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Reports show teacher spending varies at school sites

by Dana Schroeder

Part two of two.

This year, for the first time, school districts in Minnesota must report how much general school revenue students attending each school site bring to their site. The new law, enacted in 1999, also requires districts to report how they reallocate those funds among school sites or for districtwide purposes. And districts are also required to report how many teachers work at each school site and how much money is spent at each site on teacher salaries and benefits.

This flood of new information—partly reported last month in the first in this two-part *Minnesota Journal* series—is a new tool districts can use in tracking revenues and their largest category of expenditures—teacher salaries and benefits.

Even though districts are free to reallocate money, some reformers also see the new law as a big step toward assuring the money generated by low-income and other students at a particular site stays there and is used for its intended purpose. A longer-range goal of many reformers is also increasing each site's authority to decide how a larger share of its revenues is actually spent. Last month, in part one in this series, the *Journal* reported the initial allocations and reallocations for all school sites in Minneapolis and St. Paul for the 1999-2000 school year. Part two analyzes the teacher compensation information generated by both districts and some early impacts of the new reporting law on both districts and school sites.

Comparing different district approaches

According to Tom Melcher, program finance manager at the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, whose office managed the new revenue reporting, school district

business managers opposed the reporting requirement and tried unsuccessfully to get it repealed this session.

Although the department provided detailed instructions, much of the information and online help for doing the reporting, Melcher said there was a "great deal of flexibility" in how districts completed the reports, especially the revenue reallocation among sites and to districtwide programs. "There are a lot of comparability problems, depending on what the districts did," he said.

The difference in approach to the reports shows clearly in how Minneapolis and St. Paul completed the reports. As reported in last month's *Journal*, St. Paul accounted for only \$17.9 million as a districtwide reallocation (out of the district's total initial allocation of general revenues of \$271.8 million). Minneapolis, in contrast, accounted for \$175.6 million as a districtwide reallocation (out of the district's total initial allocation of \$329.0 million.)

Minneapolis Superintendent Carol Johnson said the large districtwide reallocation Minneapolis reported shouldn't be interpreted as tight central budget control over site-level spending, nor as high central administrative costs.

Chuck Irrgang of the district's budget office pointed out that the district's central administrative costs are \$18.9 million, comparable to the St. Paul districtwide reallocation. "We believe we're shelling out well over 85 percent of the dollars right to the schools," Johnson said.

Irrgang said the district allocated transportation costs, district subsidies to special education costs and employee benefits on a districtwide level when completing the state reports, while

Schools continued on page 2

INSIDE

Examining site-based budgeting

Viewpoint: why managing for results matters

View from site council member

Table: Teacher compensation in Minneapolis

Table: Teacher compensation in St. Paul

Analyzing teacher compensation

Obstacles limit preventive maintenance

Chart: Survey of maintenance obstacles

Take Note: policy tidbits

Schools *continued from page 1*

St. Paul allocated transportation and benefit costs to the various school sites.

"The purpose of the report was intended to better inform the public about where the dollars go when they're given to the school district," Johnson said. "That's what we want to be on the Truth Squad about. We want to put out there where the resources go, so that the taxpayers feel they have some sense that we're spending dollars in the way they want."

David Dudycha, assistant to the superintendent, said the state reporting may be the right way, but the district is still trying to figure it out. "What's the right metric and what's the right procedure here to be able to help inform about site-based spending?" he asked. "In this case is a school district actually allocating its dollars to the site? We have a real vested interest in the answer to the question."

In St. Paul, Lois Rockney, executive director of business and finance, said St. Paul spent a lot of time preparing for the new state reporting and used it as an opportunity to think through what costs can be allocated to school sites.

"We allocated transportation to sites based on the number of buses that go to each school," she said. "We allocated other services that happen at the site, such as custodial costs, maintenance and repair. In the past we thought of some of

"We actually think we have an allocation system that puts more onus at the site. The way the [state] report was set up doesn't reflect this. When you look at our per pupil allotment to schools, we've taken dollars and put them to schools."

—David Dudycha, assistant to superintendent, Minneapolis schools

these things as districtwide, so we spent time thinking about the costs at the schools that offset the revenue allocated there."

"We saw the state moving in the direction of site-based revenues," she said. "It started three years ago with the change in compensatory funding."

"We started thinking how we could move the dollars close to the parents, teachers and principal," Rockney said.

"The state reporting seemed to be a good match" to that thinking. "It was perfect timing. One year earlier and we'd have been in real trouble."

The one part of the report that she described as "a horrendous task" was the reporting of teacher full-time equivalents, salaries and benefits by site. "We had never budgeted teachers at the buildings. We had budgeted total elementary and total secondary."

Reform outlook

Joe Nathan, director of the Center for School Change at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute, is among those calling for greater control of spending at school sites. He noted that the state reports were his first look at the total general revenue allocation to St. Paul's Highland Park Junior High, where he serves as a member of the site council. He has found the district's current site-based budgeting process frustrating and confusing so far.

"The financial material given out by the district is very confusing," he said. "And the compensatory funding has been used for other things besides what the site council decided."

"The process needs work, Nathan said. "The district still has a long way to go. It needs a lot of work in order to be clear and not frustrating to folks."

Minneapolis site-based budgeting

"All of our schools have site councils," Supt. Johnson said. "We gave them their allocations. They were given guidelines about how they were to involve the community. Every one of them was asked to do a one-page summary of how they spent their money to make sure they're allocating appropriately."

"We do average salary," Johnson said. The district allocates positions based on



"...Is that really going to be ours—or are we playing dangle the money??"

average salaries and then says, "Buy whatever you want. They can take that money and decide to buy half a teacher. They can decide to buy whatever they want, but all the schools have to have a principal."

"We don't think we're that much different from St. Paul as far as expenditures," said Dudycha, assistant to the superintendent. "We actually think we have an allocation system that puts more onus at the site. The way the [state] report was set up doesn't reflect this. When you look at our per pupil allotment to schools, we've taken dollars and put them to schools."

"Because our taxpayers voted for a class-size referendum, we do give out the money first on a class size [basis]," Johnson said. "Then, the compensatory dollars are very directed. The money goes all the way to the schools based on poverty. Once we do special education and English language learners funds, we take the rest of the money that is left and put it into a pot called per capita. We weight factors related to the formula to decide how much each school should get. Then we give them this per capita amount. This per capita amount is the money they have the flexibility to deal with."

Schools continued on page 4

Viewpoint

From the Executive Director

Tackling complex problems: why managing for results matters to us all

by Lyle Wray

Certainly the topic of the Legislative Auditor's latest Best Practices Review—the "preventive maintenance of local government buildings"—might be a little dry. However, the best practices review process, which came out of a 1992 Citizens League committee on making local government services work better for citizens, is an important tool for Minnesota's policymakers and citizens to improve the quality of government services and tackle some of our state's most pressing problems. (See story on page 8.)

The fourth national conference on "Measuring for Results" in public programs was held last month in Austin, Texas. The Citizens League research team was invited to present our work from around the U.S. and the world on citizen-driven performance measurement. (Further information on the citizen-driven performance measurement project is available online at www.citizensleague.net.)

At the conclusion of the Austin meeting, a number of leading lights in the field reflected on what needed to happen next to provide greater focus on identifying and measuring the results of public services and using that information to improve results for citizens. To someone whose

involvement in results-driven government extends back some 16 years, it looks as though the field is evolving through a clear series of important stages and tasks:

▲ **Measure the results of public services.** Beginning largely in the 1980s, local and state managers began to systematically identify and track specific measures of how well public services were producing the intended outcomes. "How long did it take to place a foster child into a successful adoptive home?" "How many people remained drug-free a year after a treatment program?" These results were then often used to devise creative ways to improve the particular programs.

▲ **Integrate results into planning and budgets.** Somewhat later, this perspective was integrated into goal setting sessions between local managers, for example, and elected city councils or county boards. These measures also began to appear in budget documents and performance reports to elected officials began. By integrating results into the bigger picture, these planning efforts aimed to better align outcomes with the overall strategy and goals of the locality or state.

▲ **Customers, quality and citizens.** Beginning in the late 1980s, there was a strong push on customer service, quality and citizen participation that led to a great deal of work on what citizens want from public services. Survey research and focus groups became a standard set of tools to identify what citizens valued in public services.

▲ **Compare results and costs among public service programs.** Managers and elected officials next began to ask how their results compared with other similar jurisdictions. Although an easy question to answer, comparing performance is only now beginning to pick up steam, due to the complexities of measuring and comparing services. Benchmarking outcomes and costs among services is expanding in the U.S. and internationally, as part of an effort to provide better value for citizens.

▲ **Best practices reviews.** What makes better performers better? As more informa-

tion comparing costs and results has become available, questions immediately arise as to how the top performers get the job done. What exactly is it they are doing to make performance better? Minnesota's Best Practices Reviews have done a very good job looking at local government services to show what underlies good performance. This program helps to speed adoption of effective practices to produce better results for public services.

Now what? Glimpses of the road ahead show that we have major challenges in working across parts of governments—often termed "silos"—and working in partnership with nonprofit and business communities to achieve critical results.

Many important tasks remain that are not likely to be achievable by any one or combination of government programs acting alone. If we are to improve the dismal educational prospects of students of color in our core cities, for example, a broad group of actors needs to agree on a set of outcomes and be held accountable for achievement. Working to develop collaborative efforts across government programs and across sectors of our society is clearly before us as a core task.

States and regions across the country are grappling with improving this area of government performance. Some of the early promising work was done in waiving regulations in return for commitment to stated outcomes. Minnesota's Board of Innovation, which grew out of the same 1992 Citizens League study, can do just that and remove bureaucratic barriers to achievement. In Oregon, the federal government waived many regulations in human services, in return for an outcomes contract.

Measuring outcomes of public services is not something only someone with a "green eye shade" can love. In fact, it must become an important organizing principle in addressing some of our most pressing and complex social challenges. **MJ**

Lyle Wray is executive director of the Citizens League.

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“It appears there’s lots more impact and control at the site than really exists. To give parents the idea that there’s lots of local control is not accurate.”

—Ken Stewart, site council member, Chiron Middle School, Minneapolis

Schools continued from page 2

“You can hire a parent liaison worker, you can buy more textbooks, you can say, ‘We’re going to get our computer lab all fixed up.’ Those are the local decisions. We have some parameters around compensatory. The board says these are the compensatory dollars for kids who are not on track for reaching the high standards. The compensatory dollars—we should invest them in reading, math and writing. But we give the per capita dollars. We encourage people to see that there are gifted programs in every single school. We encourage people to have fine arts.

Dudycha said site councils have control over approximately \$75 million, \$58 million in compensatory funding and about \$25 million in the district’s per capita funding to school sites.

St. Paul ‘moving out slowly’

Next year, Rockney said, schools will receive a dollar allocation for teacher salaries and benefits and money allocated through a student-weighted formula. “There will be more flexibility to the school.”

She said the state is encouraging more decision-making at the site level.

“We are moving out slowly and will grow it over a period of time,” she said. “But there will be more power to make decisions at the schools.”

For example, she said, a school could decide to buy less nurse time and reduce class size instead. Or it could hire two educational assistants rather than one teacher.

She said right now \$19 million in compensatory funding is discretionary, with the remaining portion of the district’s \$48 million allotment going to services determined by the district.

The district has received a \$2.3 million grant from the McKnight Foundation to help move the site-based process forward.

Appearance of control ‘not accurate’

Ken Stewart is PTO president and site council member at Minneapolis’ Chiron Middle School and a member of the district’s Citizens Budget Advisory Commit-

tee. Stewart said he was surprised when he saw the initial allocation figures for school sites published in the April *Journal*, since he’d never seen those figures before.

“This is a terrific thing,” he said. “People are going to be asking hard questions.”

Stewart said he believes the central administration is “spending every dollar as responsibly as they possibly can. Administrative costs are four to five percent—that’s doing pretty well. I don’t see waste, although there are issues about transportation.”

He believes the budgeting system is “more open” than it was a few years ago. “Carol Johnson has opened the process and stretched out the time people have to look at it,” he said. But, he said, there is still a great deal of central control in the budgeting process.

He said a teacher’s retirement at Chiron for next year allowed the site council to spend its per capita money on part of a .0.6 Spanish teacher (shared with Emerson school) and a 0.4 teacher for an extended math program. This will allow the school to have one Spanish class running two semesters and three extra math sessions per semester—two for reinforcement and one for enrichment.

But, the “idea of a site-based council was sold in a way that there were no hard choices and we could have whatever schools we want on diminishing income,” he said. “It appears there’s lots more impact and control at the site than really exists. To give parents the idea that there’s lots of local control is not accurate. The whole budget process was based on a theoretical increase. The outcome is precious little flexibility because of budget constraints.”

“People must keep on top of the board and administration to be right with the numbers and to be proactive in getting them to you,” he said.

Teacher compensation comparisons

The state-required reporting process includes the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) teacher positions and teacher salary and benefit expenditures by school

site for both the 1998-99 and the 1999-00 school years. Table 4 reports these figures for 1999-2000 for Minneapolis school sites and Table 4A reports them for St. Paul school sites.

On an overall basis, the tables show: ▲ Minneapolis has a 4.2 percent higher average total teacher compensation figure (salary and benefits)—\$60,010—than St. Paul—\$57,585.

▲ Minneapolis also has 2,850.18, or 5.4 percent, more pupil-units than St. Paul.

▲ And Minneapolis has significantly more teachers—655.9 full-time equivalents (FTE), or 20.8 percent, more—than St. Paul. Minneapolis’ extra operating referendum plays a large role in the district’s ability to employ more teachers, since it was aimed at lowering class sizes in the lower elementary grades.

▲ Those factors combine to make Minneapolis’ overall teacher compensation per pupil-unit (\$4,126) over 19 percent higher than St. Paul’s (\$3,456).

Tables 4 and 4A on pages five and six show that average teacher compensation, FTEs and teacher compensation per pupil-unit (technically, the AMCPU, or adjusted marginal cost pupil unit, which is explained in the footnotes of Table 4) vary at each site. The tables rank by site the average teacher compensation and teacher compensation per pupil-unit. They also include the rank for each site of the 1999-00 total initial allocation of revenues by pupil unit and the rank for each site of 1999-00 compensatory revenues per pupil unit, also explained in footnotes on Table 4.

These figures allow consideration of the following questions: Do sites with high amounts of total initial revenue and/or compensatory revenue end up with higher levels of teacher compensation per pupil unit? Is there any relationship between average teacher compensation at a site and the site’s compensatory revenue?

Minneapolis. An analysis of the figures in Table 4 shows the following:

▲ In Minneapolis the sites with the high-

Schools continued on page 7

TABLE 4: TEACHER COMPENSATION BY SCHOOL SITE IN MINNEAPOLIS, 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEAR

113 Minneapolis School Sites										113 Minneapolis School Sites									
1999-00 Total AMCPU*	1999-00 FTE** teachers	1999-00 teacher salaries	1999-00 total compensation***	1999-00 teacher comp. per FTE	1999-00 teacher comp. per AMCPU	1999-00 total initial allocation #	1999-00 teacher comp. per FTE	1999-00 teacher comp. per AMCPU	1999-00 total initial allocation #	1999-00 teacher salaries	1999-00 total compensation***	1999-00 teacher comp. per FTE	1999-00 teacher comp. per AMCPU	1999-00 total initial allocation #	1999-00 teacher comp. per FTE	1999-00 teacher comp. per AMCPU	1999-00 total initial allocation #	1999-00 teacher comp. per FTE	1999-00 teacher comp. per AMCPU
413.59	33.7	\$1,609,205	\$1,995,414	\$59,211	\$4,126	60	73	6	4,825	556.47	\$2,425,747	46.7	\$64,410	29	\$5,405	13	13	15	15
778.42	70.5	\$3,300,581	\$4,092,720	\$58,063		6	6		\$5,258	371.72	\$2,133,251	45.6	\$65,009	31	\$7,116	6	6	14	14
462.63	35.7	\$1,897,265	\$2,392,609	\$66,989		19	19		\$5,085	205.85	\$879,468	17.5	\$66,317	24	\$5,298	31	21	13	13
189.96	19.9	\$1,009,480	\$1,251,755	\$62,902		86	86		\$4,746	514.16	\$2,584,988	44.3	\$57,572	79	\$4,502	49	56	56	56
548.06	45.9	\$2,097,870	\$2,801,359	\$60,713		37	37		\$3,658	510.19	\$1,629,240	33.9	\$60,668	53	\$3,960	75	68	79	79
614.11	37	\$1,811,601	\$2,246,385	\$60,697		91	91		\$4,412										
669	53	\$2,380,605	\$2,951,950	\$55,697		49	49		\$5,184										
620.94	53.6	\$2,595,935	\$3,218,959	\$60,055		36	36		\$4,733										
97.28	8.4	\$371,338	\$460,459	\$54,817		93	93		\$4,491										
741.28	56.2	\$2,684,893	\$3,329,267	\$57,204		83	83		\$4,733										
281.34	24.2	\$1,157,309	\$1,435,063	\$59,300		57	57		\$5,101										
545.48	54.4	\$2,664,186	\$3,303,591	\$60,728		36	36		\$5,056										
506.03	34.4	\$1,681,020	\$2,084,455	\$60,595		40	40		\$4,119										
80.2	6.5	\$366,753	\$454,786	\$69,987		3	3		\$5,671										
255.25	22.2	\$1,078,825	\$1,337,743	\$60,259		48	48		\$5,241										
407.4	40.4	\$2,022,891	\$2,520,909	\$62,389		22	22		\$6,188										
140.35	10.7	\$356,683	\$465,735	\$62,389		25	25		\$4,743										
295.56	32.9	\$1,307,111	\$1,620,818	\$61,242		97	97		\$5,484										
535.71	39.3	\$1,617,885	\$2,006,177	\$60,976		31	31		\$3,745										
445.47	30.8	\$1,516,015	\$1,879,859	\$61,084		30	30		\$4,220										
490.08	31.5	\$1,459,731	\$1,810,066	\$57,482		83	83		\$3,693										
624.26	50.8	\$2,309,246	\$2,884,019	\$56,874		37	37		\$4,598										
543.64	40.1	\$1,969,246	\$2,441,865	\$60,894		83	83		\$4,492										
643.99	46.7	\$2,017,245	\$2,744,424	\$58,767		63	63		\$4,262										
560.3	38.6	\$2,007,230	\$2,488,965	\$64,481		12	12		\$4,442										
423.2	37.5	\$1,854,573	\$2,299,671	\$61,325		29	29		\$5,434										
523.77	46.2	\$2,078,553	\$2,577,406	\$65,788		94	94		\$4,921										
286.46	30.5	\$1,085,355	\$1,345,841	\$61,426		98	98		\$4,698										
37.32	32.1	\$1,511,245	\$1,873,944	\$58,378		2	2		\$4,658										
259.16	16.9	\$973,420	\$1,207,041	\$71,423		70	70		\$5,213										
644.61	58	\$2,722,954	\$3,376,483	\$58,215		24	24		\$5,213										
644.61	60.4	\$2,837,008	\$3,517,880	\$58,243		69	69		\$5,457										
311.56	23.8	\$1,256,460	\$1,586,010	\$66,368		46	46		\$5,001										
485.87	33.5	\$1,637,405	\$2,030,382	\$60,368		39	39		\$4,179										
715.87	64.3	\$3,061,376	\$3,884,906	\$59,739		51	51		\$4,034										
526.14	37.9	\$2,307,864	\$2,853,751	\$57,282		61	61		\$5,314										
305.27	33.4	\$1,580,480	\$1,959,795	\$58,676		65	65		\$6,420										
472.91	35	\$1,656,926	\$2,054,588	\$58,703		66	66		\$4,345										
287.3	28.7	\$1,313,065	\$1,628,201	\$56,732		85	85		\$5,667										
474.72	48	\$2,280,435	\$2,802,939	\$58,395		34	34		\$3,885										
102.34	10.2	\$460,128	\$570,559	\$55,937		89	89		\$5,575										
694.07	44.3	\$2,174,408	\$2,696,286	\$60,864		74	74		\$5,737										
36.92	3.5	\$170,900	\$211,792	\$60,512		21	21		\$4,352										
116.78	10.5	\$409,850	\$508,214	\$48,401		95	95		\$4,352										
250.68	19.9	\$931,705	\$1,155,314	\$58,056		72	72		\$5,195										
763.51	69.3	\$3,198,990	\$3,966,624	\$57,238		82	82		\$5,195										
14.39	0	\$0	\$0	\$0		98	98		\$3,731										
291.62	17.9	\$877,415	\$1,087,985	\$60,792		35	35		\$3,731										
172.82	33.7	\$1,792,504	\$2,222,705	\$65,956		5	5		\$12,661										
304.68	22.9	\$1,065,445	\$1,322,392	\$57,746		77	77		\$4,467										
681.8	51.5	\$2,465,955	\$3,045,384	\$59,134		64	64		\$5,915										
482.79	48.6	\$2,303,131	\$2,855,882	\$58,763		64	64		\$5,075										
307.19	26.2	\$1,257,181	\$1,558,904	\$58,500		54	54		\$5,075										
1,003.85	69.6	\$3,604,027	\$4,468,983	\$64,210		14	14		\$4,452										
30.31	5.2	\$362,545	\$449,680	\$86,477		1	1		\$14,836										
82.09	42.4	\$2,230,161	\$2,765,400	\$65,222		8	8		\$3,687										
295.18	40.2	\$2,046,706	\$2,537,915	\$63,132		18	18		\$3,598										
752.06	47.5	\$2,333,650	\$2,893,726	\$60,921		32	32		\$3,848										
810.78	58.6	\$2,800,370	\$3,472,459	\$59,257		58	58		\$4,263										
441.65	36.7	\$1,661,989	\$2,060,122	\$56,134		88	88		\$4,665										
34.7	4.1	\$0	\$0	\$0		98	98		\$0										
925.89	88.1	\$4,133,725	\$5,125,831	\$58,182		71	71		\$5,536										
366.68	31.7	\$1,578,445	\$1,957,768	\$61,759		28	28		\$4,935										
545.2	34.2	\$1,637,151	\$2,000,067	\$58,359		84	84		\$4,479										
846.3	69	\$3,164,643	\$3,924,405	\$56,673		56	56		\$4,637										
297.39	20.1	\$958,323	\$1,188,321	\$59,120		62	62		\$3,996										

* AMCPU=Adjusted Marginal Cost Pupil Unit. Adjusted means based on resident students, resident students served elsewhere and open enrollment students served by the district. Marginal cost stands for an adjustment made to help with declining enrollment that counts 90% of this year's adjusted Average Daily Attendance and 10 % of last year's. Pupil units are weighted by grade level, with the following weights for 1999-00: handicapped kindergarten=1; regular kindergarten=.57; 1st through 3rd grade=1.115; 4th through 6th grade=1.06; and 7th-12th grade=1.3.

**Full-time equivalent.

***Includes salary and benefits.

Total initial allocation includes general and referendum revenue attributable to students enrolled in each building. It also includes compensatory revenue, LEF revenue and the replacement portion of basic skills revenue. (See April 11 Minnesota Journal.)

Compensatory Revenue is state money allocated to schools to help with the extra costs of educating low-income students

TABLE 4A: TEACHER COMPENSATION BY SCHOOL SITE IN SAINT PAUL, 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEAR

	1999-00 Total AMCPU*	1999-00 FTE** teachers	1999-00 teacher salaries	1999-00 total teacher compensa- tion***	1999-00 teacher comp. per FTE	1999-00 teacher comp. per FTE by rank	1999-00 teacher comp. per AMCPU by rank	1999-00 teacher comp. per AMCPU by rank	1999-00 total initial allocation # per AMCPU by rank	1999-00 Compen- satory Rev.## per AMCPU by rank		1999-00 Total AMCPU*	1999-00 FTE** teachers	1999-00 teacher salaries	1999-00 total teacher compensa- tion***	1999-00 teacher comp. per FTE	1999-00 teacher comp. per FTE by rank	1999-00 teacher comp. per AMCPU by rank	1999-00 total initial allocation # per AMCPU by rank	1999-00 Compen- satory Rev.## per AMCPU by rank	
127 St. Paul School Sites											127 St. Paul School Sites										
TOTALS	52,577.76	3,155.5	\$145,366,700	\$181,708,375	\$57,585		\$3,456				RAMSEY JR. WASHINGTON TECH. MAGNET	1003.63 997.74	47.5 52.3	\$2,327,108 \$2,276,044	\$2,908,885 \$2,845,055	\$61,240 \$54,430	31 63	\$2,898 \$2,851	72 73	103 47	104 47
Elementary Schools											Senior Highs										
ADAMS MAGNET EL.	662.66	41.9	\$1,731,815	\$2,164,769	\$51,665	69	\$3,267	66	107	110	ARLINGTON LEARN'G YR. PRG.	39.98	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	109	107
AMERICAN INDIAN/MOUNDS PK	368.27	28.3	\$1,141,061	\$1,426,326	\$50,489	72	\$3,873	53	38	30	ARLINGTON SR.	1748.11	94.0	\$4,314,367	\$5,392,959	\$57,402	50	\$3,085	68	77	78
AMES EL.	332.29	32.5	\$1,502,558	\$1,878,198	\$57,791	48	\$5,652	13	23	23	CENTRAL SR.	2678.10	105.6	\$4,940,027	\$6,175,034	\$58,454	42	\$2,306	80	108	109
BATTLE CREEK MAGNET EL.	555.44	45.7	\$2,331,008	\$2,913,760	\$63,703	18	\$5,246	14	52	66	COMO PARK SR.	1926.12	80.8	\$3,903,170	\$4,878,962	\$60,361	33	\$2,533	77	75	84
BENJ. E. MAYS MAGNET	578.31	44.8	\$1,601,536	\$2,001,920	\$44,686	80	\$3,462	62	69	60	HARDING SR.	2586.21	117.2	\$5,131,667	\$6,414,584	\$54,755	61	\$2,480	79	87	89
BRIDGE VIEW SR. ED.	113.33	52.9	\$1,407,464	\$1,759,330	\$33,258	84	\$15,524	5	85	77	HIGHLAND PARK SR.	1636.03	81.2	\$3,852,543	\$4,815,679	\$59,306	36	\$2,944	69	99	99
CAPITOL HILL MAGNET	1088.49	54.0	\$2,385,369	\$2,961,711	\$55,217	59	\$2,739	75	113	117	HUMBOLDT SR.	1255.81	73.8	\$3,443,701	\$4,304,626	\$58,328	45	\$3,428	65	70	74
CHELSEA HEIGHTS EL.	674.77	40.1	\$2,109,002	\$2,636,253	\$65,742	13	\$3,907	51	101	101	JOHNSON SR.	1914.76	86.8	\$4,157,392	\$5,196,740	\$59,870	35	\$2,714	76	88	88
CHEROKEE HEIGHTS MAG. EL.	592.67	33.3	\$1,637,197	\$2,046,496	\$61,456	27	\$3,453	63	29	34											
COMO PARK EL.	800.49	50.7	\$2,371,275	\$2,964,094	\$58,521	43	\$3,703	56	28	27											
COMO SPECIAL/HARTZELL	118.16	27.9	\$1,410,272	\$1,762,840	\$63,184	19	\$14,919	6	66	57											
CROSSROADS MONTESSORI	0.00	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Special Programs										
DAYTONS BLUFF EL.	514.16	33.3	\$1,664,318	\$2,080,397	\$62,568	24	\$4,046	46	16	12	A. G. A. P. E.	129.99	9.2	\$451,371	\$564,214	\$61,328	30	\$4,340	37	44	51
DOWNTOWN KINDERGARTEN	13.92	1.0	\$54,955	\$68,694	\$68,694	6	\$4,935	19	98	92	A.L.C. COMMUNITY SCHOOL	196.79	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	119	120
EAST CONSOLIDATED EL.	777.98	64.9	\$3,065,677	\$3,832,096	\$59,046	39	\$4,926	20	17	14	A.L.C. CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL	136.52	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	112	112
EASTERN HEIGHTS EL.	532.71	37.2	\$1,662,969	\$2,078,711	\$55,879	55	\$3,902	52	72	69	A.L.C. EVENING H.S.	36.28	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	120	119
EASTSIDE WORKPLACE KDG/N	23.10	1.0	\$39,321	\$49,151	\$49,151	74	\$2,128	81	121	121	A.L.C. FACE TO FACE	7.98	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	123	122
EXPO/HARRIET BISHOP Ctr	725.94	57.0	\$2,655,087	\$3,318,859	\$58,256	46	\$4,572	31	84	91	A.L.C. HUBB PROGRAM	42.73	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	105	105
FARNSWORTH EL.	571.92	37.7	\$1,897,137	\$2,371,421	\$62,902	22	\$4,146	44	68	71	A.L.C. LEAP	193.09	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	62	73
FOUR SEASONS EL.	330.20	26.9	\$1,320,302	\$1,650,378	\$61,352	29	\$4,998	17	65	59	ADULT DIPLOMA PROGRAM	0.05	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	126	122
FRANKLIN MAGNET EL.	395.46	28.2	\$1,419,399	\$1,774,249	\$62,917	21	\$4,487	33	20	21	ALC FRESH START	100.00	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	76	70
FRENCH IMMERSION/ HIGHLAND EL.	57.15	4.0	\$126,588	\$158,235	\$39,559	82	\$2,769	74	115	113	ALC GATEWAY	39.71	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	118	116
FROST LAKE MAGNET EL.	557.52	46.5	\$2,232,259	\$2,790,324	\$60,007	34	\$5,005	16	64	75	ARLINGTON HOUSE SP ED	6.84	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	9	9
GALTIER MAGNET EL.	360.84	28.5	\$1,275,141	\$1,593,926	\$55,927	54	\$4,417	34	49	44	BOOTH BROWN HOUSE	6.06	0.5	\$14,251	\$17,814	\$35,628	83	\$2,940	70	8	8
GROVELAND PARK EL.	534.60	34.2	\$1,785,808	\$2,232,260	\$55,328	16	\$4,176	43	100	100	BOYS TOTEM TOWN	77.87	10.5	\$563,344	\$704,180	\$67,065	8	\$9,043	9	43	31
HANCOCK/HAMLIN MAG. EL.	575.26	48.2	\$2,223,138	\$2,778,922	\$57,564	49	\$4,797	23	51	55	BUSH MEMORIAL	13.66	6.2	\$238,223	\$297,779	\$48,029	78	\$21,799	2	4	4
HAYDEN HEIGHTS EL.	628.06	43.7	\$2,204,242	\$2,755,303	\$63,050	20	\$4,387	36	54	58	E ED DAYTONS BLUFF	9.99	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	22	11
HIGHLAND PARK EL.	253.29	18.4	\$982,759	\$1,228,449	\$66,764	9	\$4,850	22	58	53	EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION	22.86	4.3	\$187,943	\$234,929	\$55,277	62	\$10,277	8	125	122
HIGHWOOD HILLS EL.	477.58	36.3	\$1,901,414	\$2,376,767	\$65,476	15	\$4,977	18	73	72	EARLY ED. EXPO/HARRIET BISHOP	37.89	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	104	95
HILL MONTESSORI	498.38	37.1	\$1,908,320	\$2,385,400	\$64,331	17	\$4,777	24	97	106	EARLY ED.-HIGHWOOD HILLS	29.02	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	56	40
HOME CROFT EL.	197.23	24.2	\$1,060,249	\$1,325,311	\$54,878	60	\$6,720	11	59	67	EARLY EDUCATION-HILL	41.26	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	46	23
JACKSON MAGNET EL.	459.49	32.3	\$1,507,548	\$1,884,435	\$58,342	44	\$4,101	45	32	39	EARLY EDUCATION-RIVERVIEW	10.54	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	89	83
LCD ALLDAY BILINGUAL KG/ HOME CROFT	21.21	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	6	7	EARLY EDUCATION-RONDO	118.73	18.6	\$1,162,864	\$1,453,580	\$78,149	3	\$12,243	7	92	87
LINWOOD A+ MAGNET EL.	359.16	24.4	\$1,023,584	\$1,279,480	\$52,438	68	\$3,562	61	80	80	EARLY EDUCATION-WHEELOCK	68.67	8.0	\$479,429	\$599,286	\$75,005	4	\$8,727	10	86	76
LONGFELLOW MAGNET EL.	566.17	43.1	\$1,911,236	\$2,389,045	\$55,430	57	\$4,220	41	53	50	ECSE INCLUSION	40.04	3.0	\$115,622	\$144,528	\$48,176	77	\$3,610	60	116	115
MANN EL.	391.29	27.7	\$1,518,688	\$1,898,360	\$55,261	58	\$4,244	40	37	28	EISENMENGER/BATTLE CREEK	26.44	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	50	37
MAXFIELD MAGNET EL.	535.12	41.1	\$1,816,977	\$2,271,221	\$55,905	52	\$5,144	15	61	61	EISENMENGER/EL DORADO/E CON	37.53	1.0	\$59,488	\$74,360	\$74,360	5	\$1,981	83	42	33
MISSISSIPPI MAGNET EL.	560.87	50.7	\$2,308,056	\$2,885,070	\$56,379	10	\$4,599	29	63	61	EISENMENGER/HANCOCK	39.13	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	36	22
MONROE COMMUNITY	745.57	51.7	\$2,743,305	\$3,429,131	\$66,379	10	\$4,599	29	63	61	EISENMENGER/MAXFIELD	29.37	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	41	26
MUSEUM MAGNET/RONDO	379.57	24.4	\$1,135,775	\$1,419,719	\$58,185	47	\$3,740	55	78	82	EISENMENGER/RONDO	26.00	3.4	\$122,923	\$153,654	\$45,192	79	\$5,910	12	34	19
NEW ARRIVALS EL.	100.13	8.6	\$336,576	\$420,720	\$48,921	76	\$4,202	42	71	56	EISENMENGER/WEBSTER	27.84	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	48	36
NOKOMIS MONTESSORI/MAG.	458.09	31.0	\$1,460,844	\$1,826,055	\$58,905	40	\$3,986	48	93	97	EL. AUTISTIC PRG/BATTLE CRK EL.	21.18	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	90	90
NORTH END EL.	857.61	57.9	\$2,491,947	\$3,114,934	\$53,799	66	\$3,632	59	31	35	ELEMENTARY TARGETED SERVICE	727.78	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	122	122
PARKWAY EL.	720.99	53.3	\$2,665,715	\$3,332,144	\$62,517	23	\$4,622	28	26	25	FCAS/DAY TREATMENT	28.42	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	110	111
PHALEN LAKE EL.	727.77	49.3	\$2,311,992	\$2,889,990	\$58,620	41	\$3,971	49	21	24	FISCAL HOST	4.74	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	1	1
PROSPERITY HEIGHTS EL.	357.84	24.8	\$1,217,627	\$1,522,034	\$61,372	28	\$4,253	38	27	32	FOCUS BEYOND	400.44	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	117	118
RANDOLPH HEIGHTS EL.	399.45	27.8	\$1,466,841	\$1,833,551	\$66,074	11	\$4,590	30	94	93	HOME/HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION	2.86	3.0	\$231,157	\$288,946	\$96,315	1	\$101,030	1	3	3
RIVERVIEW MAGNET EL.	312.64	27.9	\$1,135,699	\$1,419,624	\$50,810	70	\$4,541	32	45	46	JUVENILE HORIZONS (WILDER)	8.35	2.0	\$104,858	\$131,072	\$65,536	14	\$15,697	4	5	5
ROOSEVELT MAGNET EL.	515.38	45.4	\$1,969,358	\$2,461,698	\$54,187	64	\$4,776	26	18	18	JUVENILE SERVICE CENTER	65.60	1.1	\$70,888	\$88,610	\$80,555	2	\$1,351	94	14	10
ST. PAUL OPEN SCH.	521.64	32.5	\$1,539,730	\$1,924,662	\$59,220	38	\$3,680	57	79	79	LEAD ALC	38.60	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	124	122
SATURIN RIVER FRONT ACAD. EL	629.02	53.5	\$2,137,730	\$2,672,162	\$49,910	73	\$4,248	39	39	41	RESIDENT STUDENT/OUT OF STATE	29.92	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	111	108
SHERIDAN EL.	336.64	22.1	\$1,095,769	\$1,369,711	\$61,978	26	\$4,045	47	57	64	RIVERSIDE SR. ED. PROGRAMS	12.20	3.0	\$158,015	\$197,519	\$65,840	12	\$16,190	3	74	65
ST. ANTHONY PARK EL.	544.75	34.8	\$1,729,821	\$2,182,276	\$62,134	25	\$3,969	50	86	103	ST JOSEPH HOSPITAL	2.76	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	7	6
WEBSTER MAGNET EL.	1085.94	85.4	\$4,149,653	\$5,187,066	\$60,738	32	\$4,777	25	83	81	ST. PAUL A.L.C.	1063.33	53.2	\$1,711,852	\$2,139,815	\$40,192	81	\$2,012	82	114	114
WORLD CULTURES & LANG/ MOUNDS PARK	355.41	27.9	\$1,092,956	\$1,366,195	\$49,055	75	\$3,844	54	40	43	TESOL-AMES	37.27	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	33	52
Middle Schools											TESOL-BATTLE CREEK	24.42	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	19	38
ALL YEAR ROUND/ARLINGTON	69.96	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	102	98	TESOL-BENJ E MAYS/RONDO	82.25	0.0	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	\$0	85	13	17
BATTLE CREEK MIDDLE</																					

Obstacles limit preventive maintenance of local public buildings

by Jody A. Hauer

Publicly owned buildings represent a significant investment of taxpayer dollars. Failing to adequately maintain public buildings may lead to costly repairs and unsafe building conditions. A best practices review recently completed by the Legislative Auditor's Office recommends that local governments protect their investment in buildings through preventive maintenance.

What does preventive maintenance mean? Preventive maintenance is the regularly scheduled repair and maintenance intended to keep building components, such as roofs or heating-ventilation-air-conditioning systems, operating efficiently and to extend their useful life. Changing air filters in an air-handling unit every quarter is an example. In a car analogy, filling a vehicle with gasoline and checking the oil level are general maintenance; changing the oil and oil filter every 5,000 miles, or as recommended by the car manufacturer, is preventive maintenance.

The Legislative Auditor's office surveyed Minnesota school districts, counties and a sample of cities to analyze the extent to which they practice preventive maintenance on public buildings. While most local governments in Minnesota perform some preventive maintenance on their buildings, only about 15 percent have a comprehensive program that covers most building components.

Why do so few local jurisdictions follow a comprehensive program of preventive maintenance? Many obstacles deter local governments. More than three-quarters of school districts and two-thirds of cities and counties reported that certain obstacles, such as funding problems, limited their ability to perform preventive maintenance.

Those jurisdictions that use comprehensive preventive maintenance benefit from it. The study found a direct link between a comprehensive preventive maintenance program and school facility conditions. School districts with comprehensive preventive maintenance were more likely than other districts to report having most facility components in good condition.

Best practices in preventive maintenance

One of seven best practices the report

recommends for effective preventive maintenance is creating an inventory of building components and assessing their conditions. This involves collecting information on the number and functional performance of building equipment, as well as on its age, usage, location, warranty information and model type.

Information collected through building assessments serves as a baseline to help identify maintenance needs, plan maintenance projects, set priorities among them and estimate their costs. To control costs, managers should plan the inspections and plan how the collected data will be used. For comparable condition data, building managers need to train workers on inspection methods and have them follow standard assessment methods.

Hennepin County's Property Services Department follows this best practice. It requires ongoing building inspections, including twice-yearly roof inspections. Building managers inspect roofs following a checklist to look for problems such as blistering, plugged drains and damage to caulking. In addition, every five years, consultants scan the roofs with infrared imaging equipment to detect problems that might otherwise go undetected.

Together the inspections and infrared data give the department information to track roof conditions over time and prevent leaks and water damage. Condition information also enables the county's Property Services to better estimate roofs' life expectancies.

Structuring a framework for preventive maintenance

The Auditor also recommends that building managers create a framework to

support a preventive maintenance program. Among other things, this means designating responsibility for coordinating maintenance projects with one individual (or one department in a larger jurisdiction). Someone needs to be responsible for synchronizing preventive maintenance with all other maintenance projects to avoid problems, such as repainting a wall, only to tear it down a month later as part of a remodeling project.

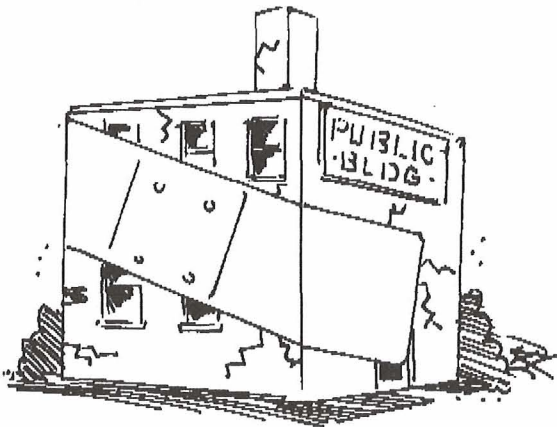
A good framework for preventive maintenance also includes checklists of preventive maintenance tasks and their frequency. For each type of equipment, the checklist should specify what inspections, calibrations, lubrications or replacements are needed. Nearly 38 percent of school districts and 18 percent of cities and counties reported that they prepare checklists of preventive maintenance tasks for most building components.

Building managers should also develop one-year schedules of preventive maintenance tasks. The schedules detail tasks to be completed during every week of a given year. When setting the schedule, building managers should try to minimize disruptions to building users. Conducting preventive maintenance on cooling equipment while it is shut down in the winter is effective scheduling.

Another element of a preventive maintenance framework is written procedures. For instance, jurisdictions that contract for maintenance jobs should follow written procedures for good contracts. Contracts need to specify what constitutes satisfactory job completion. As another example, procedures should control the inventories of a maintenance department's materials and tools. They should ensure that needed parts are on hand without overburdening storage space.

A framework should also allow building managers to use preventive maintenance in controlling the quality of indoor air. Although many factors affect indoor-air quality, how a building is operated and maintained is a major one. Preventive maintenance, such as periodic cleaning of ventilation ducts and

Maintenance continued on page 9



“While most local governments in Minnesota perform some preventive maintenance on their buildings, only about 15 percent have a comprehensive program that covers most building components.”

cooling coils, minimizes the opportunity for growth of microorganisms that could disseminate through ventilation systems and affect people's health.

Fridley School District uses schedules of maintenance tasks for school building components. Every quarter, the maintenance director sends a schedule of preventive maintenance tasks to head custodians in each building. The schedule lists, for instance, all heating, ventilation and air conditioning equipment and what work is needed, such as changing filters or lubricating bearings. Records of completed work assure accountability that needed maintenance is done; they also provide maintenance histories for the equipment.

Other best practices

The Legislative Auditor also recommends that local governments: Plan strategically for preventive maintenance in the long- and short-term. The plans should be tied to jurisdictions' annual operating budgets and long-term capital improvement programs.

Use an objective process for setting priorities among maintenance projects; calculate total costs over the expected lifetime of equipment.

Use tools, such as work-order systems, to optimize the preventive maintenance program.

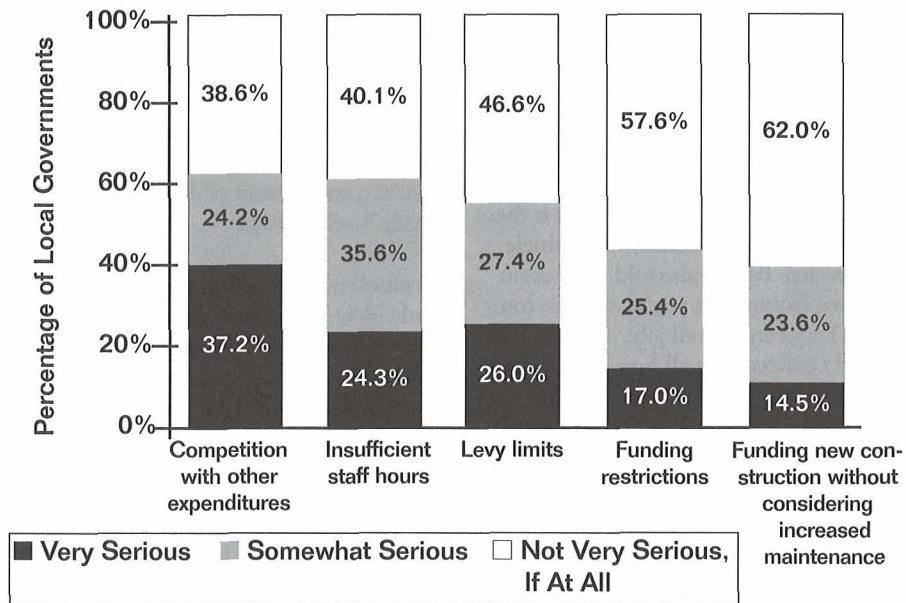
Ensure that maintenance employees have appropriate training to competently complete their tasks.

Involve maintenance personnel when purchasing major components or designing space; and target building-condition information to the specific needs of local elected officials, administrators, and others.

Obstacles

While most local jurisdictions reported providing at least minimal preventive maintenance, three out of four jurisdictions said that obstacles limited their ability to do preventive maintenance. The obstacles listed most frequently as “very serious” relate to inadequate funding for building maintenance. These funding-related obstacles included competition with other expenditures for limited dol-

Seriousness of Funding-Related Obstacles to Preventive Maintenance, 1999



SOURCE: Office of Legislative Auditor's surveys of school districts and cities and counties, 1999.

lars, state-imposed levy limits, and insufficient staff hours available for preventive maintenance work.

About 41 percent of school districts, and 34 percent of cities and counties, cited competition with other expenditures for limited dollars as a very serious obstacle to preventive maintenance. Some school districts pointed to Minnesota's school financing formula, in which money reserved for building maintenance is also available for textbooks, library books, vehicles and computers.

State statutes limit how much property tax revenue most local governments can levy each year. About 26 percent of the local jurisdictions surveyed indicated that levy limits were a very serious obstacle to preventive maintenance, as shown in the figure. Another 27 percent reported levy limits as a somewhat serious obstacle.

About 24 percent of local governments rated insufficient staff hours for the necessary work as a very serious obstacle. Interestingly, more school districts than cities and counties considered insufficient staff hours as very serious. More than 30 per-

cent of school districts said insufficient staff hours represented a very serious obstacle, compared to 18 percent of cities and counties. An earlier Legislative Auditor's Office report on school finances noted that the most common noninstructional budget cuts Minnesota school districts planned for 2000 were to custodial, maintenance or grounds activities.

Other obstacles noted as very serious by at least 15 percent of those surveyed were increased maintenance needs due to new construction and funding restrictions that deter spending on preventive maintenance. MJ

Jody A. Hauer coordinates best practices reviews in the Legislative Auditor's Office. Copies of Preventive Maintenance for Local Government Buildings are available at <http://www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us/ped/bp/pe0006.htm>.

Editor's note:

Due to space constraints, the “On Balance” wrap-up of editorial opinions from around the state will not run this month.

TakeNote

Policy Tidbits

"In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel faster than a stagecoach."

—O. Goldsmith.

Gary Barnes at the Center for Transportation Studies is uncovering some tantalizing information, some of which could have profound implications for transportation policy. At a recent CTS workshop Barnes outlined some of his more surprising preliminary findings: There is no correlation between density and congestion, nor is there a correlation between density and vehicle miles traveled. Barnes also said there seem to be three factors that might increase transit use: 1) concentrate all jobs in a 12-block area, or 2) concentrate all households at at least Manhattan-level density (30,000 people per square mile) or 3) keep incomes low.

Increasing transit use is a goal that is widely shared. Maybe we should step back and ask whether just increasing transit use should be a goal by itself, especially if to get there we need to contemplate the options suggested by Barnes' research.—*Phil Jenni.*

The ultimate tax grab is underway in New York, thanks to the rise in telecommuting. A New York state appellate court recently ruled that a telecommuter must pay New York state income taxes on his full income, even though he lives and works in Pennsylvania, because he "could have" worked at his employer's New York office.

As an article in *Forbes* magazine asks, "Where does New York's taxing power end? The U.S. government has offices in Manhattan. Bill Clinton doesn't work there, but he could...does that mean that for any of the days Clinton works out of his home—the White House—New York can grab a piece of his salary?"—*Kris Lyndon Wilson.*

You can tell quite a bit about the argument over light-rail by watching where the numbers appear. Most of the numbers—about ridership, cost and cost-effectiveness—are in the letters and columns from the opponents. The band of enthusiasts for LRT, by contrast, simply believes.

They can't accept that LRT failed all these years because it was not a good idea. There must have been some conspiracy to do it in. It reminds you of Peter Pan: Tinker Bell mustn't die: Clap your hands if you believe. —*Ted Kolderie.*

TIF eats dog: A report last year by the Good Jobs First looked closely at economic development in Minnesota and particularly at tax increment finance. Among its findings was an abuse of the "but for" clause. The report authors interviewed a number of local development practitioners and one had this to say:

"'But for' is actually getting driven by what (business) can get elsewhere. Burnsville is in effect giving the store away. Lakeville is doing the same thing. It's dog-eat-dog. If you're a connoisseur of dog, you've got it made."—*Ron Wirtz.*

A small note in the paper reported that only New York, Washington, D.C., and the San Francisco Bay area surpass the Twin Cities area in per-capita income. That's a pretty good measure of our region's success. Factor in the lower cost-of-living here and we look even better.

Some people still believe the best measure of "economic development" is rising per-capita incomes, not jobs (which can, of course, be low-wage) and not new construction.—*T.K.*

While Minnesota's lawmakers debated a constitutional amendment to get rid of one house of the Legislature, the Colorado Legislature considered a constitutional amendment to eliminate another "unnecessary" element of state government: the office of the lieutenant governor. According to the amendment's sponsor, State Senator Ken Chlouber, the office costs taxpayers \$250,000 and does very little for the state. The proposed amendment would put legislative leaders from the same party as the governor in charge when the governor is out of the state or incapacitated. (No word on how the approach might work when the governor doesn't have any partisan allies in the Legislature.)—*Dave Chadwick.*

**The Minnesota Journal
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We pay for many of our utilities—electricity, gas and oil, phone charges, etc.—based on how much we use each month. Nonetheless, the concept of road pricing—charging people for how much they use their vehicle and when—has been slow to catch on. But Progressive Auto Insurance is testing a system in Texas that uses Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to track when, where and how much its customers drive their cars and then charge them accordingly. People have a financial incentive to drive less. So far, the average person is saving about 25 percent on insurance.—*P.J.*

With heroic efforts that included both test-preparation and summer school, school districts have gotten almost all kids to pass the basic skills tests (given first in eighth grade) so they can qualify for a high-school diploma. But—as the new report from the Office of Educational Accountability reminds us—Minnesota still has to add in an assessment of performance for grades 10 through 12. This, the authors warn, "will make it difficult to maintain" the state's graduation rate. Currently, about three-quarters of the entering ninth-graders graduate four years later, in "the urban schools and some minority groups" fewer than half.

Meantime, nationally, some useful questions are at last being asked about testing and the Great God of Accountability. Does teaching to the test perhaps actually reduce what kids learn and are able to do? Is "academics" really all that matters? One of those provoking this debate, Alfie Kohn, will be speaking in Minnesota June 22.—*T.K.*

"Take Note" contributors include Minnesota Journal and Citizens League staff members and Ron Wirtz, district news editor for the Federal Reserve Bank's fedgazette.

PERIODICALS
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MINNESOTA

Welcome

New and returning members

Katherine Bates
 Ronald Clark
 Gary Farland
 Ed Hagerty
 Cathryn Kennedy
 Marvin Marshak
 Bob Mc Crea
 Pat Mulligan
 Florence Myslajek
 Dan O'Neill
 Valerie Pace
 Thomas L. Ruen
 Kenneth Stewart
 John Stonhouse

CITIZENS LEAGUE

708 South 3rd St. Suite 500
 Minneapolis, MN 55415
 612-338-0791 Fax 612-337-5919
 info@citizensleague.net
 www.citizensleague.net

The Citizens League promotes the public interest in Minnesota by involving citizens in identifying and framing critical public policy choices, forging recommendations and advocating their adoption.

The Citizens League is an open membership organization. Suggested dues for membership are \$50 for individuals and \$75 for families. Please call 612-338-0791 for more information about membership.

Network meetings are a great way to introduce people to the Citizens League. Why not bring a friend to the May 22 meeting with John Wodele.

Board of directors election to be held on June 30

Each year League members elect eight people to three-year terms on the League's Board of Directors. This year, the election will be held on Friday, June 30.

All members of the League will receive a ballot with a brief profile of each nominee and election instructions in the mail in the beginning of June. Voting is open to all Citizens League members.

The Citizens League Board of Directors is responsible for setting broad policy direction for the League. Perhaps the most important role directors have is selecting topics for League study committees and approving the policy reports from those committees.

The Board is also responsible for assuring that the League has adequate resources to carry out its mission. Board members are expected to help raise money and to make individual contributions.

Candidates for the Board include: **Buzz Cummins**, Mendota Heights, Workers Compensation Reinsurance Fund, **Katherine "Kit" Hadley**, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, **Roger Hale**, Minneapolis, retired CEO of the Tennant Company, **Kenneth Keller**, Bloomington, University of Minnesota, **Tim Marx**, St. Paul, Briggs and Morgan, **Tony Morley**, Minneapolis, editorial consultant, **Laura Sether**, Minneapolis, MN

Planning Agency, **Barbara Sporlein**, New Brighton, St. Paul Public Housing Agency, **Missy Thompson**, St. Paul, Fannie Mae MN Partnership Office and **Emily Anne Tuttle**, Wayzata, retired.

The League Nominating Committee, chaired by immediate past-president **George Latimer**, consisted of **Marcia Avner**, **Sean Kershaw** and **Gary Cunningham**.

According to League by-laws, any member of the League may be nominated for director upon the written petition of 25 League members submitted to League secretary Christine Roberts at least 25 days before the election.

The eight members elected will fill the spots of the following Board members whose terms expire this year: **John**

Adams, Mike Christenson, Sally Evert, Lani Kawamura, Gene Merriam, Tony Morley, Emily Anne Tuttle and Jane Vanderpoel.

League by-laws stipulate that no Board member may serve for more than six consecutive years (two straight elected terms). Five Board members whose elected terms are expiring are ineligible for re-election to another three-year term. John Adams, Mike Christenson, Sally Evert, and Jane Vanderpoel are completing their second straight elected term and Gene Merriam has served for four years.

The elected Board members will begin their term at the annual transitional Board meeting sometime in August at which time officers and additional directors will be appointed to one-year terms.

Minnesota Journal gets a new look

By now you will have noticed that the *Minnesota Journal* has a new graphic look; and that the *Matters* has a new masthead. Careful readers will recall that we announced in March that the *Journal* would have a new look in April. Unfortunately, the many pages of tables in conjunction with the article on tracking the money in Minneapolis and St. Paul schools delayed our design change by a month. But now here it is — we hope you like it. This is the first design change in the *Journal* since 1988 and only the second change since Steve Alnes started the *Journal* in 1983. The new look is the creation of freelance designer Battina Dehnhard. Let us know what you think!

NETWORK *presents*

John Wodele
Director of Communications
for Governor Jesse Ventura

Monday, May 22, 2000
4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

Downtown University Club
(formerly the St. Paul Athletic Club)
340 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN

The "shocking" election of Jesse Ventura was attributed by many to his no-nonsense, straight-talking style that energized people, especially younger and first-time voters who seemed uninterested by formulaic political candidates. Today, after two Legislative sessions and a series of controversial national interviews, the Governor's approval ratings are still strong. What's it like to be communications director for a governor whose strength, and weakness, seems to lie in his ability to be outspoken and controversial? Join us as John Wodele talks about his experience as the chief spokesman for Governor Jesse Ventura.

There is no charge for this event, but reservations are encouraged. To register: call 612.338-0791, fax 612-337-5919 or email info@citizensleague.net.

Citizens League Network meetings are designed to provide League members and their guests with an opportunity to discuss current policy issues. Network meetings give people a chance to interact and meet with others interested in learning more about regional issues and initiatives. Scheduled in the late afternoon, Network meetings are relaxed and informal, and best of all, free.

The next quarterly Network meeting will be held in July. Early planning envisions an outdoor event examining the architectural fabric of the Twin Cities. Watch your mail for details.

The May **Network** meeting is sponsored by:

The St. Paul Companies

Second Mondale forum looks at balancing personal liberty and national security

Former Vice-President **Walter F. Mondale** will deliver the second lecture in a series focusing on important issues and episodes from his 50 years in public life.

On June 6, Mondale will reflect on the investigation of the 1975 Senate Select Committee on Intelligence into the activities of the U.S. government intelligence and security agencies. As chair of the committee's domestic task force, Mondale learned firsthand about the power an unchecked government can wield in the private lives of its citizens.

Walter Pincus, award-winning reporter for the *Washington Post*, will moderate a panel of guests who will explore the effectiveness of intelligence oversight steps instituted by the government since 1975, and to discuss the proper balance between protecting national security and preserving individual liberty.

The forum is at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. The program begins with breakfast at 7:30 a.m.; the lecture and discussion is from 8:30 to 11:45. Cost for the program and breakfast is \$35; cost for students and educators is \$25. Cost for just the lecture and discussion is \$10 and free to students and educators. Advance reservations are required because of limited seating. For more information contact 612-625-5309 or bthompson@hhh.umn.edu.

Web site helps reporter in Houston, TX

Use of the League's web site continues to expand as last month the site averaged 750 hits per day. Occasionally we get notes from people across the country. Here's one:

Hello, I'm a reporter in Houston, TX. Last year, I did three, in-depth stories on Houston's use — or in this case, abuse — of tax-increment financing (TIF). Later this month, I will be part of a panel discussion on TIF districts...I was wondering if someone at the Citizens League could talk to me about TIFs...Thanks for your help — and for your website and publications, which I tapped into often while I was doing my research last year. Sincerely,
Brian Wallstein
Houston Press

It's nice to see that people are looking us up on the web...and it's nice to know that people from around the country consider the League a resource for information on things like TIF.

speaking of websites ...

The Active Citizenship School for Young Adults (ACS) now has an official website at www.citizenschool.org/. The League serves as fiscal agent for ACS. Check out their site to learn more about this interesting program for tomorrow's leaders.