

MESPA Minnesota School of Excellence Program



The Minnesota School of Excellence Program promotes excellence through a rigorous evaluation process that showcases dynamic schools of the 21st century.

The Minnesota School of Excellence Program engages school communities in purposeful conversations, leading to meaningful action. This program, supported by the Minnesota Department of Education and the National Association of Elementary School Principals, assesses six national standards for quality elementary and middle level school communities. Research shows that if these standards are evident, best practices are being followed.

1. **Learning Centered:** Balance management and leadership roles to lead schools in ways that place student and adult learning at the center.
2. **Diverse Communities:** Set high expectations and standards for the academic, social, emotional, and physical development of all students in an environment that acknowledges, fosters, and celebrates diversity.
3. **21st Century Learners:** Demand content and instruction that ensure student achievement.
4. **Quality Instruction:** Create a culture of continuous learning for adults, tied to student learning and other school goals.
5. **Knowledge and Data:** Manage knowledge and data to inform decisions and measure progress of student, adult, and school performance.
6. **Community Engagement:** Actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student performance and development.



Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association

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Excellence is a process.

The Minnesota School of Excellence Program validates school communities dedicated to continual improvement. It endorses school communities who as a team—principal, staff, and school community members working together:

- Complete a school community self-study.
- Develop a plan to build on evident strengths and address areas needing improvement, letting the self-study guide the process.
- Assess ongoing results from implementing the plan.



Program Timeline

The timeline for completing the Minnesota School of Excellence self-study and application varies from one school community to another. It may be accomplished in one school year, but frequently takes up to two years.

October 1: Letters of intent due.

June 1: Minnesota School of Excellence applications (parts 1 and 2) due in the MESPA office.

Mid-June: Applications receive preliminary review from the MESPA MN School of Excellence Committee.

June 30: Schools notified if the committee feels applications require additional information to more fully address results from the self-study; revisions due mid-August.

Mid-August: Minnesota School of Excellence Committee conducts final review of applications.

Before Labor Day: Minnesota School of Excellence validations finalized and announced to media.

Spring: School communities celebrate!

For complete information and to download an electronic copy of the MESPA Minnesota School of Excellence Guidelines and Application, visit www.mespa.net and click on *Professional Development*.