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State of Minnesota

May 12, 2016

Jon Schumacher, Chair of St. Paul Board of Education
Denise Rodriguez, President of St. Paul Federation of Teachers

Dear Jon and Denise,

This is a critical time for budgeting at both the state and district level. As such, I give you my commitment that I will continue to work with our leadership to secure as much revenue as possible for the district. The Senate supplemental budget bill will not erase the districts projected deficit, but there are provisions that provide funding for Pre-K, one-time teacher development and evaluation revenue, and lifts the cap off QComp. I urge you to engage in a process to consider the opportunity that QComp funding will bring to the district to provide essential supports for teachers and benefits for St. Paul students and families.

I have asked the district what committee is currently charged with the teacher evaluation mandate. I urge you to have that committee establish a process to work with MDE regarding QComp, inventory the activities that the district is already doing that meet the requirements in statute and identify existing and new areas that provide support for teachers and students to access the \$260 per students that an agreed upon plan could provide. As we discussed, my colleagues at the Senate do not understand why St. Paul does not pursue this funding.

The MMB Commissioner and the Senate Finance Chair are very cautious about the forecast for the next biennium. We cannot afford to pass this revenue up again for the coming year, should the Senate prevail in lifting the cap permanently. We must start now to address funding for the next school year. I will also discuss with the Commissioner whether she is willing to add another date for application if the Senate prevails in lifting the cap effective for the 2016-17 school year.

I understand that trust is an issue, however, the district under the board's leadership and federation, must work in the best interest of the students to negotiate a plan that both parties can be proud to recommend to their members and the community.

Sincerely,

Sandra L. Pappas

Sandra L. Pappas
President, Minnesota Senate

CC:

Senator Cohen

Senator Hawj

Senator Marty

Valeria Silva

Zuki Ellis

Chue Vue

Steve Marchese

John Brodrick

Jean O'Connell

Mary Vanderwert

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