

Improve the Site-Governed Schools Law to Unlock Community-Driven Innovation

Summary

The Site-Governed Schools Law, MN Statutes §123B.045, has been law since 2005. The current law has strong intent but needs refinement to be practically usable. We propose to address challenges raised by schools and districts.



Why This Matters

The Site-Governed Schools Law is a powerful tool and framework that can be used to:

- Empower site-level educators, families, and community members to design and implement school models that benefit their students while maintaining district and union support
- Provide school district leaders the ability to foster innovative practices and accountability for results among schools, through a clear framework and process
- Create increased satisfaction and retention of both educators and families within the district by creating a pathway for authentic trust and empowerment
- Combine site-level flexibility with clear performance expectations and accountability for results

Proposed Revisions

The proposed revisions to the existing Site-Governed Schools law would:

- 1. Clarify the process and specific steps for actually using the law**
 - Make it clearer and simpler for interested schools and districts to actually use the law. Clarify the number of steps, and describe concretely what the school and district must do, in partnership with educators and community.
- 2. Clarify what should be in the site-governed agreement, including clear performance standards**
 - Describe what should be included in the agreement that establishes a site-governed school, including performance standards and a dispute resolution process.
- 3. Establish a process for staffing within a newly site-governed school that respects union status**
 - Teachers may elect to remain at the site or retain access to the district transfer process

The Result

Districts are faced with an impossible task of overseeing countless schools while being responsive to students, families, community, and educators. Teachers are leaving the profession at alarming rates. For those districts and schools who elect to use it, the site-governed schools law provides a viable alternative to allow for innovation and authentic power-sharing without compromising district commitments to families.