

Management Report

for

Intermediate School District No. 917  
Rosemount, Minnesota

June 30, 2021

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#### PRINCIPALS

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To the School Board and Management of  
Intermediate School District No. 917  
Rosemount, Minnesota

We have prepared this management report in conjunction with our audit of Intermediate School District No. 917's (the District) financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2021. We have organized this report into the following sections:

- Audit Summary
- Funding Public Education in Minnesota
- Financial Trends of Your District
- Legislative Summary
- Accounting and Auditing Updates

We would be pleased to further discuss any of the information contained in this report or any other concerns that you would like us to address. We would also like to express our thanks for the courtesy and assistance extended to us during the course of our audit.

The purpose of this report is solely to provide those charged with governance of the District, management, and those who have responsibility for oversight of the District's financial reporting process comments resulting from our audit and information relevant to school district financing in Minnesota. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

*Malloy, Montague, Karnowski, Radosevich & Co., P.A.*

Minneapolis, Minnesota  
November 29, 2021

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## **AUDIT SUMMARY**

The following is a summary of our audit work, key conclusions, and other information that we consider important or that is required to be communicated to the Board, administration, or those charged with governance of the District.

### **OUR RESPONSIBILITY UNDER AUDITING STANDARDS GENERALLY ACCEPTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS***

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the District as of and for the year ended June 30, 2021. Professional standards require that we provide you with information about our responsibilities under auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and *Government Auditing Standards*, as well as certain information related to the planned scope and timing of our audit. We have communicated such information to you verbally and in our audit engagement letter. Professional standards also require that we communicate to you the following information related to our audit.

### **PLANNED SCOPE AND TIMING OF THE AUDIT**

We performed the audit according to the planned scope and timing previously discussed and coordinated in order to obtain sufficient audit evidence and complete an effective audit.

### **AUDIT OPINION AND FINDINGS**

Based on our audit of the District's financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2021:

- We have issued an unmodified opinion on the District's basic financial statements.
- We reported no deficiencies in the District's internal control over financial reporting that we considered to be material weaknesses.
- The results of our testing disclosed no instances of noncompliance required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.
- We reported two findings based on our testing of the District's compliance with Minnesota laws and regulations:
  1. Two of the twenty-five disbursements we tested were not paid within forty-five days from the receipt of goods or services as required by Minnesota Statutes.
  2. The District did not advertise a request for proposal for group insurance at least twenty-one days prior to the final date for submitting proposals as required by Minnesota Statutes.

## **OTHER OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Uniform Guidance Written Controls and Micro-Purchase Threshold**

Federal Uniform Guidance requires that nonfederal entities must have and use documented procurement procedures consistent with 2CFR § 200.317-320 for the acquisition of property or services required under a federal award or subaward. Effective August 31, 2020, the federal micro-purchase threshold, which is the threshold that allows for procurements without soliciting competitive price or rate quotations given certain conditions, was increased from \$3,500 to \$10,000 in the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR).

Effective November 12, 2020, the Uniform Guidance was also revised to allow nonfederal entities to establish a micro-purchase threshold higher than the \$10,000 threshold established in the FAR under certain circumstances. The nonfederal entity may self-certify a micro-purchase threshold up to \$50,000 if the requirements in 2CFR § 200.320(a)(1)(iv) are followed. Requirements include an **annual** self-certification and clear documentation of the justification to support the increase in the threshold. Acceptable reasons for justification must meet **one** of the following criteria:

- A qualification as a low-risk auditee, in accordance with the criteria in § 200.520 for the most recent audit,
- An annual internal institutional risk assessment to identify, mitigate, and manage financial risks, or,
- A higher threshold consistent with state law.

This flexibility would allow Minnesota local governments to increase and align their federal procurement procedures, specifically the micro-purchase threshold, with state law, which allows for procurements below \$25,000 to be made without competitive price or rate quotations.

We recommend that the District review its current federal procurement policy. If the micro-purchase threshold in your currently adopted policy is below the allowable FAR limit of \$10,000, you would need to make a one-time amendment to the policy to adopt the \$10,000 FAR limit before using it. If you prefer to increase your federal micro-purchase threshold to \$25,000 to align it with state law, in addition to amending your federal procurement policy, you would need to annually certify the higher threshold and the justification for using the higher threshold.

### **SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The significant accounting policies used by the District are described in Note 1 of the notes to basic financial statements. No new accounting policies were adopted and the application of existing policies was not changed during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021.

We noted no transactions entered into by the District during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period.

## **ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND MANAGEMENT JUDGMENTS**

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from those expected. The most sensitive estimates affecting the financial statements were:

Special education state aid includes an adjustment related to tuition billings to and from other school districts for special education services, which are computed using formulas derived by the Minnesota Department of Education. Because of the timing of the calculations, this adjustment for the current fiscal year is not finalized until after the District has closed its financial records. The impact of this adjustment on the receivable and revenue recorded for state special education aid is calculated using preliminary information available to the District.

The District has recorded a liability in the Statement of Net Position for severance benefits payable for which it is probable employees will be compensated. The "vesting method" used by the District to calculate this liability is based on assumptions involving the probability of employees becoming eligible to receive the benefits (vesting), the potential use of accumulated sick leave prior to termination, and the age at which such employees are likely to retire.

The District has recorded activity for other post-employment benefits (OPEB) and pension benefits. These obligations are calculated using actuarial methodologies primarily described in Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement Nos. 68 and 75. These actuarial calculations include significant assumptions, including projected changes, healthcare insurance costs, investment returns, retirement ages, proportionate share, and employee turnover.

The depreciation of capital assets involves estimates pertaining to useful lives.

The District's self-insured activities require recording a liability for claims incurred, but not yet reported, which are based on estimates.

We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used by management to develop the estimates discussed above in determining that they are reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

Certain financial statement disclosures are particularly sensitive because of their significance to financial statement users. The disclosures included in the notes to the basic financial statements related to OPEB and pension benefits are particularly sensitive, due to the materiality of the liabilities, and the large and complex estimates involved in determining the disclosures.

The financial statement disclosures are neutral, consistent, and clear.

## **DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN PERFORMING THE AUDIT**

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing our audit.

## **CORRECTED AND UNCORRECTED MISSTATEMENT**

Professional standards require us to accumulate all known and likely misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are clearly trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. There were no misstatements detected as a result of audit procedures that were material, either individually or in the aggregate, to each opinion unit's financial statements taken as a whole.

## **DISAGREEMENTS WITH MANAGEMENT**

For purposes of this letter, a disagreement with management is a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditor's report. We are pleased to report that no such disagreements arose during the course of our audit.

## **MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIONS**

We have requested certain representations from management that are included in the management representation letter dated November 29, 2021.

## **MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS**

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a "second opinion" on certain situations. If a consultation involves application of an accounting principle to the District's financial statements or a determination of the type of auditor's opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.

## **OTHER AUDIT FINDINGS OR ISSUES**

We generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards with management each year prior to retention as the District's auditors. However, these discussions occurred in the normal course of our professional relationship and our responses were not a condition to our retention.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

We applied certain limited procedures to the management's discussion and analysis and the pension and OPEB-related required supplementary information (RSI) that supplement the basic financial statements. Our procedures consisted of inquiries of management regarding the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We did not audit the RSI and do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the RSI.

We were engaged to report on the supplemental information and the Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards Compliance Table, which accompany the financial statements, but are not RSI. With respect to this supplementary information, we made certain inquiries of management and evaluated the form, content, and methods of preparing the information to determine that the information complies with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the method of preparing it has not changed from the prior period, and the information is appropriate and complete in relation to our audit of the financial statements. We compared and reconciled the supplementary information to the underlying accounting records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves.

We were not engaged to report on the introductory and other information sections which accompany the financial statements, but are not RSI. Such information has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, accordingly, we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.

## FUNDING PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MINNESOTA

Due to its complexity, it would be impossible to fully explain the funding of public education in Minnesota within this report. A summary of legislative changes affecting school districts included later in this report gives an indication of how complicated the funding system is. This section provides selected state-wide funding and financial trend information.

### BASIC GENERAL EDUCATION REVENUE

The largest single funding source for Minnesota school districts is basic general education aid. Each year, the Legislature sets a basic formula allowance. Total basic general education revenue is calculated by multiplying the formula allowance by the number of pupil units for which a district is entitled to aid. Pupil units are calculated using a legislatively determined weighting system applied to average daily membership (ADM). Over the years, various modifications have been made to this calculation, including changes in weighting and special consideration for declining enrollment districts.

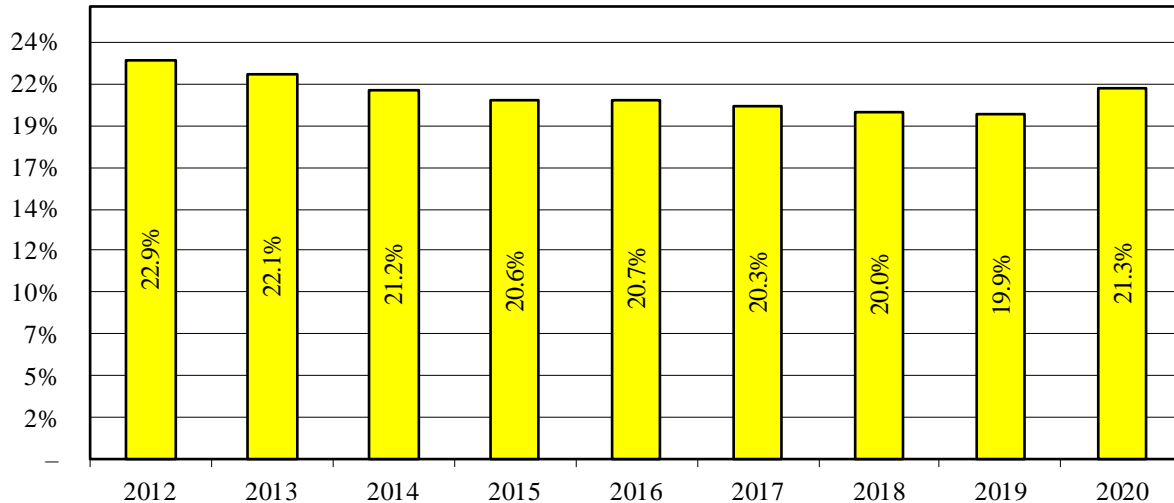
The table below presents a summary of the formula allowance for the past decade and as approved for the next two fiscal years. The 2021 Legislature approved per pupil increases of \$161 for fiscal 2022 and \$135 for fiscal 2023. The amount of the formula allowance and the percentage change from year-to-year excludes temporary funding changes, the “roll-in” of aids that were previously funded separately, and changes that may vary dependent on actions taken by individual districts. The \$529 increase in 2015 was offset by changes to pupil weightings and the general education aid formula that resulted in an increase equivalent to approximately \$105, or 2.0 percent, state-wide.

Fiscal Year Ended June 30,	Formula Allowance	
	Amount	Percent Increase
2012	\$ 5,174	1.00 %
2013	\$ 5,224	1.00 %
2014	\$ 5,302	1.50 %
2015	\$ 5,831	2.00 %
2016	\$ 5,948	2.00 %
2017	\$ 6,067	2.00 %
2018	\$ 6,188	2.00 %
2019	\$ 6,312	2.00 %
2020	\$ 6,438	2.00 %
2021	\$ 6,567	2.00 %
2022	\$ 6,728	2.45 %
2023	\$ 6,863	2.00 %

## STATE-WIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCIAL HEALTH

One of the most common and comparable statistics used to evaluate school district financial health is the unrestricted operating fund balance as a percentage of operating expenditures.

State-Wide Unrestricted Operating Fund Balance  
as a Percentage of Operating Expenditures



Note: State-wide information is not available for fiscal 2021.

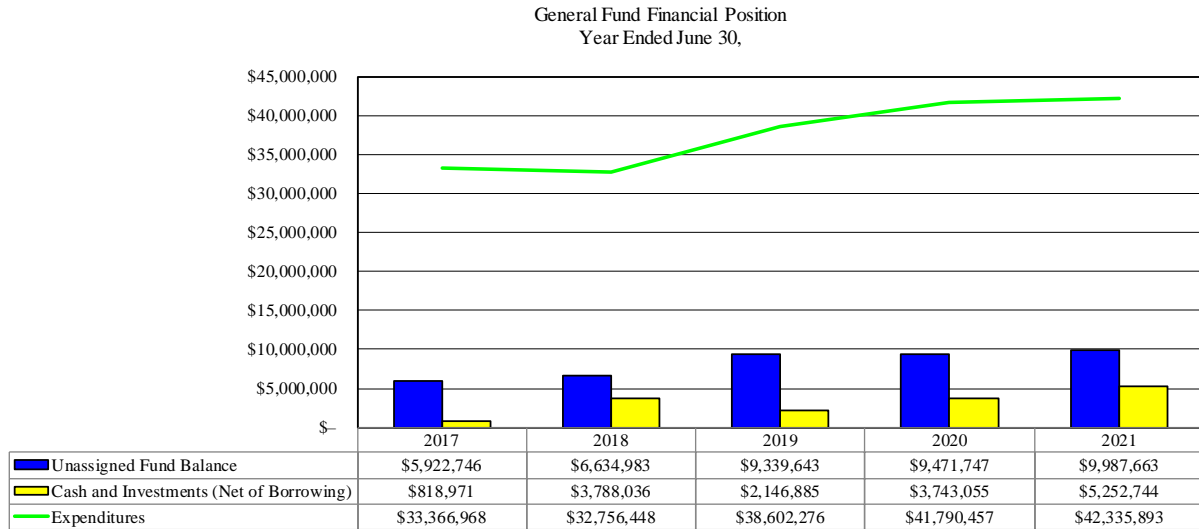
The calculation above reflects only the unrestricted fund balance of the General Fund, and the corresponding expenditures, which is the same method the state uses for the calculation of statutory operating debt.

The average unrestricted fund balance as a percentage of operating expenditures maintained by Minnesota school districts decreased gradually from 22.9 percent at the end of fiscal 2012 to 19.9 percent at the end of fiscal 2019, a period of relative stability in the state's economic condition and school funding. This ratio increased back up to 21.3 percent at the end of fiscal 2020, the highest level since 2014.

## FINANCIAL TRENDS OF YOUR DISTRICT

### GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL POSITION

The following graph displays the District's General Fund trends of financial position and changes in the volume of financial activity. Unassigned fund balance and cash balance are two indicators of financial health, while annual expenditures are often used to measure the size of the operation.



The District ended fiscal year 2021 with a General Fund cash and investments balance of \$5,252,744 (net of borrowing and interfund receivables and payables), an increase of \$1,509,689 from the previous year. This was mainly due to the decrease in amounts due from the member districts from tuition billings.

Unassigned fund balance at year-end was \$9,987,663, an increase of \$515,916. This was due to the increase in the total fund balance and a decline in amounts assigned for subsequent year's budget deficit.

The District ended the year with a \$204,926 increase in the General Fund balance. This increase of \$204,926 is \$580,365 higher than anticipated in the District's revised budget. The reason for the variance is mainly due to the District experiencing better than expected results in the Secondary Education Account totaling \$435,963, including revenue exceeding projections by \$252,215, mainly due to having higher than anticipated enrollment in fiscal 2021. Expenditures were lower than anticipated in this account by \$183,748, mainly in purchased services.

The District also experienced an increase to fund balance that was more than anticipated in the Special Education Account with an increase of \$245,548, compared to an anticipated increase of \$107,969. The special education programs' state aids were \$2,159,581 under budget for fiscal year 2021, due to lower program activity in the current year. Expenditures were also lower than budgeted amounts by \$2,457,529, mainly in salaries and benefits, purchased services, and supplies and materials. Most categories of expenditures were lower than budget as a result of moving to distance learning for parts of the year, due to COVID-19.

The following table presents the components of the General Fund balance for the past five years:

	Year Ended June 30,				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Nonspendable fund balances	\$ 154,609	\$ 622,617	\$ 129,262	\$ 131,151	\$ 109,429
Restricted fund balances	880,523	342,912	182,355	138,134	105,925
Assigned fund balances	–	423,420	145,942	391,088	134,029
Unassigned	5,922,746	6,634,983	9,339,643	9,471,747	9,987,663
Total fund balances	<u>\$ 6,957,878</u>	<u>\$ 8,023,932</u>	<u>\$ 9,797,202</u>	<u>\$ 10,132,120</u>	<u>\$ 10,337,046</u>
Unassigned fund balances as a percentage of expenditures	<u>17.8%</u>	<u>20.3%</u>	<u>24.2%</u>	<u>22.7%</u>	<u>23.6%</u>
Cash and temporary investments (net of borrowing)	<u>\$ 818,971</u>	<u>\$ 3,788,036</u>	<u>\$ 2,146,885</u>	<u>\$ 3,743,055</u>	<u>\$ 5,252,744</u>

The resources represented by this fund balance are critical to a district's ability to maintain adequate cash flow throughout the year, to retain its programs, and to cushion against the impact of unexpected costs or funding shortfalls.

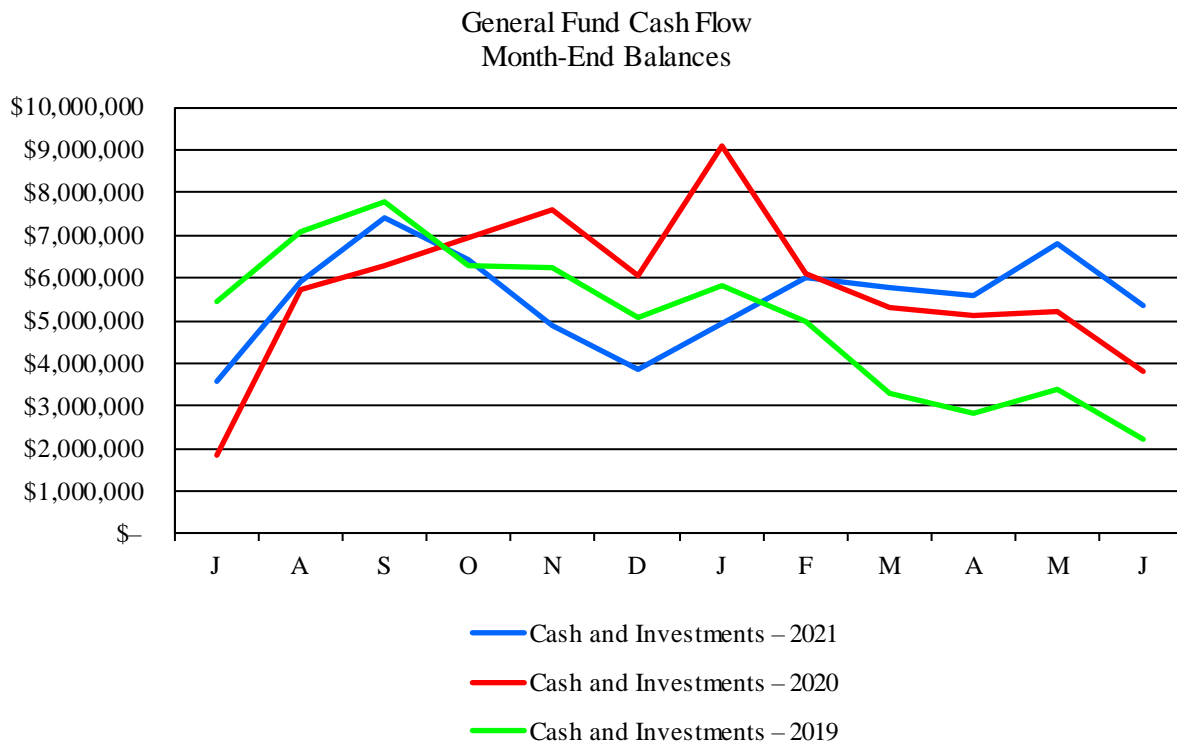
Fund balance as a percentage of expenditures is one key measure in assessing the financial health of the District. Maintaining an adequate fund balance is particularly important because of the limited availability of borrowing for the District and the need for the General Fund to be self-sustaining in its cash flow needs.

The fund balance remains healthy when compared to the level of district expenditures. The District's plan, based on the current fund balance policy, is to maintain a minimum unassigned General Fund balance of 15.0 percent of the annual budget. At June 30, 2021, the District has exceeded that policy, with an unassigned fund balance as a percentage of 2021 expenditures of 23.6 percent.

The District's fund balance provides opportunities to incur one-time capital expenditures to mitigate the amount of long-term facilities maintenance levy that the District requests on behalf of the member districts. The District continues to monitor its fund balances closely.

## GENERAL FUND CASH FLOW

The level of cash and investments varies considerably during the year, due to the timing of various revenues and expenditures. The following graph summarizes the level of cash and investments, including cash and investments held by trustee (net of short-term cash flow borrowing) over the past three years:



The graph above shows the peaks and valleys of the General Fund cash and investments balance (net of borrowing and interfund balances) on a monthly basis. The swing between its high and low month-end cash balances was about \$3.8 million for fiscal 2021.

## GENERAL FUND OPERATIONS AND FINANCIAL POSITION BY ACCOUNT

The following tables present comparative operating results for some of the accounts of the District's General Fund:

### Secondary Education Account

	Year Ended June 30,				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Revenue and other financing sources	\$ 3,384,163	\$ 3,891,849	\$ 4,598,757	\$ 4,409,692	\$ 4,211,547
Expenditures	3,401,719	3,399,214	3,713,372	4,101,077	4,258,342
Net change in fund balances	(17,556)	492,635	885,385	308,615	(46,795)
Fund balances					
Beginning of year	1,936,330	1,918,774	2,411,409	3,296,794	3,605,409
End of year	<u>\$ 1,918,774</u>	<u>\$ 2,411,409</u>	<u>\$ 3,296,794</u>	<u>\$ 3,605,409</u>	<u>\$ 3,558,614</u>

This account experienced a net decrease in fund balance of \$46,795 during fiscal 2021. This compares to a budgeted decrease of \$482,758. Revenues were over budget by \$252,215, mainly in tuition for the alternative learning (DCALS) program. Expenditures ended the year lower than budget by \$183,748, mainly in purchased services, due to reductions in contracted services, activities for students, and building lease charges.

Total revenue in the Secondary Education Account of the General Fund totaled \$4,211,547 in fiscal 2021, a decrease of \$198,145 from the previous year, due to a decrease in tuition revenue, mainly in the career and technical education programs. Expenditures in this account increased \$157,265, mainly in salaries and benefits related to open positions being filled, as well as salary rate increases.

### Special Education Account

	Year Ended June 30,				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Revenue and other financing sources	\$ 26,294,372	\$ 28,924,111	\$ 34,735,955	\$ 37,131,011	\$ 37,774,644
Expenditures and other financing uses	25,498,947	28,235,178	33,857,291	37,119,354	37,529,096
Net change in fund balances	795,425	688,933	878,664	11,657	245,548
Fund balances					
Beginning of year	4,102,054	4,897,479	5,586,412	6,465,076	6,476,733
End of year	<u>\$ 4,897,479</u>	<u>\$ 5,586,412</u>	<u>\$ 6,465,076</u>	<u>\$ 6,476,733</u>	<u>\$ 6,722,281</u>

This account experienced a net increase in fund balance of \$245,548 during fiscal 2021, which compares to a budgeted increase in fund balance of \$107,969 for the year. The special education programs received \$266,815 less tuition revenue than anticipated for fiscal year 2021. Special education state aid revenue was \$2,159,581 lower than budget and the related expenditures were also lower than budgeted amounts by \$2,457,529. This was mainly due to lower than anticipated salaries and benefits, purchased services, and supplies and materials. This is due to most expenditure categories being lower as a result of open positions not being filled, lower than anticipated unemployment insurance costs, and the District moving to distance learning due to COVID-19.

Special Education Account revenues increased \$643,633 in fiscal 2021. The District experienced increased activity in special education programs causing increased state aid. Expenditures and other financing uses increased \$409,742, mainly in salaries and benefits for licensed staff, employee contract enhancements, and employee benefits for insurance.

## **OTHER FUNDS OF THE DISTRICT**

### **Food Service Special Revenue Fund**

The District's Food Service Special Revenue Fund expenditures exceeded revenue by \$12,679. In order to eliminate the deficit in the Food Service Special Revenue Fund, the District transferred \$12,679 from the General Fund in fiscal 2021.

### **Internal Service Funds**

The internal service funds are considered proprietary funds and are used to account for health and dental insurance offered by the District to its employees as a self-insured plan and post-employment employee benefits.

The following table presents comparative operating results for the District's internal service funds over the past five fiscal years:

	Year Ended June 30,				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Revenue	\$3,425,979	\$3,865,060	\$4,632,933	\$5,066,691	\$5,791,672
Expenses	3,255,326	3,150,658	4,122,961	3,831,523	4,742,075
Change in net position	170,653	714,402	509,972	1,235,168	1,049,597
Net position					
Beginning of year	137,433	406,523	1,120,925	1,630,897	2,866,065
End of year	<u>\$ 308,086</u>	<u>\$1,120,925</u>	<u>\$1,630,897</u>	<u>\$2,866,065</u>	<u>\$3,915,662</u>

These funds had revenues over expenses of \$1,049,597 during fiscal 2021. This occurred mostly as a result of the District's internal service fund for self-insured health insurance, which had an operating income of \$1,074,301. Revenues were more than fiscal 2020, mainly in the self-insured medical insurance plan, due to increased numbers of employee participants and increased rates. Expenses increased, due to employees utilizing various medical services again, after not seeking services as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## GOVERNMENT-WIDE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The District's financial statements include fund-based information that focuses on budgetary compliance, and the sufficiency of the District's current assets to finance its current liabilities. The governmental reporting model also requires the inclusion of two government-wide financial statements designed to present a clear picture of the District as a single, unified entity. These government-wide financial statements provide information on the total cost of delivering educational services, including capital assets and long-term liabilities.

Theoretically, net position represents district resources available for providing services after its debts are settled. However, those resources are not always in expendable form, or there may be restrictions on how some of those resources can be used. Therefore, this statement divides net position into three components: net investment in capital assets, restricted, and unrestricted. The following table presents a summarized reconciliation of the District's governmental fund balances to net position, and the separate components of net position for the last two years:

	As of June 30,		
	2020	2021	Change
Net position – governmental activities			
Total fund balances – governmental funds	\$ 10,132,120	\$ 10,337,046	\$ 204,926
Total capital assets, net of depreciation	9,050,323	8,717,725	(332,598)
Total long-term debt	(7,620,856)	(7,332,145)	288,711
Net pension-related liabilities	(26,070,284)	(28,163,779)	(2,093,495)
Internal service funds balance	2,866,065	3,915,662	1,049,597
Other items	(3,722)	(11,373)	(7,651)
Total net position – governmental activities	<u>\$ (11,646,354)</u>	<u>\$ (12,536,864)</u>	<u>\$ (890,510)</u>
Net position			
Net investment in capital assets	\$ 1,894,018	\$ 1,856,227	\$ (37,791)
Restricted	93,757	61,543	(32,214)
Unrestricted	<u>(13,634,129)</u>	<u>(14,454,634)</u>	<u>(820,505)</u>
Total net position	<u>\$ (11,646,354)</u>	<u>\$ (12,536,864)</u>	<u>\$ (890,510)</u>

Some of the District's fund balances translate into restricted net position by virtue of external restrictions (statutory restrictions) or by the nature of the fund they are in (e.g., Food Service Special Revenue Fund balance can only be spent for food service program costs). The unrestricted net position category consists mainly of the General Fund unrestricted fund balances, offset against noncapital long-term obligations, such as severance payable, compensated absences, OPEB, and pension liabilities.

Total net position decreased by \$890,510 in fiscal 2021. The District's net investment in capital assets decreased \$37,791 this year. The change in this category of net position typically depends on the relationship between the rate at which the District is adding capital assets, the rate capital assets are being depreciated, and how that compares to the rate at which the District is repaying the debt issued to purchase or construct those assets. The District's unrestricted net position decreased by \$820,505, mainly due to changes in funding levels of the Public Employees Retirement Association and the Teachers Retirement Association pension obligations offset by improved net position in the General Fund and internal service funds of the District.

## LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

In a typical year, the primary focus of the 2021 Minnesota legislative session would have been the development of the state's fiscal year (FY) 2022–2023 biennial budget. However, given the significant events of the preceding year, including the COVID-19 pandemic and death of George Floyd while in police custody, the focus of the regular session shifted to legislation responding to the pressing issues that resulted from these events. The business of setting a biennial budget and passing an education finance bill were ultimately not addressed until a June special session.

There was positive news on the state's budget outlook entering the session. A May 2020 special pandemic budget projection had predicted the state would finish the FY 2020–2021 biennium with a \$2.4 billion shortfall. By the regular budget and economic forecast in February 2021, the state's fiscal outlook had improved, projecting a positive budgetary variance of \$940 million at the end of the biennium, reducing the threat of potential funding cuts to local government programs. The resulting education finance bill passed and signed by the Governor on June 30, 2021, included appropriation increases of approximately \$554 billion for the FY 2022–2023 biennium, and \$669 billion for the FY 2024–2025 biennium.

The following is a brief summary of specific legislative changes from the 2021 Legislature impacting Minnesota school districts in future years.

**General Education Revenue** – The Legislature approved annual increases of 2.45 percent and 2.00 percent to the basic general education formula allowance for the FY 2022–2023 biennium. The per pupil allowance will increase \$161 to \$6,728 for FY 2022, and another \$135 to \$6,863 for FY 2023.

**English Learner Cross Subsidy Aid** – Approved annual appropriations of \$2 million to provide English learner cross-subsidy aid for FY 2022 through FY 2025. This new funding will be allocated annually to school districts and charter schools based on their proportionate share of English learner and concentration revenue from the preceding fiscal year, and must be used and accounted for within the basic skills program.

**Special Education Revenue** – The Legislature had previously approved enhancements to special education funding designed to hold the state average cross-subsidy per pupil constant at the FY 2019 level of \$82 per ADM for FY 2021, which included establishing a new component of the state special education funding formula, known as cross-subsidy reduction aid. Cross subsidy reduction aid will equal a percentage of each district's "initial cross-subsidy" for the prior fiscal year, with the percentages set at 6.43 percent for 2021. Initial cross-subsidy is defined as the district's nonfederal special education costs, including transportation, less state special education aid after tuition adjustments and general education aid attributable to students receiving special education services outside of the regular classroom for at least 60.00 percent of the school day. The 2021 Legislature approved an additional appropriation of \$10.425 million to fund a one-time increase to cross-subsidy for FY 2022, which is estimated to increase the percentage funded by 1.24 percent to a total of 7.67 percent. Charter schools are not eligible for cross-subsidy reduction aid.

**Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) and School Readiness Plus (SRP)** – The Legislature approved continued funding for FY 2022 and FY 2023 to maintain 4,000 state-wide VPK and SRP seats set to expire after FY 2021. The Local Optional Revenue (LOR) second tier equalization factor was increased for FY 2023 only to offset the state-wide impact of levy changes for the VPK/SRP continuation, which should result in a levy increase for VPK/SRP districts and a levy decrease for most other districts.

**Hiring Bonuses** – Districts or schools are authorized to offer a hiring or retention bonus of \$2,500–\$5,000 to attract teachers who are American Indians or persons of color, or \$4,000–\$8,000 to meet staffing needs in shortage areas and to attract teachers who are American Indians or persons of color.

**Sales Tax Exemption** – A previous sales tax exemption for sales made by school-associated student groups for funding extracurricular student activities, that was eliminated by the 2019 omnibus education bill, was restored.

**Staff Development** – Teacher mentorship was added as an eligible use of general education aid restricted for staff development as part of a mandate for districts to develop teacher mentoring programs.

**Lunch Shaming Prohibited** – Students approved for free or reduced-price meal status must be served reimbursable meals irrespective of any outstanding individual student lunch account debt. Districts are required to post this policy.

## ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING UPDATES

The following is a summary of GASB standards expected to be implemented in the next few years. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the GASB has delayed the original implementation dates of these and other standards as described below.

### **GASB STATEMENT NO. 87, *LEASES***

A lease is a contract that transfers control of the right to use another entity's nonfinancial asset as specified in the contract for a period of time in an exchange or exchange-like transaction. Examples of nonfinancial assets include buildings, land, vehicles, and equipment. Any contract that meets this definition should be accounted for under the leases guidance, unless specifically excluded in this statement.

Governments enter into leases for many types of assets. Under the previous guidance, leases were classified as either capital or operating depending on whether the lease met any of the four tests. In many cases, the previous guidance resulted in reporting lease transactions differently than similar nonlease financing transactions.

The goal of this statement is to better meet the information needs of users by improving accounting and financial reporting for leases by governments. It establishes a single model for lease accounting based on the principle that leases are financings of the right to use an underlying asset. This statement increases the usefulness of financial statements by requiring recognition of certain lease assets and liabilities for leases that previously were classified as operating leases and recognized as inflows of resources or outflows of resources based on the payment provisions of the contract.

Under this statement, a lessee is required to recognize a lease liability and an intangible right to use lease asset, and a lessor is required to recognize a lease receivable and a deferred inflow of resources, thereby enhancing the relevance and consistency of information about governments' leasing activities.

To reduce the cost of implementation, this statement includes an exception for short-term leases, defined as a lease that, at the commencement of the lease term, has a maximum possible term under the lease contract of 12 months (or less), including any options to extend, regardless of their probability of being exercised. Lessees and lessors should recognize short-term lease payments as outflows of resources or inflows of resources, respectively, based on the payment provisions of the lease contract. The requirements of this statement are effective for fiscal years beginning after June 15, 2021.

### **GASB STATEMENT NO. 92, *OMNIBUS 2020***

The objectives of this statement are to enhance comparability in accounting and financial reporting and to improve the consistency of authoritative literature by addressing practice issues that have been identified during implementation and application of certain GASB Statements. This statement addresses a variety of topics and includes specific provisions about the following:

- The effective date of Statement No. 87, *Leases*, and Implementation Guide No. 2019-3, *Leases*, for interim financial reports
- Reporting of intra-entity transfers of assets between a primary government employer and a component unit defined benefit pension plan or defined benefit other post-employment benefit (OPEB) plan
- The applicability of Statements No. 73, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pensions and Related Assets That Are Not within the Scope of GASB Statement 68*, and *Amendments to Certain Provisions of GASB Statements 67 and 68*, as amended, and No. 74, *Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefit Plans Other Than Pension Plans*, as amended, to reporting assets accumulated for post-employment benefits

- The applicability of certain requirements of Statement No. 84, *Fiduciary Activities*, to post-employment benefit arrangements
- Measurement of liabilities (and assets, if any) related to asset retirement obligations (AROs) in a government acquisition
- Reporting by public entity risk pools for amounts that are recoverable from reinsurers or excess insurers
- Reference to nonrecurring fair value measurements of assets or liabilities in authoritative literature
- Terminology used to refer to derivative instruments

The requirements of this statement are effective for fiscal years beginning after June 15, 2021. Earlier application is encouraged.

## **GASB STATEMENT NO. 96, *SUBSCRIPTION-BASED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ARRANGEMENTS***

This statement provides guidance on the accounting and financial reporting for subscription-based information technology arrangements (SBITAs) for government end users (governments). This statement (1) defines a SBITA; (2) establishes that a SBITA results in a right-to-use subscription asset—an intangible asset—and a corresponding subscription liability; (3) provides the capitalization criteria for outlays other than subscription payments, including implementation costs of a SBITA; and (4) requires note disclosures regarding a SBITA. To the extent relevant, the standards for SBITAs are based on the standards established in Statement No. 87, *Leases*, as amended.

A SBITA is defined as a contract that conveys control of the right to use another party's (a SBITA vendor's) information technology (IT) software, alone or in combination with tangible capital assets (the underlying IT assets), as specified in the contract for a period of time in an exchange or exchange-like transaction. Under this statement, a government generally should recognize a right-to-use subscription asset—an intangible asset—and a corresponding subscription liability.

This statement provides an exception for short-term SBITAs with a maximum possible term under the SBITA contract of 12 months, including any options to extend, regardless of their probability of being exercised. Subscription payments for short-term SBITAs should be recognized as outflows of resources.

This statement requires a government to disclose descriptive information about its SBITAs other than short-term SBITAs, such as the amount of the subscription asset, accumulated amortization, other payments not included in the measurement of a subscription liability, principal and interest requirements for the subscription liability, and other essential information.

The requirements of this statement are effective for fiscal years beginning after June 15, 2022, and all reporting periods thereafter.

***GASB STATEMENT NO. 97, CERTAIN COMPONENT UNIT CRITERIA, AND ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING FOR INTERNAL REVENUE CODE SECTION 457 DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLANS—AN AMENDMENT OF GASB STATEMENT NO. 14 AND NO. 84, AND A SUPERSESSION OF GASB STATEMENT NO. 32***

The primary objectives of this statement are to (1) increase consistency and comparability related to the reporting of fiduciary component units in circumstances in which a potential component unit does not have a governing board and the primary government performs the duties that a governing board typically would perform; (2) mitigate costs associated with the reporting of certain defined contribution pension plans, defined contribution OPEB plans, and employee benefit plans other than pension plans or OPEB plans (other employee benefit plans) as fiduciary component units in fiduciary fund financial statements; and (3) enhance the relevance, consistency, and comparability of the accounting and financial reporting for Internal Revenue Code Section 457 deferred compensation plans (Section 457 plans) that meet the definition of a pension plan and for benefits provided through those plans.

The requirements of this statement that (1) exempt primary governments that perform the duties that a government board typically performs from treating the absence of a governing board the same as the appointment of a voting majority of a governing board in determining whether they are financially accountable for defined contribution pension plans, defined contribution OPEB plans, or other employee benefit plans, and (2) limit the applicability of the financial burden criterion in paragraph 7 of Statement 84 to defined benefit pension plans and defined benefit OPEB plans that are administered through trusts that meet the criteria in paragraph 3 of Statement 67 or paragraph 3 of Statement 74, respectively, are effective immediately.

The requirements of this statement that are related to the accounting and financial reporting for Section 457 plans are effective for fiscal years beginning after June 15, 2021. For purposes of determining whether a primary government is financially accountable for a potential component unit, the requirements of this statement that provide that for all other arrangements, the absence of a governing board be treated the same as the appointment of a voting majority of a governing board if the primary government performs the duties that a governing board typically would perform, are effective for reporting periods beginning after June 15, 2021. Earlier application of those requirements is encouraged and permitted by requirement as specified within this statement.

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