

## About MASBO

The Minnesota Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) is an independent, nonprofit professional association including more than 600 school business managers and related specialists. MASBO members are experts in the areas of school finance, public accounting, and school district support services (including facilities management, transportation, food services, and information management). We are dedicated to defining and maintaining the highest standards of financial and operations management for Minnesota schools.

MASBO has a standing Legislative Committee whose primary goal is to promote state legislation that improves the efficiency and effectiveness of school district fiscal practices and operations. MASBO priorities are all related to school finance and operations — the areas of our members' greatest experience and expertise. In addition, MASBO proposals are not intended to result in significant redistribution of resources among districts and are designed to make school districts more cost effective and efficient within existing resources.

This document gives a brief overview of MASBO's legislative proposals for 2016. For a more detailed platform, please visit our website at [www.mnasbo.org](http://www.mnasbo.org).

## For Further Information Contact:

### Dan Pyan, Chair

MASBO Legislative Committee  
South Washington County Schools  
(651)425-6260  
[Dpyan0@sowashco.k12.mn.us](mailto:Dpyan0@sowashco.k12.mn.us)

### Steve Anderson, President

MASBO  
Proctor Public Schools  
(218) 628-4934 x1016  
[sanderso@proctor.k12.mn.us](mailto:sanderso@proctor.k12.mn.us)

### Valerie Dosland

MASBO Lobbyist  
(612)490-3052  
[valeried@ewald.com](mailto:valeried@ewald.com)



masbo

Prepared and paid for by the Minnesota  
Association of School Business Officials

[www.mnasbo.org](http://www.mnasbo.org)

# 2016 Legislative Platform Summary



masbo

Minnesota Association  
of School Business Officials



## School Finance

Student success depends greatly on the state legislature providing adequate funding and maintaining school district flexibility to meet their financial challenges. Our proposals include:

- **Provide Adequate Regular Program Funding**  
It is important the basic formula be fully funded, or at a minimum, be increased at the current rate of inflation so that educational funding is not further eroded.
- **Fully Fund Special Education Mandates**  
It is important that mandated special education programs be funded. Increasing special education funding will have an equal and reciprocal impact on regular program resources, freeing up money for regular program needs.
- **Fully Equalize Property Tax Levies**  
MASBO recommends that all property tax levies be fully equalized, so that generating the same revenue in one district as in another requires the same property tax effort regardless of overall value. Further, the equalization factors used to calculate the state aid for a levy should be indexed to the growth in property value over time, so that the aid provided by the state does not erode.

## Increase Flexibility to Meet Needs of World's Best Workforce and Pre-K Programs

The World's Best Workforce bill was passed in 2013 to ensure that every Minnesota school district is making strides to increase student performance. The Governor's 2015 budget proposal called for full funding of universal school-based pre-kindergarten for all 4-year-olds. While the proposed funding may have covered the costs for teachers in these programs, it failed to address other important cost factors such as the need to increase classroom space and provide transportation services to families. In addition, it did not recognize that needs are varied around the state.

MASBO proposes more flexibility in existing capital funding sources to give local school boards the ability to access the capital funding necessary to support these programs.

School districts should be given the flexibility to develop programs that best meet the needs of their students, families and communities.

## Support Local Control and Reduce Unfunded Mandates

Despite the best of intentions, new legislation often results in more administrative requirements that consume and divert district resources away from student learning. MASBO requests state leaders either fund mandates or increase districts' flexibility to make decisions locally based on local needs, and to continue to assess mandates and implement efficiencies for our schools. The most immediate priorities for this year are:

- **Invest in Infrastructure**  
Some of the mandates imposed on school districts result from the inadequate technology infrastructure at MDE to provide vehicles for districts to deliver information to the department. MASBO supports MDE's technology requests to MN.IT and for adequate funding to support MDE technology infrastructure.
- **Revise Publishing Requirements (M.S.123B.10)**  
Allow school districts more flexibility to publish minutes on their websites with a simple notice in the newspaper stating the web address where the information can be found. This can reduce expenses for all districts while still providing access to minutes and budget information.
- **Repeal Reserved Revenue for Staff Development (M.S. 122A.61)**  
Districts are required to reserve at least two percent of basic revenue for in-service and staff development. While this requirement has been waived for 2012 and 2013, districts should be permanently given discretion as to the amount expended in the area of staff development.

## Facility Funding

The 2013 Legislature directed the Commissioner of Education to convene a working group to develop recommendations for reforming facilities financing to create adequate, equitable, and sustainable financing of public school facilities throughout the state. The 2014 and 2015 Legislatures reviewed the recommendations of the working group, and adopted some of the recommendations.

MASBO recognizes and supports the full implementation of all eight recommendations of the School Facility Financing Working Group.

## Health Insurance Transparency Act

The Health Insurance Transparency Act (HITA), for the most part, was passed to regulate how school districts solicit bids for health insurance. HITA added much administrative expense and burden to the health insurance renewal processes of many districts, while producing very little change in plans, employee participation in the bidding process and any discernable reduction in health insurance cost to district employees.

MASBO proposes the following changes to the current HITA law:

- **Require PEIP districts to go out to bid every two years.**  
Districts that are fully insured or self-insured through a service cooperative are required to go out to bid every two years. All districts enrolled in the Public Employees Insurance Program (PEIP) program should be required to go out for bid every two years as well.
- **Rescind ability of exclusive representative to leave the current carrier.**  
If districts are required to solicit bids every two years under the HITA legislation, the ability of the exclusive representatives to leave their current carrier should be rescinded, and the authority for these managerial decisions should be returned to the school boards. PEIP should be required to follow the HITA requirements directing them to respond with a bid/quote when requested.
- **Eliminate Two-Year Bid Requirements for Fully Insured Districts and Self-Insured Districts.**  
Under current HITA law, fully insured districts and self-insured districts through a Service Cooperative program are required to go out for bids every two years. This requirement should be eliminated, allowing individual districts (management and employees) to decide to go out for bid at least every four years if with a Service Cooperative or five years if fully insured.