



### Just the Facts

#### Good News

- ◆ Minnesota's average ACT composite score of 22.6 was the highest in the nation among the 26 states in which more than half the college-bound students took the test in 2008.
- ◆ Minnesota has led the nation in average composite ACT scores for four consecutive years. The national average composite score was 21.1.

#### No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

According to *American School*, June 2008, Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings has proposed and will implement a series of regulatory changes to the NCLB Reauthorization Act including:

- ◆ Requirement for states to calculate their graduation rates in a uniform way by 2012-13.
- ◆ Schools will be judged on the percentage of minority students who graduate.
- ◆ Districts must demonstrate that parents are being properly notified that free tutoring is available to low-income students in struggling schools.
- ◆ Parents must also be notified of their right to transfer students out of low-performing schools at least two weeks before the school year starts.

#### State Status Report

- ◆ Minnesota's national ranking on key performance indicators has declined in recent years at the same time that the state has decreased its public investment relative to other states.
- ◆ Minnesota ranks 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> among the 50 states in the total size of state and local government.
- ◆ The falloff in Minnesota's investment in public services and infrastructure since 2002 is largely the result of a "no new tax" agenda.
- ◆ Other states have increased the percentage of income they devote to public investments; Minnesota's public investment has shrunk, dipping below the national average.
- ◆ Minnesota 20/20 cites the following three meaningful criteria for meaningful national comparisons of public investment and outcomes:
  - 1) a broad measure of revenues or expenditures (as opposed to just "taxes").
  - 2) combined state and local government revenues or expenditures (not only state-level information).
  - 3) revenues or expenditures per \$1,000 of personal income (rather than per capita).
- ◆ Minnesota's jobless rate has climbed, surpassing the national average.
- ◆ Most Minnesotans surveyed rate our schools, in relation to the taxes they pay, as either an excellent or good value.
- ◆ 83% of Minnesotans believe Poverty has a very critical or medium impact on the performance of public schools.

#### Cause for Pause

- ◆ According to the U.S. Department of Labor, today's learners will have 10 – 14 jobs by the time they are 38 years old.
- ◆ Many of today's college majors didn't exist 10 years ago.

- ◆ More than 70% of four-year-olds have used computers.
- ◆ The number of text messages sent today exceeds the number of people on the planet.
- ◆ In 10 years China will be the number one English-speaking country.
- ◆ 100% of college graduates in India speak English.
- ◆ More than 2.7 billion searches will be done on Google this month.
- ◆ My space has 230,000 new users each day.
- ◆ 3,000 books are published each day. We are currently preparing kids for jobs and technologies that don't exist.
- ◆ The 25% of children in China with the highest IQs is more than the entire population of North America.
- ◆ China has more honors kids than we have kids.
- ◆ China and India alone graduate 5.1 million students from college each year.

### **Demographic matters**

- ◆ Almost half of the record 50 million students entering U.S. schools this fall are minorities. – National Center on Education Statistics as cited in the *American School Board Journal*, September, 2008
- ◆ Fewer than half of black males receive diplomas with their cohort. – Schott Foundation for Public Education as cited in the *American School Board Journal*, September 2008

### **Communications**

- ◆ One-third of today's superintendents say they need more professional development and counsel in public relations and communications. – American Association of School Administrators *10 year study of the American Superintendency*
- ◆ 25% U.S. superintendents seek help in interpersonal relations and group dynamics. – American Association of School Administrators *10 year study of the American Superintendency*
- ◆ 31% of new teachers say that involving parents and communicating with them is their top challenge. – June 2005 National MetLife *Survey of the American Teacher*
- ◆ 89% of parent leaders surveyed say that not understanding how to become involved is the second-highest reason for a lack of parent involvement. – National PTA survey of 25,000 parent leaders.
- ◆ A top desire of parents is for schools to communicate with them in simple, understandable terms. – *How Strong Communication Contributes to Student and Schools Success*, MNSPRA
- ◆ Lack of communication expertise is the main reason superintendents lose their jobs. – *How Strong Communication Helps Superintendents Get and Keep Their Jobs*, MNSPRA 2005 survey

### **Excellence in Education**

#### **Minnesota's Promise**

Partners in *Minnesota's Promise* have agreed to work toward the following ten strategies of *Minnesota's Promise* both within organizations and across the state as a whole. (to see partner organizations or learn more about the ten strategies, go to [www.minnesotaspromise.org](http://www.minnesotaspromise.org))

- 1) Early childhood education
- 2) Educator quality
- 3) Academic rigor
- 4) Family and community involvement
- 5) Multicultural community
- 6) Data and research
- 7) Funding
- 8) Time
- 9) Special education
- 10) Health and wellness

#### **Bridge to Higher Learning**

The Bridge to Higher Learning is a New Vision for Minnesota's High Schools in the Global Information Age benefiting the following: (find more at [www.massp.org](http://www.massp.org))

- ◆ Students – with the skills and credentials they need to succeed.
- ◆ Schools – with a clear objective toward which they can align.
- ◆ Society – with economic growth and productivity and equity and social justice.

### **MESPA Minnesota Schools of Excellence**

The Minnesota School of Excellence Program is a school improvement process developed and sponsored by the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association, and recognized by the Minnesota Department of Education. It assesses the following six standards for quality elementary and middle level communities. Research has shown that if these six standards are evident in a school, best practices are being followed.

- 1) Leadership
- 2) Vision
- 3) Student learning (curriculum)
- 4) Culture of adult learning (staff development)
- 5) Data and decision making
- 6) Active community engagement

### **Red Flags**

- ◆ This year's high school seniors scored the lowest of any of their age group, in the 12 year history of the Federal Reserve survey which measures understanding of money and finances. – Federal Reserve (see [www.jumpstart.org](http://www.jumpstart.org))
- ◆ Students got 48.3 percent of the questions on personal finance and economics correct—down from 52.4 percent in 2006. – Federal Reserve

## Quotes and Quotables

### **Leadership**

- ◆ Abraham Lincoln's leadership qualities according to Doris Kearns Goodwin, Author of *Team of Rivals*:
  - 1) Resilience in times of trouble
  - 2) Capacity to listen to differing points of view and yet realize the search for consensus could be paralyzing.
  - 3) Ability to acknowledge errors and learn from mistakes.
  - 4) Willing to share credit for success
  - 5) Willing to share blame for failure
  - 6) Understanding of his own weaknesses
  - 7) Ability to control emotions when angry
  - 8) Capacity to relax and replenish energy
  - 9) Managed by walking around
  - 10) Mastery of timing
  - 11) Ability to compromise
  - 12) Ability to convey convictions with stories and metaphors
- ◆ "Courageous leadership is about how well you lead and teach those who report to you, but more importantly, it is about how well you lead and teach those you report to." Kathy Lucas, president of Fairview home care and hospice

### **Progress**

- ◆ "This is a series of incredible opportunities disguised as insoluble problems." – John Gardner

### **Education**

- ◆ “Alignment begins with school readiness and continues through the elementary, middle, and high school levels into college, and beyond.” Molly Chamberlin and Jonathan Plucker, Phi Delta Kappan, March 2008
- ◆ “The most significant new challenge is the aspiration that every child will master academic subjects and the prerequisites of citizenship and be equipped to pursue rewarding work or higher education. This is truly a radical goal.” – Frederick M. Hess, Director of education policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

## Red Flags

- ◆ “In light of the problems that have arisen in the subprime mortgage market, we are reminded of how critically important it is for individuals to become financially literate at an early age so that they are better prepared to make decisions and navigate an increasingly complex financial marketplace.” – Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke
- ◆ “Unless we transform those schools and do it now...it will soon be too late.” Louis Berstner, former chairman IBM; chairman, The Teaching Commission
- ◆ “In the international competition to have the biggest and best supply of knowledge workers, America is falling behind.” – Bill Gates
- ◆ “Our [Minnesota’s] position in comparison to other states can and has deteriorated. This deterioration has coincided with a relative shrinkage in Minnesota’s public investment.” – Minnesota 20/29
- ◆ “Minnesota’s economic record over the last half-century is one most states envy. The reason that occurred was because farsighted public and private sector leaders figured out they were going to invest in the education of the Baby Boom generation.” State economist Tom Stinson, MinnPost.
- ◆ “We have a governor and legislature that honestly believes it is possible to have world class schools with a 1972 funding program. Unless we change our method of funding education...education in Minnesota is in serious trouble no matter how adept at financial management schools become.” –unnamed superintendent, Minnesota 20/20



These materials are provided by:  
 Minnesota Association of School Administrators  
 Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals  
 Minnesota Elementary School Principals’ Association

To request more information contact the above organizations or [sprest@arkassoc.com](mailto:sprest@arkassoc.com)