



***** 2021 Annual Member Meeting *****

5:00 pm | Wednesday, Dec. 1

Online via GoToMeeting

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order & Welcome – President Karen Jacobson**
- 2. Approval of Agenda – President Jacobson** (ACTION)
- 3. Approval of 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes – President Jacobson** (ACTION)
- 4. 2021 Annual Review & Highlights – Executive Director Bob Indihar** (INFORMATION)
- 5. 2022 Board Elections Update– President Jacobson** (INFORMATION)
- 6. Approval of Recommended 2022 Legislative Platform –President Jacobson** (ACTION)
- 7. Adjournment – President Jacobson** (ACTION)



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***** 2020 Annual Member Meeting *****
4:45 pm Tuesday, Nov. 17
Online via GoToMeeting

MINUTES

Call to Order & Welcome

President Lance Bagstad called the meeting to order at 4:46 pm.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Abby Geotz, Crosby-Ironton, to approve the agenda; second by Linden Olsen, Worthington.
Motion carried.

Approval of 2019 Member Meeting Minutes

Motion by Karen Jacobson, MN River Valley Education District, to approve minutes of 2019 Annual Member Meeting; second by Maydra Maas, Westbrook-Walnut Grove. *Motion carried.*

2020 Review & Highlights

Executive Director Bob Indihar reviewed association highlights of 2020 including:

- Search for executive director and leadership change
- Educational advocacy
- Honoring MREA's 20th Educator of Excellence
- Continued strong membership with 227 member districts and 94 associate members
- Valuable partnerships for insurance, testing preparation, and virtual teacher coaching
- 35-year legacy as the Voice for Greater Minnesota Education
- Strong financial position despite FY2021 and FY2022 membership discounts due to COVID-19

2021 Board Elections Update

President-Elect Karen Jacobson reviewed the process for upcoming Board elections and introduced candidates for the four vacant positions as of January 1, 2021. Vacancies are:

- **North Central Zone**
 - At-Large Representative (4-Year Term 2021-2024)
 - School Board Representative (1-Year Term 2021)
- **South Central Zone**
 - Administrator Representative (4-Year Term 2021-2024)



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- **South Zone**
 - School Board Representative (4-Year Term 2021-2024)

Action on Recommended 2021 Legislative Platform

Motion by Gary Gauldin, Park Rapids, to approve the 2021 Legislative Platform; second by Luther Heller, Montevideo. *Motion carried.*

Board Recognition

President Bagstad recognized outgoing MREA Board members for their service to MREA:

- Lee Carlson, Windom
- Gary Gauldin, Park Rapids
- Luther Heller, Montevideo
- Chris Mills, Minnesota State University -- Moorhead

Bob Indihar thanked President Bagstad for his leadership as Board President in 2020.

Adjournment

Motion by Abby Geotz, Crosby-Ironton, to adjourn the meeting; second Sarah Bauck, Waubun-Ogema-White Earth. *Motion carried.*

President Bagstad adjourned the meeting at 5:12 pm.

APPROVED

James O. Ferden
Board Secretary-Treasurer

December 1, 2021



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2022 Legislative Platform

*Draft Recommended by
MREA Board of Directors*

MREA advocates on behalf of about 230 school districts, 30 education districts and additional associate members across Greater Minnesota to provide educational opportunities and close achievement gaps in Minnesota in these key ways.



Education Revenue to Support Strong Public Schools

State aid for public education funding has not kept up with inflation, and school systems routinely struggle to attract and retain staff to meet student educational needs. The current funding model has led school districts to heavily rely on requesting taxpayer support through operating referendums, creating major disparities in educational funding and opportunities across the state. To help schools compete in an ever-tightening labor market and meet student needs, the state needs to significantly increase and stabilize funding for Minnesota's local public education systems.

KEY ACTIONS NEEDED

Provide rural school districts with financing tools that are available to members of the metro Intermediate Districts and with increased flexibility for existing revenue streams in SF 1999 and HF 1980.

- Redefine the “general education formula” to include a mix of state aid and a highly equalized board approved operating levy, consistent with the recommendations of the School Finance Reform working group recommendations submitted to the MDE on November 5, 2020.
- Include automatic 2% inflationary increases as part of the state’s budget process.
- Stabilize Basic Skills Revenue (Compensatory Aid) by streamlining direct certification between state agencies and creating census-based factors for generating this revenue.
- Continue to freeze special education cross-subsidies in place for each school district.
- Expand Voluntary PreK funding to all school districts.
- Create minimum revenue guarantees to ensure small schools can generate meaningful revenue for the stated purposes of each category of revenue.
- Ensure rural cooperative educational systems are included in revenue streams targeted at the students they serve.
- Fund targeted teacher development, mentoring and credentialing programs to help advance professional teaching careers.
- Increase “Safe Schools” funding to increase student mental health service capacity.

Support Education Innovation at the Local Level

- Remove state agency barriers that restrict “Innovation Zone” development
- Oppose unfunded state mandates and “one-size-fits-all” approaches to state education policy
- Oppose changes to graduation requirements that restrict flexibility in the High School schedule.
- Allow school boards to renew operating levies previously approved through voter approved referenda.
- Allow school boards to replace a school board vacancy without a general election

School Facilities

There is a significant funding gap between school districts that receive Long Term Facility Maintenance Revenue (LTFMR) and the “Alternative Facility” districts. The Ag2School bond credit has been critical for local school facility support, but additional state legislative action is needed to address rural school facility needs.

KEY ACTIONS NEEDED

- **Cooperative Facilities:** Provide same access to lease levy for rural education cooperatives
- **Debt Service Equalization (DSE):**
 - Create “Enhanced” DSE for newly consolidating school districts
 - Increase the DSE thresholds so more districts qualify for state support
- **Long Term Facility Maintenance Revenue (LTFMR):**
 - Close the funding gap for deferred maintenance by eliminating the revenue cap on LTFMR

