the district must compensate employees and contract employers.
  - o Instructional employees who were scheduled to work on a day that school was canceled must either be given the opportunity to work another day or compensated at their normal rate of pay as though they had worked that day.
  - o A contract employer who provides student-related services who was scheduled to work on a day that school was canceled must either be given the opportunity to work another day or compensated at their normal rate of pay as though they had worked that day.
- A probationary teacher may count the canceled days toward the required 120 days of teacher service.