



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 26, 2010  
MEDIA AVAILABILITY TODAY AT 12:30 IN ROSEVILLE

Contact: Bill Walsh  
(651) 582-1145

## School Improvement Reports Identify Problems at Minnesota's Lowest Performing Schools

*Outside review finds poor instructional practices in Minnesota's lowest performing schools.*

(Roseville, MN...) The Minnesota Department of Education released today independent evaluations of 32 of Minnesota's persistently lowest performing schools, revealing inconsistent instructional practices, poor leadership and a lack of community and parent involvement. The reports were part of the federal government's \$34 million School Improvement Grant to Minnesota that targets the state's chronically struggling schools.

"These schools do not have the fundamental educational practices in place for their students to be successful," said Education Commissioner Alice Seagren. "As commissioner, I am fully committed to working with these communities to develop a strong turnaround plan using the resources of this grant. I strongly encourage each school to apply for this funding, because these students deserve the best education possible."

The evaluation reports were conducted by Cambridge Consultants and pointed out some common educational deficiencies found in most of the schools:

- Lack of differentiated instruction between struggling students and gifted students.
- Not using current instructional practices.
- Not using data to improve instruction.
- Lack of academic goals for students.
- Poor or lacking professional development for teachers, professional development not tied to the needs of the schools.
- Lack of proper evaluation of teachers.
- Poor leadership at the principal, superintendent and school board level.
- Lack of parent and community engagement.

Each of the 32 schools can now use their report to create a turnaround plan to apply for funding as part of Minnesota's \$34 million grant. In order to receive funding, the school must design a plan that meets the shortcomings found in their report using one of four turn around strategies proscribed by the U.S. Department of Education.

- Turnaround Model: Replace the principal, screen existing school staff, and rehire no more than half the teachers; adopt a new governance structure; and improve the school through curriculum reform, professional development, extending learning time, and other strategies.
- Restart Model: Convert a school or close it and re-open it as a charter school or under an education management organization.
- School Closure: Close the school and send the students to higher-achieving schools in the district.
- Transformation Model: Replace the principal and improve the school through comprehensive curriculum reform, professional development, extending learning time, and other strategies.

**Applications are due July 1, 2010** with implementation plans in place by the first day of school for the 2010-11 school year.

**The schools involved include:**

Brooklyn Center Secondary

Bethune Elementary  
Butterfield Secondary  
Braham Area Secondary  
Broadway Arts and Technology  
Cass Lake-Bena Secondary  
Cityview PAM Magnet  
East Central Senior Secondary  
East High School  
Edison Senior High  
Four Directions Charter School  
Greenbush-Middle River Senior High  
High School for Recording Arts  
Hmong College Prep Academy High School  
Hmong International Academy  
Humboldt Senior High  
Isle Secondary  
Lucy Laney at Cleveland Park Elementary  
Maxfield Magnet Elementary  
New Spirit Primary School  
New Visions Charter School  
North View IB World School  
Ogilvie Secondary  
Ponemah Elementary  
Red Lake Senior High  
Riverway Secondary  
Rochester Off-Campus Charter High  
Transitions Senior High  
Unity Campus  
Urban Academy Charter School  
Waubun Secondary  
Wellstone International High

[View the reports here on the department's website.](#)

###

## **Media Availability**

Commissioner Alice Seagren will be available to answer questions regarding the School Improvement Grant reports.

12:30 pm

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

Minnesota Department of Education

1500 Highway 36 W, Roseville

Also available via the Internet through a live Mediasite presentation at:

<http://stream2.video.state.mn.us/mnoet/Viewer/?peid=0cea7b1c07c24c9b933eaef39224afb6>