CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

MINNDEPENDENT

School Leadership Conference
September 28-30, 2026

Housekeeping and logistics

- Conference resource page – the place to find it all
- Wifi – Ruttgers
- Board members and staff
- First-time attendees
- Restrooms
- Sponsors
- Your time is valuable – THANK YOU

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Who’s here?

- Name
- Position – School/Org. – Location
- Minnesota’s best season is…



Overview of Our Work

WHAT	**We connect and strengthen Minnesota's private and independent schools through programming, partnerships and public policy so members can be student-centered and mission-driven.**
WHY	**A vibrant educational ecosystem that promotes success for all Minnesota students.**
HOW	**We create meaningful professional development opportunities and resources for educators, educational leaders and school communities** to build exceptional schools and deliver high-quality education for all students.
	We foster authentic relationships with funders, businesses and community organizations on behalf of member schools, resulting in grants, in-kind services and professional resources.
	We advocate with a focused and united voice for the interests of private and independent schools, ensuring that local and state policy makers will understand and support policies and practices that strengthen Minnesota's private and independent schools.

MINNDEPENDENT School Leader Engagement Journey





MINNDEPENDENT

Who reads our newsletter?

How many schools were founding members of MISF?

a) 13

b) 20

c) 25

d) 35

Who reads our newsletter?

The first School Head Retreat was held in…

a) 1998

b) 2006

c) 2010

d) 1976

Who reads our newsletter?

The average tenure of member schools is?

a) 22.3 years

b) 10.7 years

c) 9.5 years

d) 15.1 years

By the numbers - membership

- 188 member schools – enrolling more than 41,000 students (highest # of schools and students)
  - 16% increase since 2020-21
  - 10 new members last year
- 53% metro/47% outside metro
- 97% member retention
- Be independent, not alone

Benefits of membership

- What you get vs. what you are part of
- Unified voice (some get the bread for free)
- STEM program (grants, education, partnerships)
- Navigating…blocking…tackling (aka The hotline)
- Building connections
- Conferences, seminars, webinars

Enrollment trends

- 70,385* students enrolled in private/independent schools in SY26 (3.6%* decrease from SY25)
  - Lower rate of reported schools

- 2024/25 – 72,871
- 2023/24 – 73,143
- 2022/23 – 72,478
- 2021/22 – 69,971
- 2020/21 – 66,138

Legislative strategy

We advocate with a focused and united voice for the interests of private and independent schools

Advocate for…

- Inclusion/participation of private/independent school students and staff

Protect…

- Programs and services that support private/independent school students and staff

Defend against…

- Legislation that overreaches or infringes on unique missions

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Legislative environment (and other stuff)

- 101 D/100 R – "everyone has a veto"
  - House – 67R/67D
  - Senate - 34D/33R

- All three branches are up for election

- Primary issues
  - School safety and security
  - Expanding counseling to K-6
  - Keeping an eye on nonpublic aids and transportation
  - Continued hostility?

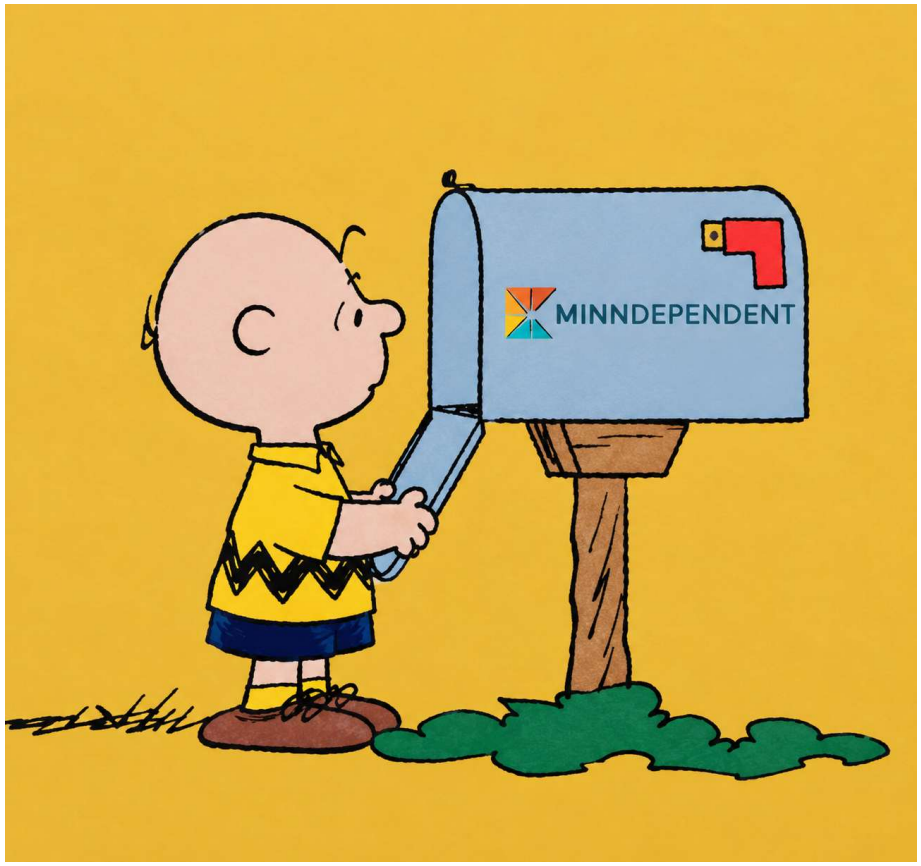
Legislative environment (and other stuff)

- ECCA…FSTC…EFTC…aka Federal Tax credit
  - States must opt in by January 2027 – 30 states are "in"
  - Gov. Walz, "That is never going to happen. Since I've been here in seven years, I've never said it about anything more forcefully than that. We are not doing it."

- MN Constitutional amendment
  - MN Permanent School Fund (public, charter, tribal)
  - Increase draw from 2.5% to 4.5% (add'l $33/student annually)
  - No increase in taxes

- IRS proposal to end tax-exempt status for private schools
  - Based on admission, educational program, scholarship, athletic, etc.
  - Applicable to elementary, secondary, colleges, universities

What’s in the inbox?




BUSING AND NURSING
AND COUNSELING! OH MY!

Playing the hits

- Equal/equitable treatment – no more/no less
  - Type A school, Type B school
- Timely and meaningful consultation
  - ESSA/IDEA
  - Nonpublic pupil aids and transportation
- Get what you get…not what you're entitled to
- Protecting the relationship vs. advocating for students

Questions? Comments? Thoughts?



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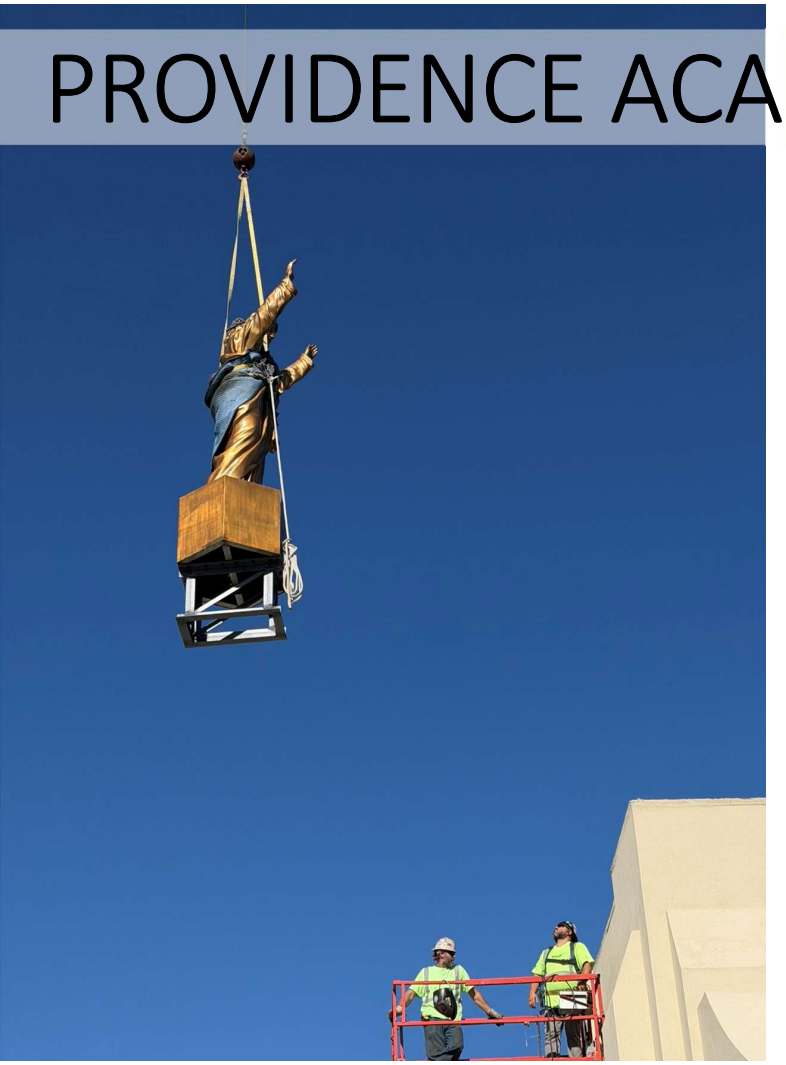
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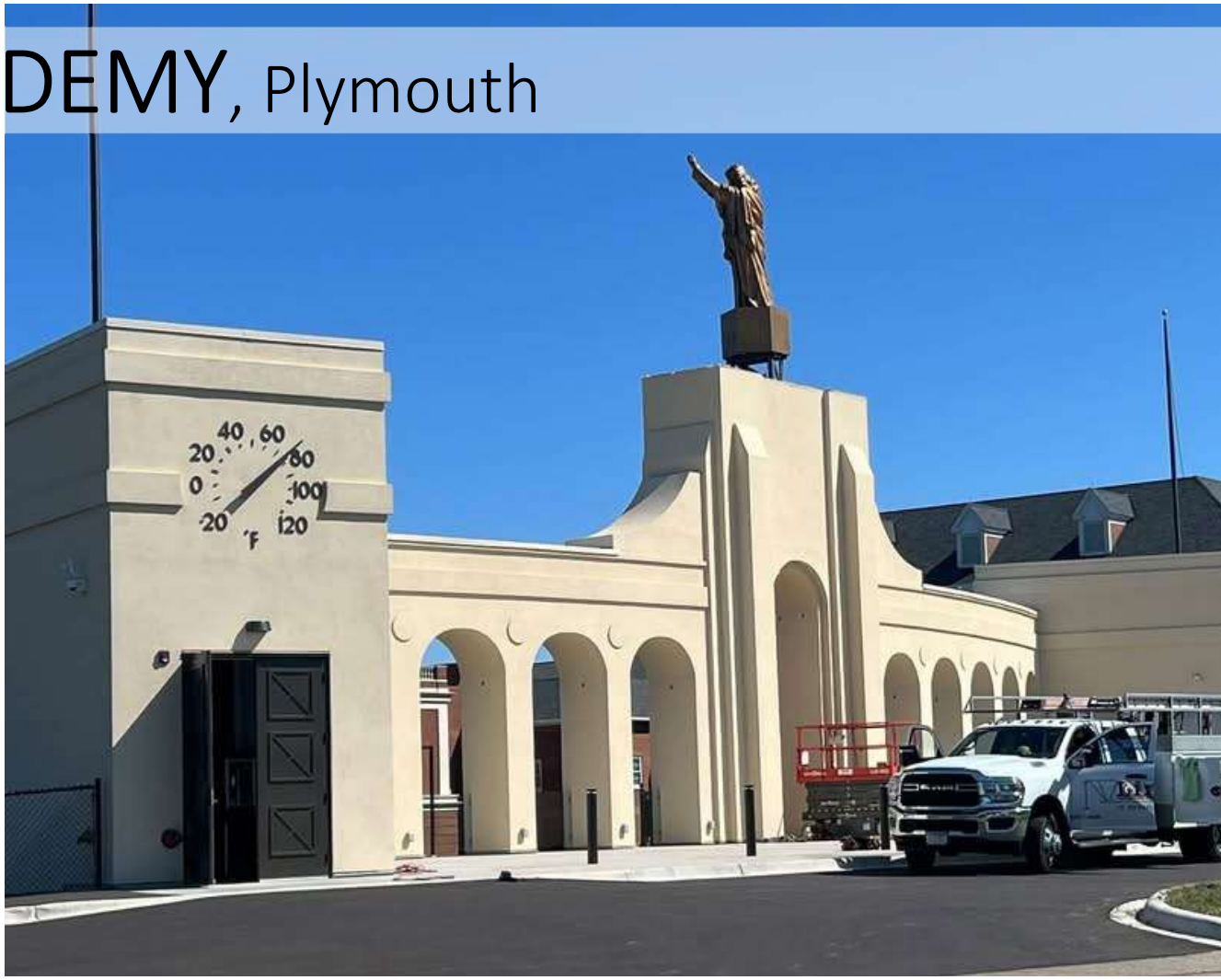
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