



FAQ

What is the Page Amendment?

The Page Amendment is a constitutional amendment that would make clear all children of Minnesota have a civil right to a quality public education. It would make education a paramount duty of the state and would give families an avenue for holding the state accountable for providing such education. Today our children are only granted a right to an adequate education and the result is a decades long education gap where 68% of Minnesota's low-income students can't read at grade level.

What does the Page Amendment say?

"All children have a fundamental right to a quality public education that fully prepares them with the skills necessary for participation in the economy, our democracy, and society, as measured against uniform achievement standards set forth by the state. It is a paramount duty of the state to ensure quality public schools that fulfill this fundamental right. The duty of the state established in this section does not infringe on the right of a parent to choose for their child a private, religious, or home school as an alternative to public education."

What does the current constitutional language say?

"The stability of a republican form of government depending mainly upon the intelligence of the people, it is the duty of the legislature to establish a general and uniform system of public schools. The legislature shall make such provisions by taxation or otherwise as will secure a thorough and efficient system of public schools throughout the state." This has been interpreted as an adequate education.

Why is the Page Amendment needed now?

Minnesota used to be a pioneer in public education, but in recent decades educational disparities among students from low-income households and students of color have continued to increase and separate them from the rest of the student population in the state. The gaps are present in all 87 Minnesota counties and persist over decades.

We have a systemic problem with education in Minnesota. There have been X education bills in the legislature since X and Minnesota spends more than \$13 billion a year on the public school system with an average of \$14,000 per student each year, yet education gaps have persisted.

Without a fundamental change in the way the state provides public education, elevating our standard from adequate to quality, our students will continue to have limited educational and economic opportunity. Minnesota's future depends on its ability to develop its youth into a productive, informed citizenry.

What are some of the education gaps in Minnesota?

- Minnesota still ranks 47th in the nation for American Indian students who graduate on time and 50th in the nation for Black and Hispanic students who graduate on time
- Math test scores for BIPOC and lower-income students are 20-30 points below state average.
- Only 36 percent of students from a household with an income of less than \$36,000 are college-ready as compared to 87 percent of students from a household with an income of at least \$100,000.



Why is it important to move from an “adequate” standard to a “quality” standard?

The minimum constitutional requirement of an “adequate” education has not moved the needle in terms of educational attainment for students of color, Indigenous students, and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds across the state of Minnesota. In fact, over the past two decades, we have seen the achievement gaps grow to the highest in the nation, and the disparities have remained large and persistent. As Justice Page said in his Skeen dissent, the state’s duty is not satisfied “when some children receive an ‘adequate’ education while others receive a more-than-adequate education.” The proposed amendment will finally raise the bar of expectations to a “quality” education for all public-school students, so they are prepared to fully participate in our democracy, society, and economy.

What is the process for amending the constitution?

A bill must be passed by both the House and Senate. From there the amendment language is placed on the November general election ballot and it must receive greater than 50% of the votes for passage. A ballot submitted with blank choice on the ballot measure is counted as against. While the Governor is an important voice in this conversation, he is not part of the process to pass a constitutional amendment.

If implemented, how does the Page Amendment end education gaps?

Once the Page Amendment passes, the legislature will be tasked with defining quality by involving parents and the community in their work.

If the legislature cannot come together to pass legislation to define quality and elevate our education system, ultimately parents will be able to turn to the courts to ensure they are receiving a quality education.

The current constitutional language has prevented the countless education reform bills passed by the legislature from having little impact on improving disparities. The Page Amendment replaces an outdated and cracked foundation with a new solid foundation that will enable future legislation to have a measurable impact on closing education gaps.

Will specific policies be included in the Page Amendment?

The Page Amendment elevates our standard for education in Minnesota to quality but doesn’t prescribe specific policies. The amendment pushes the legislature to prescribe what policies will elevate our education system to quality. Because our education problems are systemic, we’ll need a community driven, holistic approach to making the necessary changes. The amendment paves the way for these conversations in a way that we haven’t seen to date. As we’ve seen in places like Florida. Their amendment as well as executive and legislative policy changes helped improve their education system and outcomes.



FACT SHEET

FACT: The Page Amendment focuses on improving public education

This is strictly about public education in Minnesota, and the amendment specifically states that in the language. It ensures that quality public schools are a “paramount duty” of the state: The state would have no higher duty than supporting public schools if this amendment is adopted.

FACT: The Page Amendment maintains families right to choice

The amendment only addresses public school education in Minnesota. Nothing in the proposed amendment mandates public school attendance, nor does it create a claim if parents choose to home school their children. In fact, the language specifically states that the Page Amendment does not infringe on the right of parents “to choose for their child a private, religious, or home school as an alternative to public education.”

FACT: The Page Amendment empowers parents

The amendment enables holistic change from the legislature, encouraging conversation from parents and community members to help define quality and have a voice at the legislature. It also provides recourse for a parent who believes their child isn’t receiving a quality education.

FACT: The Page Amendment empowers local school districts

The amendment will give broader latitude to local school districts and their students to make decisions, but a state-wide standard of quality education for all is needed to establish the foundation for which local school districts can build upon as they see fit.

FACT: The Page Amendment strengthens the state's obligation to fund schools

The amendment strengthens the state’s obligation to fund schools because it’s raising the standard from adequate to quality. The proposed amendment makes quality public education a “paramount duty” of the state, which means the state would have no responsibility that is more important than supporting quality public schools.

FACT: The Page Amendment puts the responsibility of quality education on all three branches of government

All three branches of government will be involved in implementation and oversight. The Legislature and Executive branches will be the first to act on ensuring quality public education for all Minnesotans. If the Legislature and others don’t take needed action for implementation, then the courts can handle the most complex civil rights issues.



FACT: The Page Amendment holds the state to a higher standard

Establishing a clear, fundamental right to quality public education will motivate policymakers to put children first. In other states, strong constitutional language has led executive and legislative branches to recognize their obligation and respond with action.

FACT: The Page Amendment provides a right and a remedy

If quality education is not being provided by the state, students and families have a way to seek remedy. The courts are there to protect everyone's rights and provide more access to all Minnesotans. Historically, the most important civil rights cases in America have often been brought by citizens whose rights have not been met and seek redress in the courts.