



Strengths and Challenges of Greater MN Schools

Fred Nolan, MREA Executive Director

House Education Finance Committee

I

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MREA

Leading Advocacy for Greater Minnesota Students

Under the leadership of school board members, administrators, teachers and Community members,

The Minnesota Rural Education Association puts learners first to bring about our best possible future.



MREA Serves

231

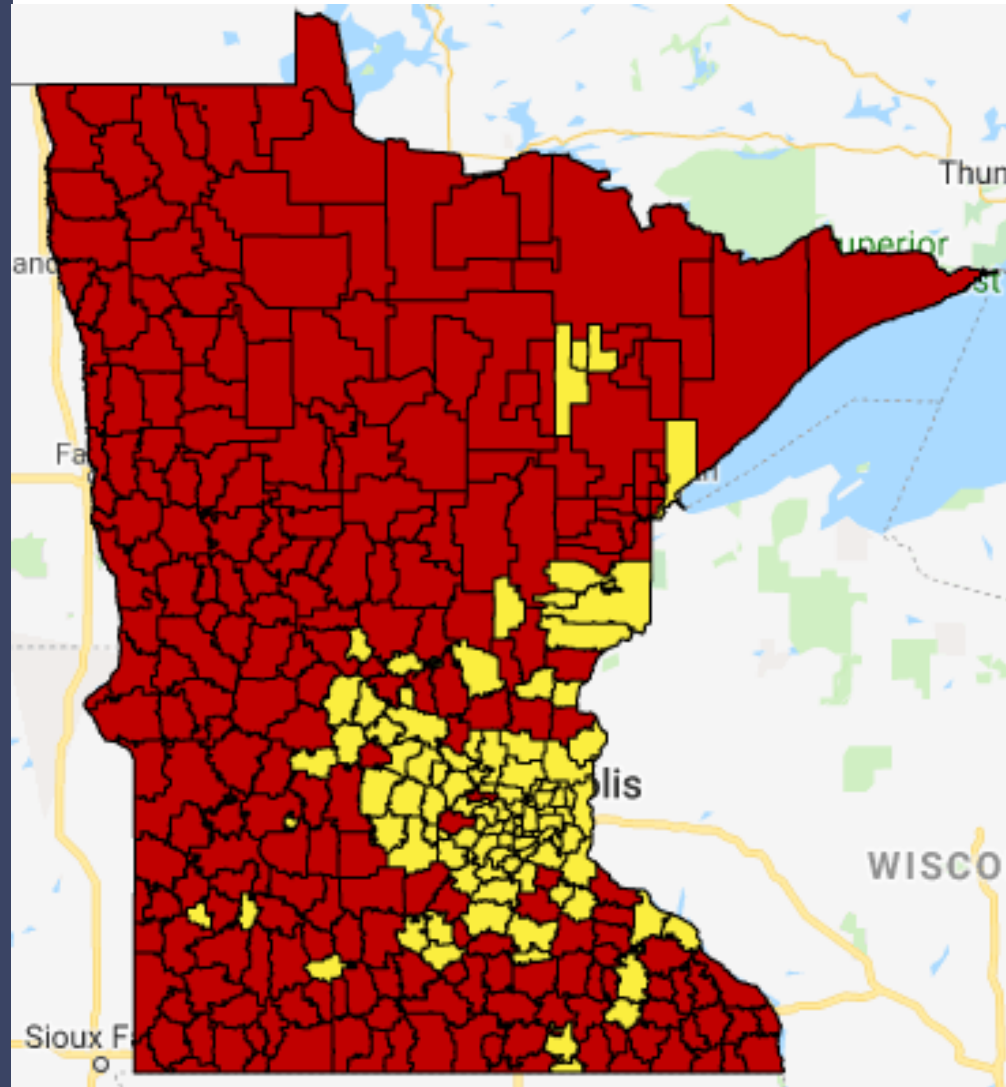
member districts

30

cooperatives

245,000

students

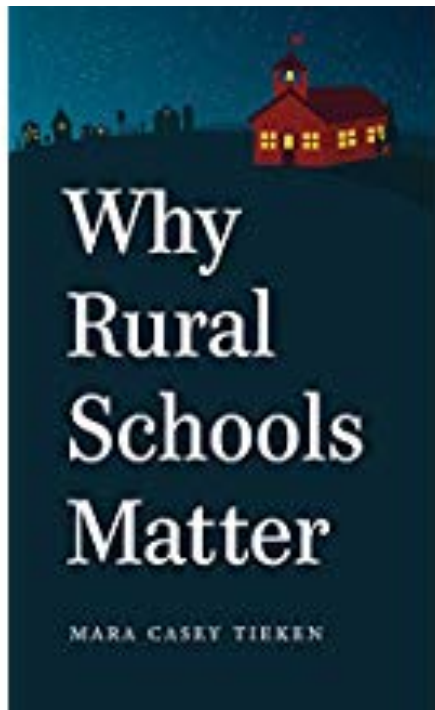




Greater MN Schools Three Strengths

Rural Schools are the

Center of their Communities



- Where people come together
- Multi-generational
- Social Capital for young people (robotics competitions)
- Above average income growth for poorest 25%
- Community Pride (state tournaments)
- Economic Engine



Our People, Our Teachers

- Our teachers teach multiple subjects, multiple generations and coach sports and clubs
- Our teachers are leaders of their communities
- Our teachers are memorable
- Our teachers are role models
- Everyone else matters too,
- But good teachers are the core of rural schools



MREA Annually Honors Teachers

2018 Educators of Excellence

NORTH



Lois Lewis

*Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher, South
Koochiching Rainy River Schools*

NORTH CENTRAL



Lisa Coborn

*Area Learning Center Coordinator, Park Rapids Public
Schools*

SOUTH CENTRAL



Bob Bonin

*Welding Academy Teacher and Small
Engines Automotive Teacher, Fairmont Area Schools*



Tyler Warren

Agriculture Teacher at Eden Valley-Watkins High School



Rural schools are Flexible and Adaptable

- Small size makes things simpler
- Relationships create pathways to change
- Everyone is invested in the school and the success of the students
- An example is the phenomenal growth of concurrent enrollment (dual credit)
- Southwest MN State U leading provider
- Now threatened by HLC credentialing
- Work is being done



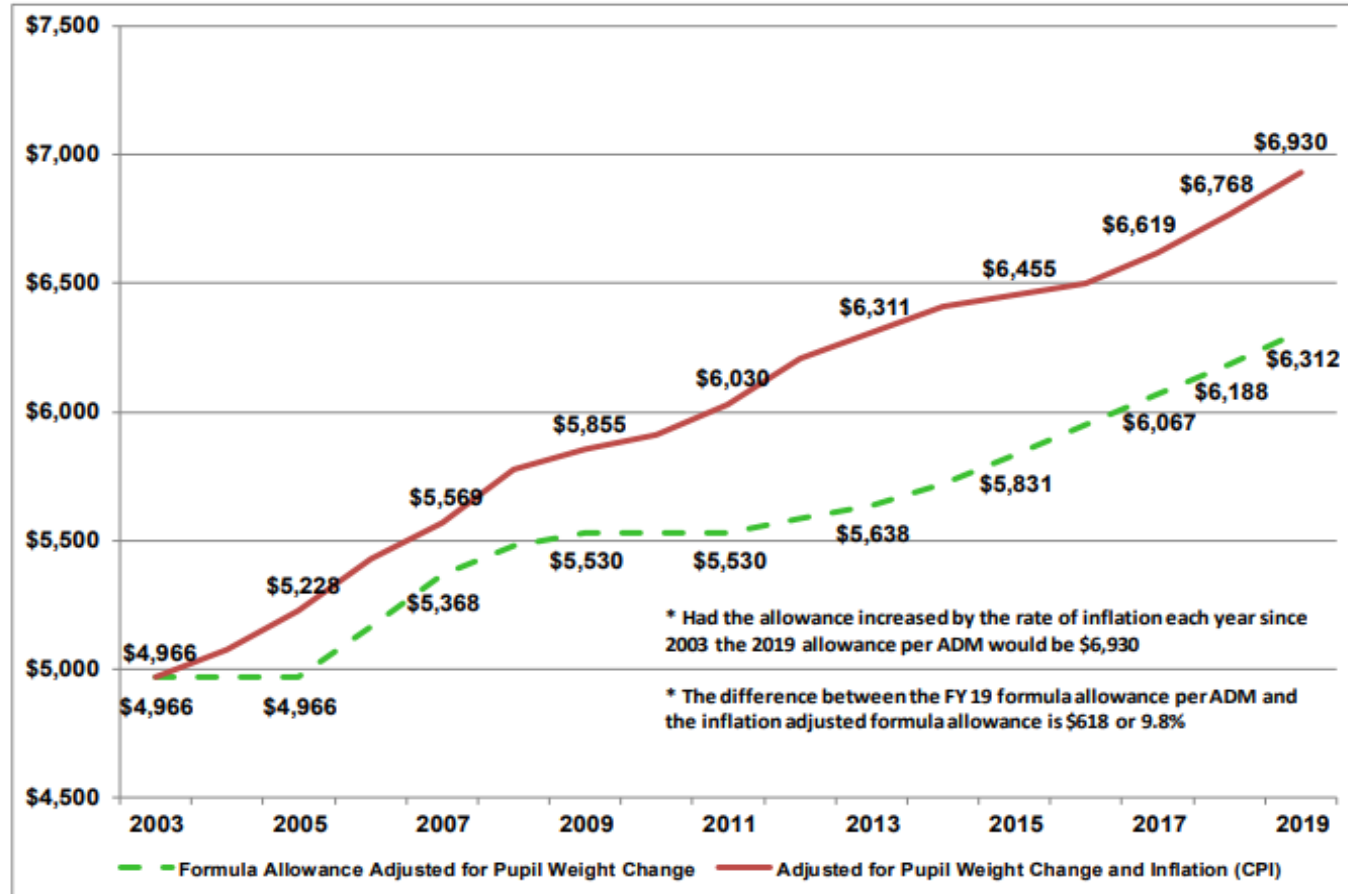


Greater MN Schools Four Challenges



Funding Student Needs

General Education Formula Allowance, 2003-2019 Adjusted for Pupil Weight Change and Inflation (CPI)



Source: MDE June 2018 Inflation Estimates

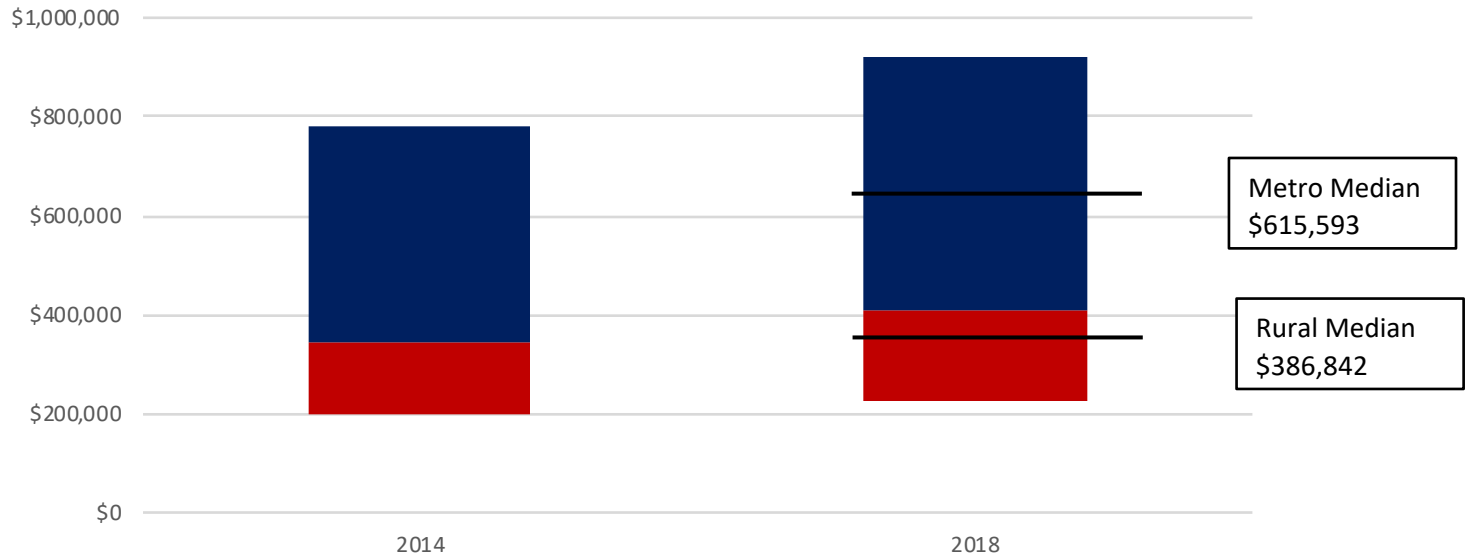
Formula trails inflation **almost \$600** per pupil since 2003, **\$525 million annually**.

Rural Household Income, Property Value and Operating Referendum Lag Metro in all Three Measures of Wealth and Revenue

	Median Household Income (2017)	Referendum Property value per Pupil ('18-'19)	Referendum Revenue above Basic Formula ('18-'19)
State-wide	\$65,699	\$583,835	\$1,371
Metro 7 county	\$80,595	\$667,210	\$1,638
Rural	\$55,476	\$441,224	\$955
Metro/Rural \$'s difference	(\$25,119)	(\$225,986)	(\$683)
Metro/Rural difference as percentage of Rural base	45%	51%	72%

Metro area districts generate **almost twice the local revenue as rural school districts.**

Growth in Referendum Market Value per Pupil



RMV/RPU	2014	2018
95th Percentile	\$778,596	\$919,892
Median	\$343,743	\$408,286
5th Percentile	\$201,089	\$223,287

5th Median 95th

Metro area districts Referendum Market Value (RMV) grew dramatically.

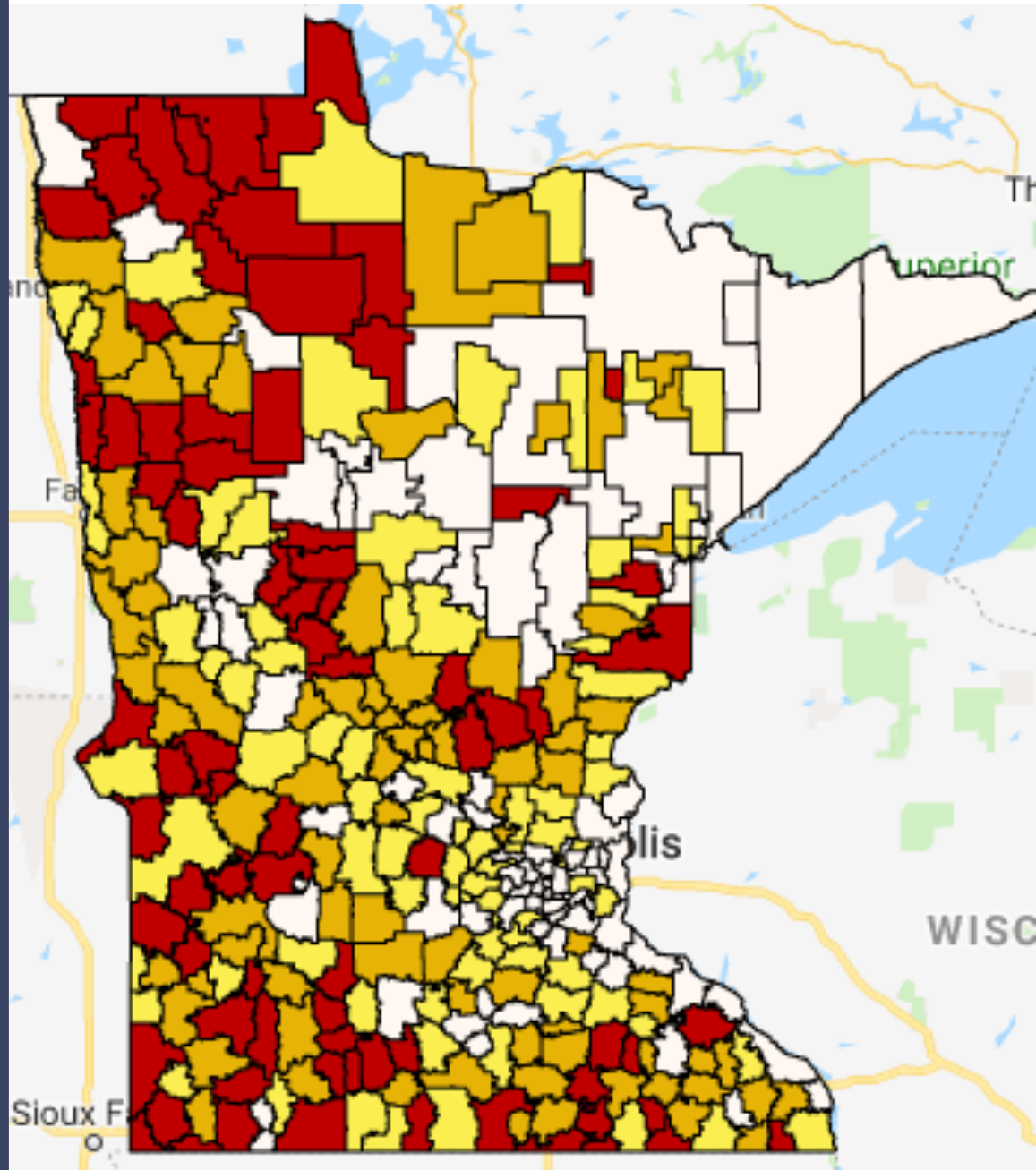
Referendum Property Wealth

\$409,000

Median RMV/RPU

Referendum Property Wealth

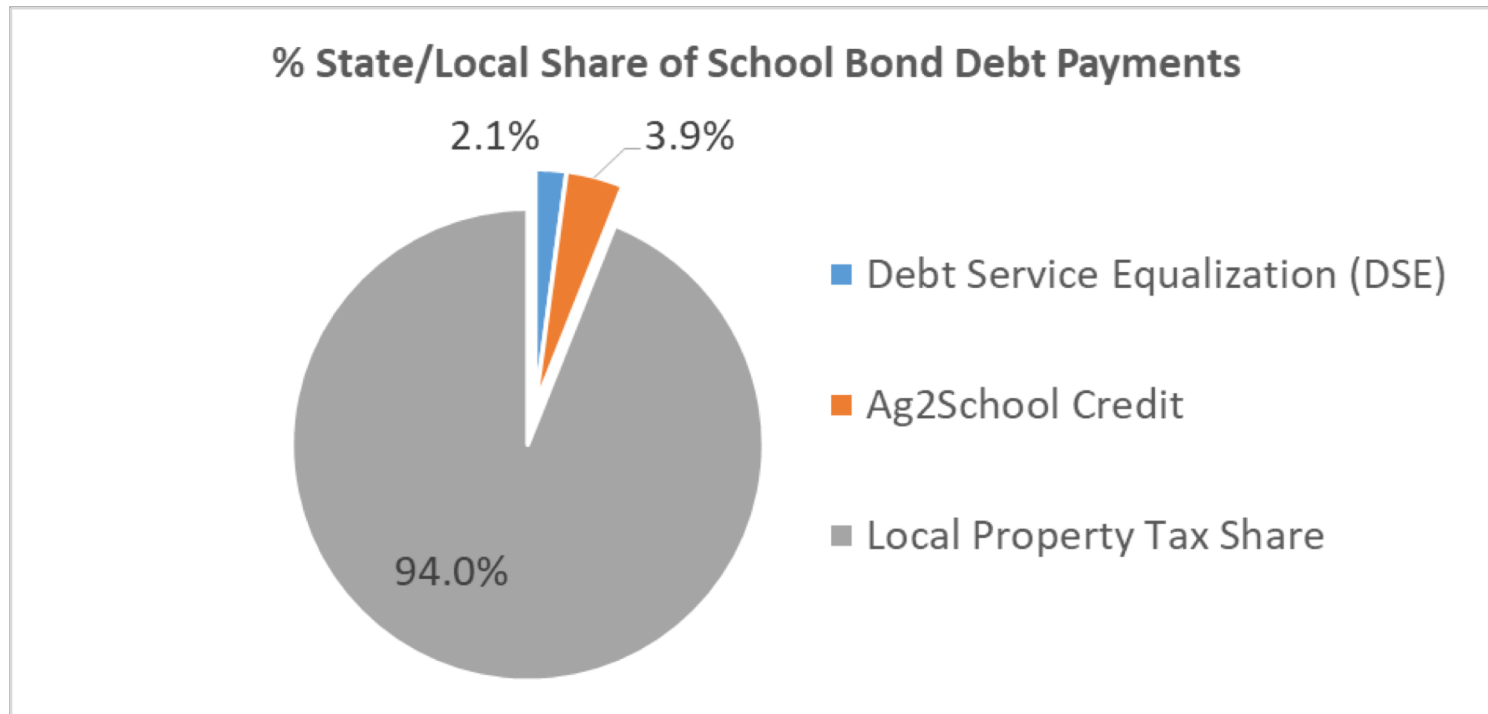
- Lowest RMV/RPU
- Below the Median RMV/RPU
- Above the Median RMV/RPU
- Highest RMV/RPU



Local Share of School Facilities is still 94%

State Share = 6% with Ag2School Credit

Homeowners pay \$510 m annually for school bond payments



RURAL: lower property values and household incomes severely challenge taxpayers' ability to provide equitable facilities for students



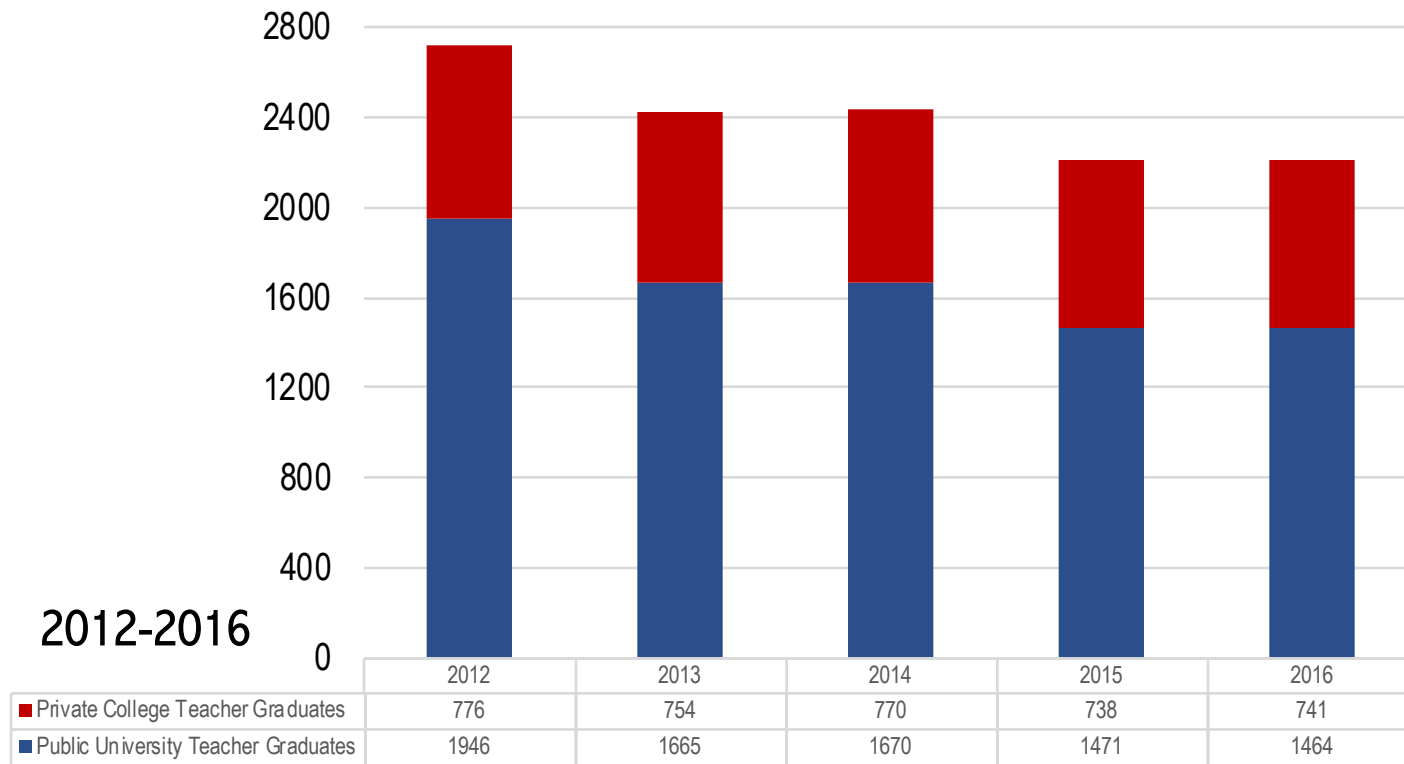
Teacher Crisis

The background of the slide is a dark blue gradient. At the bottom, there is a faint, semi-transparent image of a school bus and some tall grass.

1,400

teachers retire
in Minnesota
each year.

Minnesota Teacher Graduates



- Decline nearly 20% from 2012-2016
- 517 fewer teacher graduates



2018 Reported Hiring Difficulty

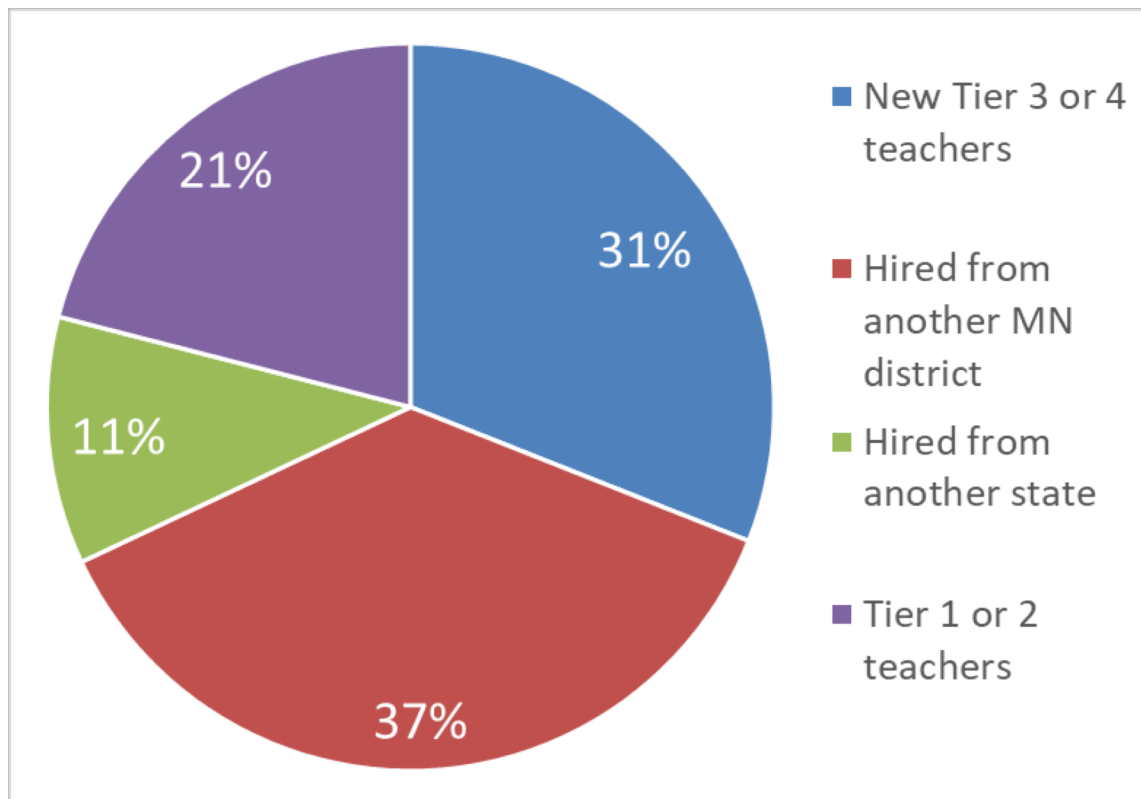
Most Difficult	Least Difficult
Sec. Industrial Arts	Social Worker
Sec. FACS*	K-12 Vocal Music
SPED - ASD*	K-12 Instrumental Music
SPED - EBD*	K-12 Visual Arts
SPED - ABS*	Sec. Mathematics*
ELL*	Counselor
Sec. Business*	Sec. Language Arts
Other CTE	Sec. Social studies
SPED - DD*	K-12 PE
Psychologist*	K-6 Elementary

*Federal Shortage Reported License Area



2018 New MN Rural Teachers

Where did they come from?





Serving Students with special needs/talents

Rural Challenges to Serving Students with Special Needs

- Smaller numbers = less concentration
- Staff shortages and recruiting challenges
Rural holes with no Mental Health Grants
- Physical distances
- Lack of appropriate facilities within reasonable distances of all students across rural MN
- Lack of financial tools and capacity to build cooperative facilities
- Large variation in the cross subsidy resulting in a wide variation in the “effective formula” for all students





Career & College Readiness Flexibility

Mismatch between MN's “One Size Fits All” Academic Standards and providing choices for our students

- Secondary students have personal learning plans
- Educators and others “talk” about student centered and culturally responsive learning
- Our rural graduates have wide variety of career and further education choices
- **BUT** 67% of HS courses are required with detailed academic standards and benchmarks
- **AND** Elementary curriculum has narrowed to reading and math
- **THE RESULT**—Too many unengaged students



Now is the time to have a broad conversation about this Mismatch

- Fundamental assumptions of MN Academic Standards have not been examined in 15 years
 - The standards revision cycle has now restarted
 - Engaging students is more difficult than ever
-
- New Legislature and Governor should have a broad conversation to address the mismatch
 - MREA has administrators, teachers, community members ready to engage in this conversation



Thank You,

In Summary

Three Strengths of Greater MN Schools

- Our schools are the center of their communities
- Our people, especially our teachers
- Our schools flexible and adaptable

Four Challenges facing Greater MN Schools

- Funding
- Teacher Shortages
- Serving students with special needs/talents
- Mismatch between student choice and
“One-Size-Fits-All” MN Academic Standards



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Insider updates
Latest legislative news
Key legislative actions



MREAVoice.org

**News on issues that
matter to Greater
Minnesota schools
by date and topic**

A close-up, high-angle shot of a large group of young children, primarily girls, smiling and looking towards the camera. The children are of various ethnicities and are dressed in casual clothing. The text 'MREA' is superimposed in the center of the image in a large, bold, red font. The letter 'M' contains a white silhouette of the state of Michigan.

MREA