

LEARNING MATTERS

News from the Minnesota Department of Education

March 12, 2013
Issue 2, Volume 9

Learning Matters highlights the most important issues coming out of the Minnesota Department of Education including press releases, policy announcements, grant and scholarship opportunities and other items of interest.

Please forward this newsletter to others in the education field who may be interested in *Learning Matters*. [Subscribe to Learning Matters](#). If you do not wish to receive *Learning Matters*, [send us an e-mail](#).

Commissioner Cassellius Visits Minnesota Schools to Talk About Governor's Budget and its Impact

Education Commissioner Brenda Cassellius has been busy traveling the state in recent weeks, visiting schools to talk about how Governor Dayton's budget would impact their work to educate all students. From visits to successful all-day kindergarten programs in Austin and Mankato to special education roundtables with teachers and parents in Duluth and St. Cloud, the Commissioner has highlighted the benefits the governor's budget proposals would have in district's efforts to close achievement gaps and prepare Minnesota students for success in college, career and life. See the following press releases for more details.

[Read today's release regarding Commissioner's special education roundtable in St. Cloud.](#)

[Read March 8 release regarding Commissioner's roundtable discussion regarding special education in Duluth.](#)

[Read February 28 release regarding Commissioner's visit to Mankato Area Public Schools.](#)

[Read February 22 release regarding Commissioner's visit to all-day kindergarten program in Austin.](#)

Commissioner Cassellius Statement on Legislative Auditor's Special Education Report

On March 6, the Office of the Legislative Auditor released an evaluation report, Special Education, which examines special education funding and policy within the state of Minnesota.

[View the report on the Minnesota Office of the Legislative Auditor website.](#)

[Read the March 6 release.](#)

Commissioner Cassellius Statement on Advanced Placement Results for Minnesota's Class of 2012

The 9th Annual AP® Report to the Nation was released by the College Board, showing that more Minnesota public high school graduates are enrolling in and passing college-level Advanced Placement (AP) courses and exams.

[Read statement from Commissioner Cassellius.](#)

[For more information or to read the report, visit the College Board website.](#)

Commissioner's Statement on Introduction of Governor Dayton's Education Budget

Governor Dayton's education budget bill was introduced in the House and Senate on February 14. Authored by Senate and House education chairs Senator Chuck Wiger and Representative Paul Marquart, the bill calls for \$344 million in new investments for preschool through grade 12.

[Read Commissioner Cassellius' statement.](#)

[Follow bill status for SF453 and HF630 on the Minnesota State Legislature website.](#) You may also access committee audio and video recordings.

Now Available: 2013 Public School Free/Reduced-Price Eligibility List

Annually, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) collects public school data, including enrollment and the number of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) division uses this information to determine eligibility for Child Nutrition Programs based on the percent of eligible children enrolled in schools. The attendance boundaries of public elementary, middle, junior high and senior high schools determine the eligibility areas for Child Nutrition Programs. Area-eligible schools have at least 50 percent of their enrollment eligible for free or reduced-price meals and may participate as either an "Open" or "Enrolled" site under the Summer Food Service Program or Seamless Summer Program. This information is also used to determine eligibility for the Child Care Food Program At-Risk Afterschool Meals and Family Day Care Homes-Tier 1.

Other types of schools (area learning centers, charter schools and non-public) may be "site-eligible" if the building location has at least 50 percent of their enrollment eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Sites may also be eligible based on the 2010 Census data or other data.

For the Summer Food Service Program or Seamless Summer Program, any site may feed children without qualification as an "Open Site" if it is located within the attendance boundaries of the eligible schools listed with at least 50 percent or more eligible students.

[View the 2013 Public School Free/Reduced-Price Eligibility List.](#)

If you have any questions about this information, [contact the Minnesota Department of Education Food and Nutrition Service](#), 651-582-8526, or 1-800-366-8922 (MN Toll-free).

Opportunity to Participate in Standard Setting or Alignment Study

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is seeking English Language Arts, Reading and Special Educators to serve on committees in summer 2013. MDE will set standards on the new Reading MCA-III, MCA-Modified and MTAS and will conduct alignment studies of these assessments to the 2010 Minnesota Academic Standards. Participants will be compensated.

[See more information and the online application.](#) For assistance with questions, [contact Cheryl Alcaya](#), supervisor of Research and Assessment.

English Learner, Bilingual or Migrant Education Advocate Award Nominations

Do you know someone who has made a difference in English Learner, Bilingual, or Migrant education? An innovative teacher? A supportive administrator? A tireless paraprofessional? A vocal student leader? An active community member? An enthusiastic parent?

[Access the online nomination form on the Minnesota ELL Conference website.](#) Nominations will be accepted through **March 30th, 2013**. The award will be presented at the annual ESL, Bilingual and Migrant Education Conference at the RiverCentre in St. Paul, Minn., on May 3rd, 2013.

Hormel Foundation Gifted and Talented Education Symposium – June 10-13, 2013

The symposium is organized through collaboration between the Hormel Foundation, the Minnesota Department of Education and the Austin School District. The fifth annual General Symposium is **June 10-13, 2013**, in Austin, Minnesota. There will be a pre-conference June 9 and an Administrator Day on June 10. The symposium provides an opportunity for educators, administrators, psychologists, counselors, school board members, and parents to gain a greater understanding of the unique needs of gifted, talented and high-potential learners.

[Visit the Symposium website for complete registration information](#)

(www.austin.k12.mn.us/educationalservices/gtsymposium/default.aspx).

Grants for registration and lodging are available for school board members and certain non-teaching district staff, including administrators, counselors and coordinators, who are first-time attendees to the symposium. Please [contact Wendy Behrens](#) for more information (wendy.behrens@state.mn.us).

CenturyLink Teachers and Technology Grant Program

The CenturyLink Foundation and the Minnesota Business Partnership Education Foundation announced they are accepting applications for the CenturyLink Teachers and Technology Grant Program. Eligible schools must be located within the CenturyLink service area but need NOT be a CenturyLink customer.

To learn more about the program and to apply for grant money for your schools, [visit the Minnesota Business Partnership website](#). Click on “In the Community” and select “Schools and Education.” On the right-hand side, click on CenturyLink Teachers & Technology Grants. [Access application page directly on the Minnesota Business Partnership website](#).

Applications will be accepted through **March 30, 2013**, and all grants will be presented in May 2013.

Doodle 4 Google 2013 – Annual Competition for K-12 Students

Fifty talented state finalists (one from each state) will be selected by guest judges and travel to New York City to celebrate their achievements. The grand-prize winner will be decided by a public vote and announced on May 22nd at the final event in New York City. The winner will get to see their doodle on the Google.com homepage and receives a \$30,000 scholarship for college. Additionally, their school will receive a \$50,000 technology grant. All 50 finalists will have their work displayed at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and receive prizes for their talent and creativity. Celebrity guest judges take part in the contest as well—this year, Katie Couric, Aly Raisman, Pendleton Ward, and Chris Sanders among them. The final winner will be judged by a public vote online between May 1st and May 10th by Google users throughout the country. **Submissions close March 22nd.** [Access more information on the Doodle 4 Google website](#).

ED Review – A U.S. Department of Education Newsletter

ED Review provides a bi-weekly update on U.S. Department of Education initiatives and activities. [See the latest ED Review posting](#).

Learning Matters is produced by the Communications Office of the [Minnesota Department of Education](#).

If you have questions about the information contained in this newsletter, [please contact mde.contactus@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.contactus@state.mn.us).