



# STATE OF MINNESOTA

## Office of Governor Mark Dayton

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

May 8, 2018

To the People of Minnesota:

For over seven years, you have entrusted me with the responsibilities of governing our great State. First among them, I believe, is giving our schoolchildren and other students the best possible educations. Their futures and our state's future depend on it. Restoring adequate state funding for our schools, colleges, and universities has been key to providing those opportunities.

Now, I am asking for your help to convince Legislators — for the sake of our schools, our students, and their futures — that those responsibilities must be their highest priorities as well.

Right now, at least 59 school districts across Minnesota are facing serious budget deficits. As a result, many hundreds of teachers are at risk of losing their jobs. Many already have. If those deficits are not resolved, further layoffs will proceed, and our students will suffer — with crowded classrooms, cuts to their curriculums, and more.

As your Governor, I have the responsibility to do something about it — to give all our kids the world-class educations they need, and the brighter futures they deserve. That is why I have proposed one-time Emergency School Aid that would boost per-pupil state investments in K-12 education by 2 percent in the coming school year, increasing funding for every school district in Minnesota.

But I cannot make it happen without the support of your State Legislators.

Unfortunately, Republican Legislative Leaders are not yet supporting this school aid. Rather than help our schools and schoolchildren through this emergency, their House and Senate caucuses would protect multinational corporations from paying up to \$255 million in taxes on profits they have sheltered overseas.

In the years before I became Governor, our schools became severely under-funded. Between 2003 and 2012, state funding for K-12 education declined by \$2,000 per student. State leaders borrowed \$1.9 billion from our school districts to pay the State's bills. Facing budget cuts, districts across Minnesota were forced to make layoffs and ask voters to raise their own property taxes.

People of Minnesota  
May 8, 2018  
Page 2

Seeing the financial challenges facing our schools, I promised Minnesotans that, if I were elected Governor in 2010, I would increase state support for K-12 education every year – no excuses, no exceptions. I have kept my promise.

Since 2011, we have invested an additional \$2 billion in E-12 education. We have repaid all of the money that was previously borrowed from our schools. We have provided free, all-day kindergarten to all of our five year-old children. And we have made high-quality pre-kindergarten available to thousands of our youngest learners. But even so, the state's school aid increases over the past seven years have restored only half of what Minnesota schools lost in the previous decade.

Our students deserve better. And I need your help, one last time in my final Legislative Session, to convince Legislators to prioritize our children's needs over corporate profits. With a \$329 million projected budget surplus, we can certainly afford it.

Please contact your Legislators and remind them that they, too, have no greater responsibility than giving all our students the educations they deserve.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Dayton". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Mark Dayton  
Governor