

# Great Ideas for Great Public Schools

## MINNESOTA

### Partnerships benefit educators, students and the business community

Education Minnesota's **K-12 Business Connection**, a statewide initiative, gives local business and civic leaders the opportunity to see firsthand the challenges students and educators face each day in their classrooms. By working closely with schools, businesses hope to ensure that students are prepared to function in high-performance workplaces—environments that demand teamwork, problem solving, and complex reasoning skills. In return, businesses will highlight pressing needs of local schools such as adequate staffing and resources, updated materials, and modern facilities. Minnesota's business community considers improving public schools a top priority and strategic investment.

#### Background

- The 2010-11 school year is the first full year of K-12 Business Connection (the pilot began in October 2009).
- The program aims to engage at least 12 schools this year and eventually expand to all 440 school districts in the state.

#### How it works

- Education Minnesota has created a toolkit to help local affiliates get the most out of K-12 Business Connection events—for example, designating a “cooperating educator” to host a “guest educator” from the business community.
- Each local must create a K-12 Business Connection plan that includes a timeframe, the number of participants (cooperating educators and guest educators), and an evaluation process.
- Once the plan is in place, the local must contact and get buy-in from a superintendent or local administrator.
- The local develops a public relations plan to promote the event internally and to the media.

#### Program goals

- Raise awareness and understanding of what happens in schools
- Serve the mutual needs of educators, business leaders, and students
- Strengthen teaching and learning
- Offer work- and school-based learning experiences for students
- Provide high-quality professional development for educators
- Build community understanding and support for schools

#### For more information:

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Education Minnesota: [www.educationminnesota.org/events/k12businessconnection.aspx](http://www.educationminnesota.org/events/k12businessconnection.aspx)



*Great Public Schools for Every Student*