



2024 Annual Membership Meeting

6:00 pm | Tuesday, December 10, 2024

Online via GoToMeeting

AGENDA

1. Call to Order & Welcome
2. Approval of Agenda (ACTION)
3. Approval of 2023 Annual Member Meeting Minutes (ACTION)
4. Review 2024 Association Highlights (INFORMATION)
5. Review Board Elections & Candidates (INFORMATION)
6. Approval of Board-Recommended 2025 Legislative Platform (ACTION)
7. Recognize Departing Board Members (INFORMATION)
8. Adjournment (ACTION)



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PO Box 187
St. Cloud, MN 56302-0187

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2233 Roosevelt Rd, Suite 7
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2023 Annual Membership Meeting

5:00 pm | Tuesday, December 5, 2023

Online via GoToMeeting

MINUTES

Call to Order & Welcome

President Jim Ferden called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

Members in attendance are listed at the end.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Doug Hazen, River Bend Education District to approve the meeting agenda; second by Todd Holthaus, Hills-Beaver Creek School District. Motion carried.

Approval of 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes

Motion by Todd Holthaus, Hills-Beaver Creek School District to approve minutes of the 2022 Annual Member Meeting; second by Dennis Laumeyer, Benson School District. Motion carried.

2023 Association Review & Highlights

Executive Director Bob Indihar reviewed highlights of calendar year 2022, including:

- Legislative Educational Funding Increases
- Greater Education Summit
- 2023 National Rural Teacher of the Year | Jenny Maras, Morris School District
- Strong Membership and Sponsorships
- Educator and Program Awards

Looking ahead to 2024, MREA anticipates exploring a student scholarship program, strengthening educational alliances, growing membership, and continuing member outreach.

MREA continues to be financially healthy due to robust membership renewals, strong conference attendance and sponsorships, and reduced travel and meeting expenses.

2024 Board Elections & Candidates

President Ferden announced that online member elections for 2024 Board vacancies opened December 1. Ballots would be due December 31.

Board candidates attending the meeting introduced themselves and shared how they could help the Board advance MREA's mission (in order of introductions):

- Jeff Radle, Lake Superior ISD
- Ryan Walseth, Thief River Falls ISD
- Jeff Drake, Fergus Falls ISD
- Dr. Timothy Godfrey, Lake Park-Audubon ISD
- Brad Johnson, McGregor ISD
- Kristie Sullivan, Breckenridge ISD
- Sarah Bauck, Waubun-Ogema-White Earth ISD
- Jenna Fromm, Palmer Bus Service



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- Jenny Maras, Morris ISD
- Patrick Walsh, Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa School ISD
- Gwenn Wolters, South Central Service Cooperative
- Mary Morem, Houston ISD
- Nels Onstad, Wabasha-Kellogg ISD
- Craig Brenden, Waseca ISD
- Cynthia Gail, New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva ISD

Board-Recommended 2024 Legislative Platform

Members reviewed the Board-recommended legislative platform for 2024, focusing on:

- Restoring the teaching profession
- Clarification of actions from the 2023 legislative session
- Closing funding gaps and securing policy flexibility

Motion by Todd Holthaus, Hills-Beaver Creek School District to approve the recommended 2024 legislative platform; second by Sonia Wadena, Bemidji School District. Motion carried.

Board-Recommended MREA By-Laws Revisions

Members reviewed the Board-recommended by-laws changes. Primary changes include clarifying membership eligibility, classes of membership, and other statutory and compliance requirements.

Motion by Dennis Laumeyer, Benson School District to approve the recommended by-laws changes; second by Craig Brenden, Waseca School District. Motion carried.

Board Recognition

President Ferden thanked outgoing MREA Board members Dennis Laumeyer, Benson School District, and Todd Holthaus, Hills-Beaver Creek School District, for their service ending December 31.

Adjournment

*Motion by Karla Beck, Redwood Area School District to adjourn the meeting at the close of Board of Director elections at 11:45 pm December 31, 2023; second by Ryan Walseth, Thief River Falls School District. Motion carried.**

President Ferden adjourned the meeting at 6:15 pm.

**Board of Director Elections concluded at 11:45 pm December 31, 2023. Directors elected were:*

- Sarah Bauck, Waubun-Ogema-White Earth ISD
North Central Zone | Teacher | 3-Year Term
- Jenny Maras, Morris Area ISD
South Central Zone | At-Large | 4-Year Term
- Nels Onstad, Wabasha-Kellogg ISD
South Zone | Administrator | 4-Year Term
- Craig Brenden, Waseca ISD
South Zone | Teacher | 3-Year Term
- Jeff Drake, Fergus Falls ISD
North Central Zone | Administrator | 4-Year Term
- Ryan Walseth, Thief River Falls ISD
North Zone | School Board | 4-Year Term

APPROVAL PENDING

Jeffrey D. Drake
Board Secretary-Treasurer

December 10, 2024
Date



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Voting Members Attending (Independent School District and Other Members):

1. Alexandria
2. Barnesville
3. Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa
4. Bemidji
5. Benson
6. Brainerd
7. Breckenridge
8. Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley
9. Cromwell-Wright
10. Ely
11. Fergus Falls
12. Frazee
13. Goodhue County Ed District
14. Hill City
15. Hills-Beaver Creek
16. Houston
17. Hutchinson
18. Kingsland
19. LaCrescent-Hokah
20. Lake Park Audubon
21. Lake Superior
22. Lakes Country Service Cooperative
23. Lewiston-Altura
24. Luverne
25. Maple Lake
26. Marshall County Central
27. Marshall
28. McGregor
29. MN State University – Moorhead
30. Morris Area
31. Murray County Central
32. New London-Spicer
33. New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva
34. Northwest Service Cooperative
35. Parkers Prairie
36. Paynesville Area
37. Pipestone Area
38. Plainview-Elgin-Millview
39. Redwood Area
40. Renville County west
41. Resource Training & Solutions
42. River Bend Ed District
43. Round Lake-Brewster
44. Sauk Rapids-Rice
45. Sebeka

46. South Central Service Coop
47. Thief River Falls
48. Wabasha-Kellogg
49. Waseca
50. Waubun-Ogema-White Earth
51. Win-E-Mac
52. Winona State University
53. Worthington

Non-Voting Members/Guests Attending

- Palmer Bus Service (non-voting)
- Bob Indihar, MREA
- Kayla Schoenberg, Mindful Marketing, Inc
- Diane Vosen, MREA
- Sam Walseth, Capitol Hill Associates



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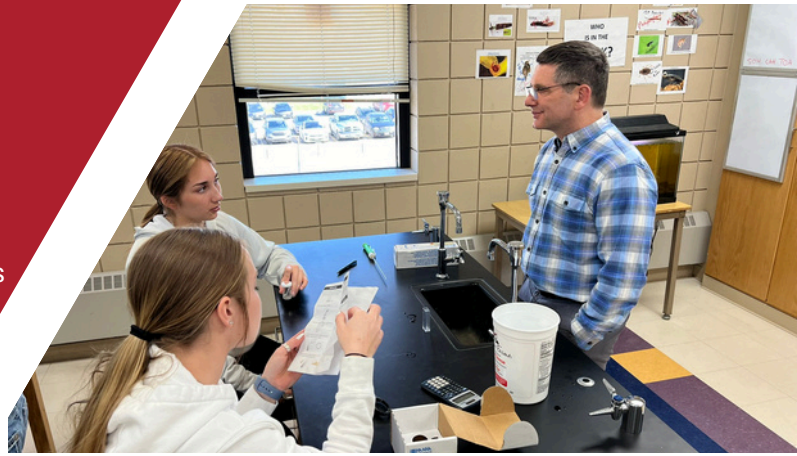
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Voice For Greater Minnesota Education

2025 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

MREA advocates on behalf of about 237 school districts, 30 education cooperatives and over 100 associate members across Greater Minnesota to provide educational opportunities and close achievement gaps in Minnesota.



Minnesota's Public Schools are struggling to attract and retain staff. Funding a system of schools is a primary duty of the State legislature and Governor. MREA is calling on state officials to improve educator compensation, making the profession more attractive, through several legislative actions.

KEY ACTIONS NEEDED

IMPROVE TEACHER COMPENSATION

- Establish a Teacher Compensation Adjustment Revenue program aimed at improving teacher salaries.
- Improve TRA by either lowering the combination of the normal retirement age and total years of service OR minimizing the reduction in retirement benefits paid before normal retirement age
- Make QComp an open and standing appropriation so all schools qualify
- Amending the Grow Your Own application requirements so more rural districts can qualify
- Providing direct underwriting to state colleges for teacher preparation programs so those credits are free to undergraduates seeking teaching degrees

FUND WHAT HAS BEEN MANDATED

- Increase the Basic Formula allowance by "3&3" over the forecast base for FY 26-27
- Shore up Compensatory Aid as Direct Certification is used solely to calculate this revenue stream
- On-going state funding for Unemployment Insurance
- Additional funding for the Read Act

CLOSE FUNDING GAPS

- Increase LTFM revenue and allow roofs & pavements to qualify for levies above \$100,000
- Increase Local Optional Revenue to \$974/pupil
- Create Seasonal & Recreational Property Tax Base Replacement Aid to reduce the cost of voter approved operating levies where the state is collecting Seasonal & Recreational property taxes
- Improve all equalization formulas to 125% of the tax base used/pupil
- Expand VPK to provide service for all low-income 4-year-olds
- Ensure minimum revenue guarantees for small schools & educational cooperatives when categorical funding streams are used to promote programs

POLICY FLEXIBILITY, NOT MANDATES

- Create flexible pathways to licensure, in addition to broader licensure categories
- Oppose unfunded mandates and "one-size-fits-all" education policy
- Oppose additional course requirements for graduation