MINNESOTA KIDS RISE
POWERED BY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MEDIA KIT

What Is Minnesota Kids Rise?

Minnesota Kids Rise is a statewide, nonpartisan initiative working to build trust and pride in Minnesota public schools by sharing real stories, local context and clear information about how students and communities grow and succeed.

What It Does

Minnesota Kids Rise combines trusted data with first-person stories from students, families, graduates, educators, employers and community members. Together, the numbers and lived experiences help Minnesotans see a clearer, more complete picture of public education - highlighting strengths, acknowledging challenges and showing how schools are preparing students for what comes next.

CORE BELIEF

When kids rise, Minnesota rises too.

FEATURED STORY VOICES

Many Paths. One Minnesota.

The developing series shows how public schools shape lives through learning, leadership, careers, family decisions, belonging, early education, activities and community connection.

Corie Barry
BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

Best Buy CEO and Minnesota public-school graduate, connecting public education with opportunity, leadership and Minnesota's workforce.

Dr. Stacie Stanley
PUBLIC-SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

St. Paul Public Schools superintendent and education leader offering a student-centered perspective on learning, belonging and opportunity.

Akram Osman
EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

Minnesota educator and leadership consultant focused on strengthening schools, systems and student opportunity.

John Millea
ACTIVITIES + BELONGING

Minnesota State High School League journalist sharing how sports and activities build connection - and how someone can become a “Minnesota Kid” even if they were not born here.

Gary Lee
MANY PATHS FROM SCHOOL

MSBA Deputy Executive Director and Fertile-Beltrami graduate whose story connects agriculture, technology and school-board leadership.

Daphne Edwards
A PARENT'S SCHOOL-CHOICE JOURNEY

A mother of four who initially chose private school and later transferred all four children to Eden Prairie Public Schools, where they found different pathways and supports.

Stephanie Clark
EARLY LEARNING + FAMILY CONNECTION

Jordan Public Schools parent and early-learning advocate whose two children began their school journeys through ECFE.

More voices coming
STATEWIDE STORY SERIES

Future profiles include retired NASA astronaut Karen Nyberg, Dr. Kevin Kessler and PhD candidate Arleth Ulloa, with additional stories from across Minnesota.

Story participation and interview availability are subject to individual schedules and confirmation. Contact Erica Allenburg to identify the strongest person for a specific reporting angle.

FIVE DIMENSIONS OF SUCCESS

No Single Measure Tells the Whole Story

No single measure defines a child, a school or the success of Minnesota's public-school system. Minnesota Kids Rise brings together five dimensions to show a broader, more useful picture of success.

Student Learning & Achievement	How students build knowledge, develop skills and pursue challenging learning opportunities.
Student Belonging & Growth	How relationships, experiences and opportunities help students discover their strengths and develop as people.
Fueling Minnesota's Economic Engine	How public schools prepare students for college, careers and the many paths available after graduation.
Committing to Minnesota's Kids and Public Education	How well Minnesota is ensuring that every student can access the opportunities and support they need to succeed.
Strengthening Minnesota's Communities	How public schools connect, serve residents and strengthen communities across Minnesota.

Data snapshots by category

These figures are a small sample of the statewide and local information available through Minnesota Kids Rise. Additional data, context and source details are available on the website for reporters and will continue to be added.

Student Learning & Achievement	**282 vs. 272**	Minnesota's Grade 8 math score was significantly higher than the national score and ranks #3 out of all 50 states.
Student Learning & Achievement	**68%**	of Minnesota's 2025 graduates took the ACT, compared with 36% nationally. Minnesota's average composite score was 20.6 - second highest among states where at least 60% of graduates tested.
Student Belonging & Growth	**Roughly 9 in 10**	Minnesota students surveyed have consistently said teachers at their school care about students for more than a decade. In fact, 2025 data is the highest since the survey has been commissioned.
Fueling Minnesota's Economic Engine	**44%**	increase since 2017 in public school student participation in college level CTE courses. CTE courses give students another way to undertake challenging work while exploring how their learning connects to Minnesota's economy.
Strengthening Minnesota's Communities	**More than 8 in 10**	Minnesota students attend traditional public schools. Through more than three decades of expanded school choice, traditional public school systems have remained the foundation of education across the state.
Strengthening Minnesota's Communities	**3.76 million hours**	Minnesota's public schools serve their communities long after the school day ends. That is more than 10,000 hours of community use every day statewide during the 2024-25 fiscal year.

EXPLORE THE COMPLETE PICTURE

MinnesotaKidsRise.org provides additional measures, local context and supporting source details across all five dimensions.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Minnesota Kids Rise: Questions + Answers

Who are the collaborators that make up Minnesota Kids Rise?

The collaborators are: AMSD (Association of Metropolitan School Districts); MASA (Minnesota Association of School Administrators); MASE (Minnesota Administrators for Special Education); MinnSPRA (Minnesota School Public Relations Association); MSBA (Minnesota School Boards Association); Minnesota PTA (statewide parent-teacher organization); MSC (Minnesota Service Cooperatives, a network of nine regional cooperatives); Morris Leatherman Company (Minnesota public-opinion and market-research firm); MASSP (Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals); MCEA (Minnesota Community Education Association); MESPA (Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association). The list is growing every day.

Why was Minnesota Kids Rise created?

Public schools remain one of the most important institutions in Minnesota communities, but misinformation, growing polarization and declining public trust have created challenges. Minnesota Kids Rise provides a positive, accurate and fact-based statewide voice that highlights the value of public education and the opportunities it creates.

Is Minnesota Kids Rise political?

No. Minnesota Kids Rise is a nonpartisan initiative. It does not endorse political candidates or parties and is focused on education, community engagement and public awareness.

Does Minnesota Kids Rise speak for local school districts?

No. The initiative complements local district communications. Districts continue to speak for themselves on local issues, decisions and priorities. Minnesota Kids Rise provides statewide messaging, resources and storytelling support that districts may choose to use or adapt.

What does Minnesota Kids Rise actually do?

It shares positive and accurate stories; highlights innovative programs, student achievement and community partnerships; provides communications resources; supports statewide public-awareness campaigns; strengthens understanding and trust; and encourages constructive community engagement.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will it advocate on local controversies or disputes?

No. Minnesota Kids Rise does not engage in individual district disputes, board disagreements, personnel matters or partisan political debates.

Why are businesses and community organizations involved?

Strong public schools are directly connected to Minnesota's workforce, economy, community vitality and quality of life. These organizations recognize that supporting students helps prepare future employees and leaders and strengthens local communities.

How is Minnesota Kids Rise funded?

Minnesota Kids Rise is primarily funded through financial and in-kind contributions from the state education associations that are current collaborators. It is anticipated that future phases will be supported by a mix of voluntary contributions, sponsorships, grants and donations from organizations, businesses, philanthropic foundations and individuals. It is not funded by local school district operating budgets.

Do you have to be from Minnesota to be a "Minnesota Kid"?

No. You do not have to be born or raised in Minnesota. A connection to Minnesota public schools can be formed as a student, graduate, parent, family member, educator, employer or community member. Minnesota Kids Rise welcomes stories from people whose lives have been shaped by Minnesota public schools and communities.

STORY IDEAS AND INTERVIEW SUPPORT

Ways to Cover Minnesota Kids Rise

Background, interviews, localized information, student and graduate voices, data context and multimedia assets are available to media.

Potential reporting angles

Beyond one measure	How multiple indicators - academics, belonging, career readiness, activities and community connection - create a fuller picture of public education.
Minnesota's workforce	How public schools connect students to agriculture, health care, skilled trades, technology, business and other paths.
Local voices	How students, graduates, families and educators describe the teachers, programs and opportunities that shaped their lives.
Schools as community anchors	How public-school buildings, programs and partnerships serve residents well beyond the regular school day.
Trust through clarity	Why accessible data, local context and transparent discussion of both strengths and challenges matter.

Media contact

ERICA ALLENBURG
Lead, Minnesota Kids Rise

eallenburg@mnmsba.org
507-327-8110
MinnesotaKidsRise.org

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WEBSITE REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING CONTEXT

Reporter source links

The data statements in this kit reflect the language and context currently presented on MinnesotaKidsRise.org. The website provides supporting source notes and additional context for each measure.

Minnesota Kids Rise overview • Frequently Asked Questions • Partners + Contributors • The Minnesota Public School Story • Minnesota Kids Rise stories