



Director's Update

Jim Zacchini, Executive Director



Dear Guild Community,

With the FY26 Summer Convening right around the corner, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you for

your thoughtful input on the survey questions. Your responses are helping Charter Source tailor the day's content to your needs and interests, giving us a clear and meaningful path forward.

As a quick reminder:

If you haven't yet sent your reservation to Debbie, please do so at your earliest convenience. You should have received a copy of the agenda, along with the RSVP deadline—**July 18th** is the final day to reserve your spot for the meeting. Please note in the Save the Date section of the newsletter Debbie's email address.

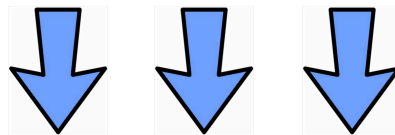
We're looking forward to a day of connection, learning, and leadership development!

With gratitude,

Jim

 **DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION**  Authorizer  Charter School

"An approved authorizer working in collaboration
with the Minnesota Department of Education"



MN GUILD ANNUAL SUMMER CONVENING -

When: July 29, 2025

Time: 12:30 pm to 4:00 pm.

Where: Amherst Wilder Foundation, St. Paul

Please RSVP on or before July 18, 2025 to:

debbie.weckman@guildschools.org

This year we will be focusing on BOARD TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT. Please invite your board members to attend. Thank you.



MN GUILD SCHOOL BOARD CORNER

To better support, you and your school board, we've introduced a new newsletter section focused on MDE and MN State statute requirements. Each month, we'll provide updates, resources, and guidance, including webinars and training opportunities, to help you stay informed and aligned with evolving regulations. This section will also cover contractual obligations, ensuring compliance with authorizer agreements and maintaining accountability.

EARN CEU CREDITS



[BOSA Website](#), [BOSA Approved CEU Credit Course Schedule](#), [2025 Educational Leadership Consumer Guides](#)

Charter Leader Statute §124E.12, Subdivision 2 - Qualifications, Evaluation, and Training

Qualifications include a four-year degree or equivalent experience and:

- instruction and assessment
- human resource and personnel management
- financial management
- legal and compliance management
- effective communication
- board and authorizer relationships
- community partnerships
- parent relationships
- curriculum design
- professional ethics
- child development
- special education oversight
- contract management
- effective communication
- cultural competency

Licensed Administrators		Non-Licensed Administrators
First year of employment	Successive years of employment	Evaluated on qualifications (above); Must complete a minimum of 25 hours annually of competency-based training corresponding to the individual's annual professional development needs and plan approved by the charter school board of directors; Training includes but is not limited to: • instruction and curriculum • state standards • teacher and staff hiring, development, support, and evaluation • social-emotional learning • data collection and usage • assessment methodologies • use of technology for learning and management • charter school law and requirements • code of professional ethics • financial management and state accounting requirements; • grant management • legal and compliance management • special education management • health and safety laws • restorative justice • cultural competencies • effective communication • parent relationships • board and management relationships • community partnerships • charter contract and authorizer relationships • public accountability
Evaluated on qualifications (above) Must complete 10 hours of competency-based training on: • charter school law and requirements • board and management relationships • charter contract and authorizer relationships	Evaluated on qualifications (above)	
Ex-Officio Board Members New Member training		
Within 3 months of starting employment: • Roles and responsibilities • Open meeting law • Data practices law • Employment policies and practices (ch. 181) • Public school funding and financial management • Roles and responsibilities regarding student success, achievement, and performance	Annual training	

[Continuing Education Unit \(CEU\) Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)



[MACS Charter School Board Training](#)

Welcome to Minnesota Charter Board Training and Development!

Minnesota Statutes do not dictate how many hours or minicourses a board member must complete, but a board member is responsible for knowing all of the statutes reviewed in the minicourses in the three required areas: board role and responsibilities, financial management, and employment policies and practices. Ready to begin training? It's as easy!

[Click here to register.](#)



[GOVERNANCE PROGRAMMING FOR MINNESOTA CHARTER SCHOOLS](#)

The Board Basics Series provides the 2024 legislative changes for state-mandated board training.

[BOARD ORIENTATION \(September 18th, 2025\)](#) Complimentary to current clients offered in preparation for our upcoming school year. We encourage new and current board members to join us. This session will provide an overview of the Minnesota charter school sector. Enjoy this interactive session and gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities you will assume as a board member of a public entity. Click here to [REGISTER](#)

MN Statutes, section 124#.07, subdivision 7 states: "Every charter school board member shall attend annual training throughout the member's term. All new charter board members shall attend initial training on the board's role and responsibilities, employment policies and practices, and financial management. A new board member who does not begin the required initial training within six months after being seated and complete the training within 12 months after being seated is automatically ineligible to continue to serve as a board member."



This month we are proud to spotlight Phoenix Academy of Art & Science.

MISSION:

We create a safe, engaging, positive and hands-on learning environment of core academics including the valuable instruction of the arts and sciences.

By building on the foundation of supportive relationships among school staff, students, families, and communities, each student's needs are met at their individual level socially and academically.

We strive to promote happy and confident students who develop a love of learning.

More about Phoenix: ROTATION-BASED TEACHING

In order to support mastery learning in the classrooms, Phoenix Academy teachers use a rotation-based teaching methodology, allowing students to be more active with the curriculum, receive individualized attention from the teacher and work in groups with students at similar academic levels.

Regular small-group and individualized learning occurs daily as needed. Small group and individualized learning benefit all students, including those who are advanced and may become bored easily in class.

Within this highly supportive classroom design, advanced students can also work in small groups or individually on enrichment projects designed around their particular interests. Phoenix Academy teachers will use data gathered frequently from student assessments (formal and informal) and develop small group or individualized lessons to go back and re-teach concepts until all students

have learned or mastered the topic (mastery learning).

In some cases, this process will be used to plan advanced lessons or projects (enrichment) for advanced students needing more challenging work. This practice helps to ensure that all students are learning a standard prior to advancing on in the curriculum.

This is especially important in topics of math and science where success in one standard is often dependent upon how well a student has mastered previous ones. For example, we want to make sure that students have mastered the topic of adding and subtracting fractions before they move on to multiplying and dividing fractions.

PHOENIX PROCESSES

DAILY 5 READING

Research backed process that maximizes engagement and small group instruction with the teacher. (Also, Daily 3 for Math)

MASTERY LEARNING

When students are not successful in a given lesson or unit, we re-teach and re-assess until students are successful.

INTEGRATION OF THE ARTS

Proven to reduce boredom, increase critical thinking, motivation and a variety of other 21st century skills.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

We use data about how a student is progressing to create individualized lessons based on that information.

PHOENIX ACADEMY

- Smaller class size
- Research supported curriculum
- Small group instruction daily
- Uniform policy to enhance a strong school culture
- A team-teaching approach
- Instructional assistants who are ready to help

INTEGRATION OF ART & SCIENCE

It has been discovered that when the arts are integrated into academic instruction, the learning experiences can become enhanced with discovery, improving the conditions for learning.

Over the past two decades, ample research has been conducted establishing direct correlations between sustained involvement in arts programs and the development of cognitive and meta-cognitive capacities or “habits of mind,” associated with high student achievement and college readiness.

Executive Director: James Gagner: "I am honored to be part of the Phoenix Academy Family. Each year, I look forward to meeting our students and their families. The success of your child depends on us working together, and it is a responsibility I take seriously. As the principal of Phoenix Academy, I embrace the opportunity to partner with you to provide our students with challenging, engaging and memorable school experience. As I enter my 29th year in education, I am committed to ensuring that every Phoenix Academy student is safe, loved and cared for when they reside in school here."

PHOENIX ART & SCIENCE ACADEMY VIDEO

Thank you, Phoenix Academy of Art & Science, for all you do!







Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another.
G.K. Chesterton

MN Guild Partners & Resources

Leading the way to excellence



Minnesota's Graduation Rates Continue to Rise Rates at the highest level on record, gaps between student groups shrink

More Minnesota high school seniors than ever before graduated in 2024, with 59,720 students—84.2 percent of the 2024 graduating class overall, the highest graduation rate Minnesota has ever recorded—earning their diploma and going on to careers or college. The graduation data show increases for students in the American Indian, Asian, Black, Hispanic or Latino and white student groups. Graduation rates also increased for English learners, students from low-income families, and students receiving special education services. Achievement gaps narrowed for many groups in both the one-year and five-year trends.

Upcoming Opportunities

[MDE Boot Camp Schedule and Registration Link](#)

[Charter School MDE Resource Link](#)

Introducing the New OHE Suite of Websites



The Office of Higher Education (OHE) is excited to announce the launch of a completely redesigned OHE website. This new site comes with many upgrades in an effort to provide students, educators and professionals easy to find and up-to-date information. A few of the highlights of this new site include mobile responsiveness, robust search functionality and user-friendly design. In addition to the primary OHE site being updated other OHE sites and partner sites have been updated:

- [Get Ready Minnesota](#)
- [Minnesota Goes To College](#)
- [MNP20](#)
- [SELF Loan](#)

Update Your Bookmarks

If you have any OHE pages bookmarked, it is time to update those links. Along with a fresh new look, the URL has also been updated to align with other state agencies. Old bookmarks will continue to work through redirects, but these redirects are temporary.

[Explore the New Website →](#)

Financial Literacy: An Essential Life Skill That Helps You Through College and Beyond



College might be the first time you're managing money on your own. Whether it's paying for books, handling rent, or deciding how much to borrow in student loans, your financial choices now can shape your future.

Understanding money management is one of the most essential skills you will ever learn to make your money count instead of pinching pennies. And you don't need a finance degree to build strong financial habits. [Read the Full Blog →](#)

OHE Celebrates Juneteenth Across Minnesota



This June, the Office of Higher Education proudly participated in two vibrant Juneteenth celebrations: The 5th Annual Juneteenth Celebration in Winona, presented by “Our Voices” with Theatre Du Mississippi and R.O.A.R., and a Juneteenth Celebration - Career & Resource Fair hosted by the Anika Foundation at the Minnesota State Capitol. Together, these events welcomed several community members to the OHE booths, where visitors explored OHE’s wide range of programs and financial aid—including the North Star Promise—and shared excitement about potential career opportunities with the agency. We were honored to join in commemorating freedom and promoting access to higher education for all.



NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR
**PUBLIC
CHARTER
SCHOOLS**

Use our [program search tool](#) to explore the lineup, and don't forget to [REGISTER!](#)

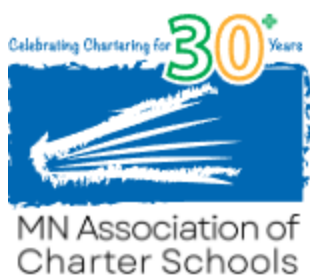


ICYMI: The Charter Schools Program Update

Last Month, the U.S. Department of Education announced a \$60 million infusion of funds into the federal Charter Schools Program this fiscal year and a new dissemination grant within the Charter Schools Program: The Model Development and Dissemination (MDD) Grants.

MDD Grants will be awarded this fiscal year.

To learn more about whether this opportunity could be right for your organization, please contact [Fiona Sheridan-Mclver](#).



STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

CHARTER-SPECIFIC EDUCATION POLICY PROVISIONS:

Authorizer Provisions, requiring authorizers to:

- MAPES reviews in their annual report
- Attend annual MDE approved trainings

- Post key accountability information about the schools they authorize on their website
- Post financial information related to chartering on their website
- Livestream non-renewal and termination hearings

Charter Transparency and Accountability:

- Requires charter schools to post a link to accountability information on their website, and upon request of the authorizer, distribute directly to families
- Requires supply and demand studies to include all proposed grades, sites and also for new locations

Charter Boards:

- Charter school boards must include a Finance Committee
- If on a corrective action plan due to financial issues, Authorizer must attend Finance Committee meetings monthly and can request schools hire a financial expert
- Creates a penalty for violating the statute currently in law prohibiting membership on two charter school boards
- Requires that board members take an oath of office
- Prohibits board members from accepting gifts (applying the public official gift ban to them)
- Adds conflict of interest provisions for Affiliated Building Company boards

Procurement Process Further Defined:

- For bids between \$25,000 and \$175,000, charter schools can use “competitive procurement,” which means a sealed bidding process, or they can use “direct negotiations” between two or more vendors
- For contracts over \$175,000, a competitive procurement process using sealed bids must be conducted, which is detailed in statute (MACS will create a detailed New Law Primer if this is passed into law)

OTHER KEY EDUCATION POLICY PROVISIONS (NOT EXHAUSTIVE):

Numerous changes to attendance policy: To highlight several; (1) Principals must be the designated keeper of excused and unexcused attendance data; (2) Principals, within 15 days of school beginning, must report to their Superintendents, students who were enrolled last year, but are no longer enrolled; and (3) Clarifies that a student is present, any day they receive services from staff. (Check out MACS full law primer after this bill is signed into law)

Numerous changes to the READ ACT: To highlight several; (1) Delays the requirement that interventions be evidence-based by a year, to the 2026-27 school year; (2) Further clarifies READ ACT provisions for dual immersion programs; and (3) Expands programs that can provide approved trainings. (Check out MACS full law primer after this bill is signed into law)

Extends the short-call substitution pilot program: Makes permanent a program that allows qualifying education support personnel or paraprofessionals to obtain a short-call substitute teacher license. The agreement modifies requirements to substitute teacher rate of pay, and how long a short-call substitute teacher under the program may cover a particular assignment.

Changes School Lunch Reimbursement: The agreement lowers the additional state funding for school lunch (above the amount established by federal rule for free lunch) from \$12.5 cents to \$6.25 cents per meal served beginning in 2028. It also requires a school to allow a student to purchase a second breakfast or lunch if the student has already selected a reimbursable breakfast or lunch. Requires schools to have cardiac response plans

Allows students to administer opioid antagonists to their classmates
Modifies language access plans for special education

"Unleashing Education from Convention" is more than the MACS motto, it is a reminder of our purpose, our goals, and it serves as a clarion Call To Action.



OUR VISION & MISSION

Our vision is to strengthen and transform the charter school landscape to generate more high-quality options for children. Our mission is to provide scaffolded support and development in governance, leadership and operations for school improvement.

Starting, leading and overseeing a charter school is complex. We believe leaders know their organizational contexts and needs the best. We come alongside and partner with you to support, grow and develop operational and governing systems. Our technology platforms were designed to optimally support high-functioning systems implementation.

At Charter Source we believe impactful school leadership is shared leadership. Select our custom, on-site training designed just for your board, join a group training or consider our convenient, online training to meet state-mandated training requirements.

Board Webinar Series

Our online educational sessions are hosted by industry leaders and special guests. We focus on relevant and pertinent topics to ensure your board has the resources needed to support good governance.

NOTE: New board members are required to start training before their term begins on Open Meeting Law, board roles and responsibilities, and data practices law. Within 12 months of being seated, new board members must complete employment policies and practices, financial management and board roles and responsibilities regarding academic achievement and performance. See Board Basics Series below for specific coursework required.

Board members appreciate the option to access this platform for many reasons:

- View and listen to online webinars from the comfort of your computer
- No travel expense or time away from work is required.
- Year-round access allows for revisiting content if needed.
- One-hour of governance coaching via email or phone is included in the purchase of the webinar series.
- BOSA approved for leadership CEU credits.
- Complimentary community Board Orientation available in Fall. (Sign up below)

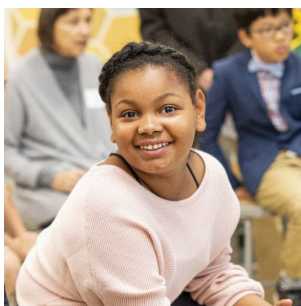
State Mandated Charter School Training Available in Spanish for the following courses: Employment Law, Charter School Budget Basics, and New Board Member Basics.

Board Orientation

Complimentary to current clients offered in preparation for our upcoming school year. We encourage new and current board members to join us. This session will provide an overview of the Minnesota charter school sector. Enjoy this interactive session and gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities you will assume as a board member of a public entity. [Click here for more information.](#)

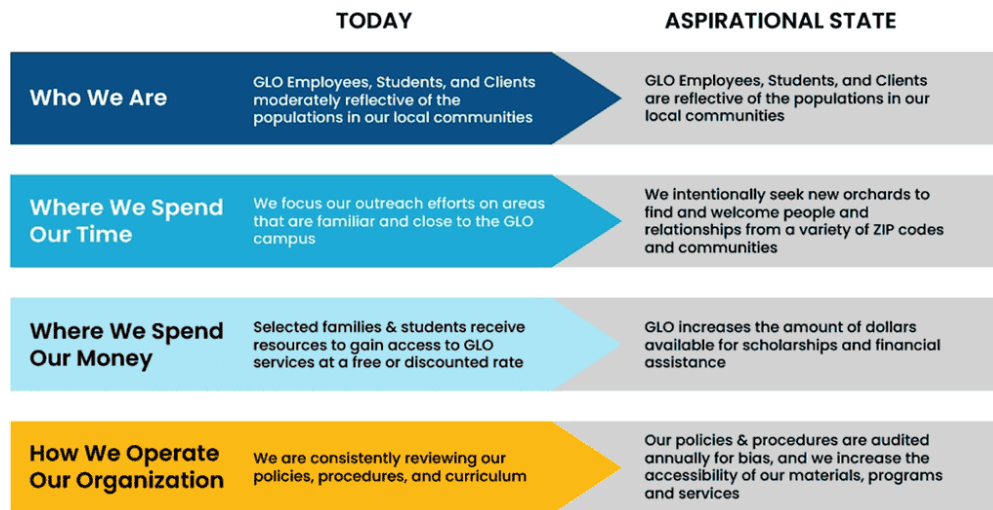
Board Peer Learning Community

Join this informative and engaging series with fellow board peers. Learn more about how to frame the work of the board and define the governance role in alignment with leadership responsibilities. From crisis communication to best practices of high-performing boards, we will engage in case studies and research to build governance knowledge. To learn more, please reach out to us or [click here for more information.](#)



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging
2024–27 Roadmap in Action

The GLO Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Roadmap contains descriptive action elements and provides opportunities for progress updates through summer 2027. These updates will be offered through affinity group sessions, question-and-answer forums, informational coffees, and inclusion training for our students, clients, faculty, staff, trustees, parents, guardians, and caregivers. In each subsequent year, the Roadmap will highlight progress toward fulfilling the values outlined in the GLO DEIB Statement of Philosophy and GLO's ongoing commitment to inclusive education. With humility and authenticity, we will acknowledge that this work is ongoing and iterative, and we will commit to lifting up relevant updates to our other broad-ranging efforts to engender a deep sense of belonging for all members of our learning community.



Holding Ourselves Accountable

A core feature of our roadmap will be to imagine and develop inclusive GLO-wide principles, practices, and policies that the entire community can internalize and hold itself accountable to.

"We believe Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) is foundational to the GLO community and supports the organization's mission, vision, and values. Honoring our legacy and defining our future as an institution that values evidenced-based literacy for all, GLO will prepare students to assert their place as global leaders in the 21st century. It is vital that their intellectual engagement occurs in an environment steeped in DEIB. Embracing multiple perspectives while demonstrating curiosity about that which can be challenging, will prepare them to thrive confidently in a diverse world."

– Groves Learning Organization's Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging



World Savvy Statement on the Targeted Shootings of

Minnesota Lawmakers

World Savvy unequivocally condemns the targeted shootings that took the lives of Minnesota State Representative Melissa Hortman and her husband, Mark, and left State Senator John Hoffman and his wife, Yvette, seriously injured after being shot multiple times. These acts of political violence are horrifying and destabilizing—not only for those directly impacted, but for the democratic systems that support us all.

As investigations continue, we are reminded that this moment reflects a broader erosion of civil discourse. Public service, which should be honored and protected in a healthy democracy, is increasingly met with hostility and threat. Disagreement is too often answered with violence rather than dialogue.

We also recognize that these lawmakers were not only public leaders, but advocates for a stronger and more inclusive future for young people in Minnesota. Their service reflected a deep belief in the power of community and the importance of ensuring all voices are heard and valued.

World Savvy stands in solidarity with the victims and their families. We remain committed to ensuring that young people are prepared not only to understand the world as it is, but to lead us toward a more just, inclusive, and democratic future.

— *World Savvy*



WEEK OF ACTION NATIONAL DEMANDS

- ★ END ZERO TOLERANCE
- ★ MANDATE BLACK HISTORY & ETHNIC STUDIES
- ★ HIRE MORE BLACK TEACHERS
- ★ FUND COUNSELORS NOT COPS



The Black Lives Matter movement is a powerful, non-violent peace movement that systematically examines injustices that exist at the intersections of race, class, and gender, including mass incarceration, poverty, non-affordable housing, income disparity, homophobia, unfair immigration laws, gender inequality, and poor access to healthcare.

The Uprising for Black lives prompted the Black Lives Matter at School movement to expand activities to a [“Year of Purpose.”](#) The centerpiece of the Year of Purpose is asking educators to reflect

on their own work in relationship to antiracist pedagogy and abolitionist practice, persistently challenging themselves to center Black lives in their classrooms.



Teaching for Change provides educators with tools to create schools where students learn to read, write, and change the world.

We offer professional development, develop lessons, curate resources, and host learning communities.

Our programs and resources encourage students to ask questions and develop the skills to build an equitable and just society.

[About Us](#) [Click here for classroom RESOURCES](#)



Conference Information:



TEACH-TOBERFEST

"Harvesting Shared Power for School Transformation"

October 23-25 | Ypsilanti, MI

Learn together, share crisp ideas, and harvest new connections in breakout sessions at [TEACH-TOBERFEST](#), the Teacher-Powered Schools National Conference.

Sessions organize under three strands:

[View breakout sessions](#)

- Cultivating Joyful Innovation
- Sharing Power Inside and Out
- Sustaining Teacher-Powered Schools

Don't wait: [Conference registration](#) [Get tickets today](#)

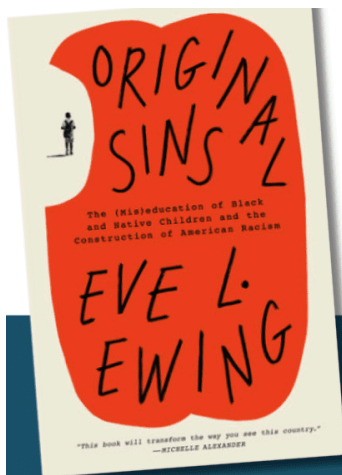


rethinking schools

[You Represent Hope in Hard Times](#)

The election results are deeply troubling, yet history reminds us of that progress often emerges despite hostile leadership. From abolitionists resisting slavery to civil rights activists challenging segregation, movements for justice have persisted and flourished. Today, educators, organizers, and activists continue that legacy, offering hope in hard times. Though the fight ahead will be difficult, resilience and solidarity remain our greatest tools.

[EVENTS](#)



Original Sins: The (Mis)education of Black and Native Children and the Construction of American Racism

September 22 / 4 PM PT / 7 PM ET



Eve L. Ewing in conversation with
Jesse Hagopian and Cierra Kaler-Jones

Teach the Black Freedom Struggle online class

zinnedproject.org/teach-freedom



Mission - AFT is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.



The AFT and First Book are celebrating a major milestone in our 13 yearlong joint partnership - distributing more than 10 million free books to students, families and educators serving in Title 1 schools and programs: public employees and health care professionals serving communities in need across the country. [10 million Books Video](#)

PROTECT OUR KIDS

[We must:](#)

- Pressure decision-makers: Urge elected officials at both the federal and state levels to oppose cuts to federal funding and block grants, both of which will hurt kids.
 - Raise awareness: Educate the public about the devastating consequences of dismantling the Department of Education, gutting federal education funding and providing no-strings-attached block grants.
 - Mobilize support: Engage a broad coalition of stakeholders—including educators, students, parents and community members—to participate in actions nationwide.
 - Drive media coverage: Generate media attention through storytelling, coordinated events, rallies, etc.
 - Lift up our stories: Highlight how these cuts disproportionately harm vulnerable students, including those from underserved communities and students with disabilities.
 - Take action in our communities: Wage this fight in the communities where students will lose services they rely on, not just in Washington, D.C.
-

5 things you need to know about SNAP



As Republican lawmakers push a plan to slash \$2 trillion from federal programs — while handing more tax breaks to billionaires — millions of families could lose access to the basics they rely on. That includes food. Gutting programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program means less food assistance to American families, especially families whose children receive free and reduced-price meals at school.

[Here are five key facts about SNAP and why this fight matters:](#)



Welcome to the light side... this section has been added to bring a little light and levity to your day. Enjoy!

WELCOME TO OUR
PARENT-TEACHER
CONFERENCES



"Your son carved his initials in his wooden classroom desk and argued that he was merely doing desktop publishing."

We Want to Hear from You

As your authorizer we want you to know we are here to support you. If you would like to bounce ideas off someone, or need a sounding board, we are happy to be that person. Please feel free to email us whenever you need additional support, we are here to listen.

Please send an email to one of the addresses listed below:

Jim Zacchini,

MN Guild Executive Director

jim.zacchini@guildschools.org

Debbie Weckman,

MN Guild Administrative Assistant

debbie.weckman@guildschools.org

Buddy Ferrari,

MN Guild Project Tech

buddy.ferrari@guildschools.org

Thank you and as always, we appreciate all you do.



Our Vision:

The Minnesota Guild of Public Charter Schools advances positive educational outcomes for students that lead to success in life.

Our Mission:

The Guild advocates for teacher leadership, professional autonomy, and the creation of innovative schools for student engagement and the ownership of learning. The Guild strives to support students, families, and communities most affected by the achievement gap and low graduation rates.

“If you want
to go fast
go alone.
If you want
to go far
go together.”
-African Proverb



If you don't stand
for something you
will fall for
anything.

Peter Marshall

BrainyQuote

Visit our website:

<https://www.guildschools.org>

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.](#)