

### Legislative Timeline and Process

The Omnibus Education Finance bills have passed both the House and Senate and are currently in conference committee. Conference committees, including the Education conference committee, are working to resolve the differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill.

Legislative leaders have given conference committees until 5 pm on Wednesday, May 10 to reach agreements. If no agreement is reached, legislative leaders and the Governor's office will complete negotiations on individual omnibus bills.

The legislature must adjourn no later than midnight on Monday, May 22. Legislative leaders announced on Tuesday, May 9, that they plan to adjourn by Thursday, May 18.

### MINNDEPENDENT Agenda

**School Counseling Legislation:** [HF1102/SF1428](#) was introduced in the House and Senate by Rep. Mary Frances Clardy and Sen. Bonnie Westlin. The legislation extends school counseling services to grades K-6 for nonpublic students. HF1102 was heard in the House Education Finance Committee and was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus bill. The Senate Education Finance Committee did not schedule SF1428 for a hearing. The bill was not included in the Omnibus Education Finance bill. The final Omnibus Education Finance bill has not been agreed to as of May 9, 2023.

**Alternative Transportation Arrangements:** [HF923/SF1012](#) was introduced in the House and Senate by Rep. Peggy Bennett and Sen. Zach Duckworth. The legislation allows for nonpublic and school districts to enter alternative transportation arrangements when mutually agreed to. The bills were included in the House and Senate Education Policy Omnibus Bills and will move forward to passage in the House and Senate. The bill was included in both the House and Senate Omnibus Education Finance bills. The final Omnibus Education Finance bill has not been agreed to as of May 9, 2023.

**Oppose Education Mandates on Nonpublic Schools:** As part of the agenda, MINNDEPENDENT closely follows legislation imposing new mandates on nonpublic schools. Both mandates below were not included in the House and Senate Omnibus Education Finance bills.

- **Nonpublic Schools Required to Report Educational Data to Resident School Districts for Students Enrolled in Nonpublic Schools:** The Minnesota Department of Education's policy bill included a provision requiring nonpublic schools to annually send all nonpublic student records to resident school districts. This mandate also included

homeschool students. This legislation was originally proposed in 2021 but was removed from the bill during the committee process. The MDE policy bill was heard by both Education Committees in the House and Senate and was removed from the bill in February 2023 after significant pushback from MINNDEPENDENT and hundreds of parents representing homeschool children.

- **Records for Students Expelled or Suspended and Transfers to New School:** The Minnesota Department of Education’s policy bill includes a provision requiring all schools – public, charter, nonpublic – to include more information when a student is expelled or suspended and then transfers to another school. There is a reporting requirement in current law when a student is suspended or expelled and enrolls in a new school, and this new provision requires the submission of additional information. MINNDEPENDENT has requested additional information from MDE. The provision was not included in the House and Senate Omnibus Education Omnibus bills.

### Education Programs

**Universal School Lunch Program:** [HF5/SF123](#), authored by Rep. Sydney Jordan and Sen. Heather Gustafson, passed the Minnesota House and is moving through committees in the Senate. MINNDEPENDENT worked to amend the original language requiring all schools and school sites to implement the program and the legislation was changed in the House and Senate to voluntary participation.

The legislation passed the Minnesota Legislature and was signed by Governor Tim Walz in March 2023. The program is effective for the 2023-24 school year. MDE will be releasing guidance on the changes to participating schools prior to the start of the school year. Total cost: \$387.208 million in FY24-25 and \$418.977 million in FY26-27.

### Employer Legislation & Mandates

**Sick and Safe Leave:** HF19/SF34, authored by Rep. Liz Olson and Sen. Sandy Pappas, passed the Minnesota House 69-54 on February 16, 2023, but has not passed the Senate. The Minnesota Legislature plans to include the Sick and Safe Leave language in the Omnibus Jobs & Economic Finance bill before the end of the legislative session. Here’s the [current version of SF34](#).

Employer-based organizations across all sectors have weighed in to oppose the bill. The legislation is pushed and supported by SEIU. SEIU refuses to negotiate any substantive changes to the bill.

**Paid Family Medical Leave:** [HF2/SF2](#), authored by Rep. Ruth Richardson and Sen. Alice Mann, has passed the House and Senate and is now in conference committee to work out the final details. Governor Walz has included Paid Family Medical Leave in his budget recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature.

Employer-based organizations across all sectors have weighed in to oppose the bill and request changes. The trade association representing non-profit organizations weighed in and supports the legislation. The bill is moving through the committee process as a stand-alone bill.

**UI Benefits:** [HF20/SF32](#), authored by Rep. Emma Greenman and Sen. Jen McEwen, grants school support employees the ability to access Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits during the summer months. The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) estimates the bill will cost the UI fund \$116 million per year.

The bill is currently moving through the committee process. In addition, Gov. Walz included \$135 million each year for HF20/SF32 in his revised budget recommendations released shortly after the February budget forecast. The Education Conference committee has stripped out funding for the program. The funding for the program was stripped from the stand-alone bill. Given the time constraints, it is likely the bill will be considered by the Education Conference Committee for inclusion in the Omnibus Education Finance bill.