



The Hostile Takeover of Minnesota Education

By Allen Quist

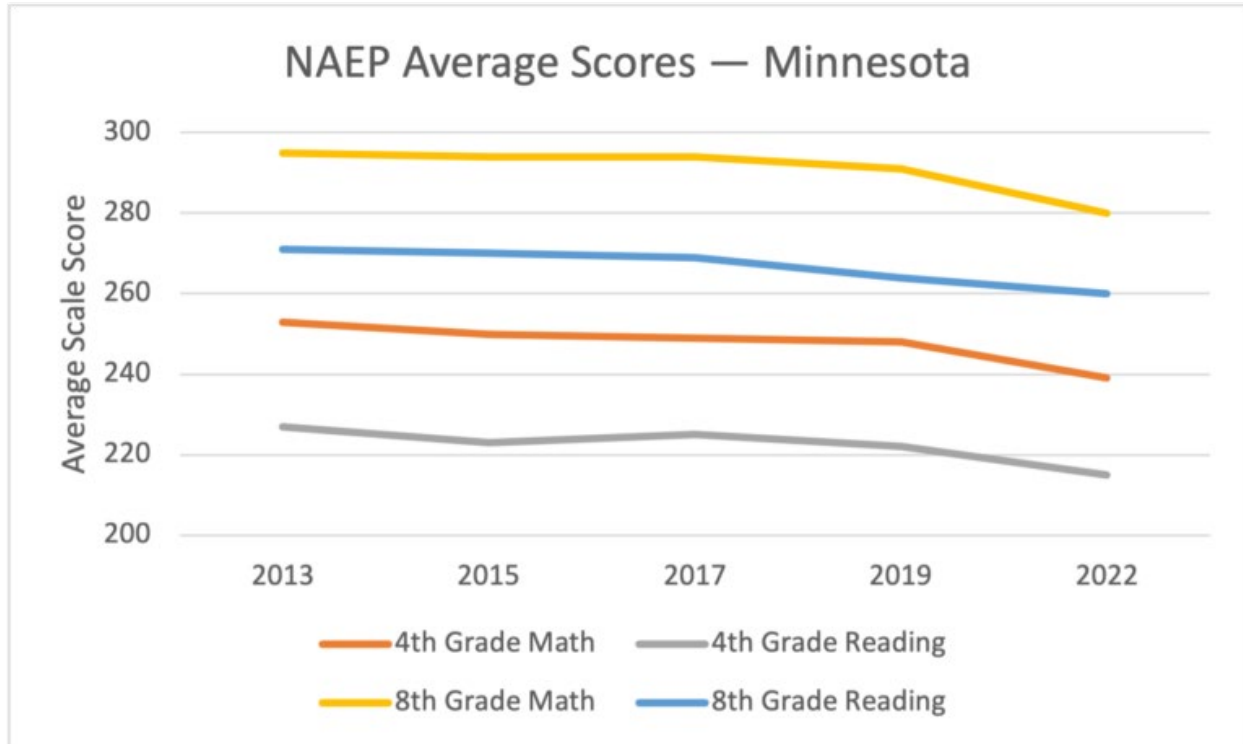
Last fall, the Duluth News Tribune reported:

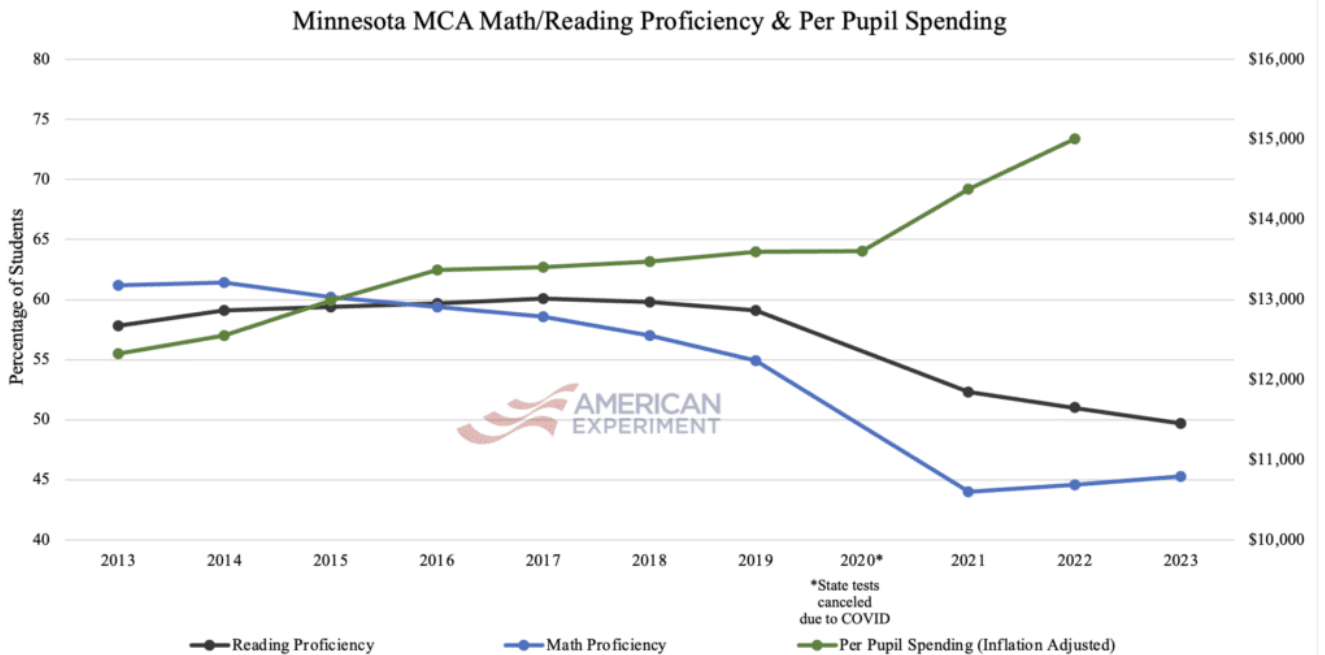
Spring, 2022, the [National Assessment of Educational Progress](#) results released Monday, Oct. 24, show Minnesota eighth-graders' math test scores dropped by 11 points from 2019, placing the state among the 10 biggest drops in that age group nationally. No state reported gains in math performance for fourth- and eighth graders since the last assessment, and nearly all states, including Minnesota, saw reading scores drop.¹

In just 3 years all 50 states saw significant declines in K-12 student academic achievement. The declines in math scores in Minnesota were among the 10 worst. The results indicate a catastrophic reduction in the academic achievement of Minnesota school children. While everyone is right to sound the alarm about these results, the charts below show academic achievement was declining well before 2019.

Since the official narrative has been to blame these losses on Covid induced “distance learning” and “mental health,” they ignore what was going on *before* Covid.

Notice that the academic achievement of Minnesota K-12 students was trending downward before the Covid-19 disruptions. Covid disruptions may have accelerated the academic decline somewhat, but they clearly were not the primary cause.





Sources: Minnesota Department of Education, U.S. Census Bureau, Reason Foundation

3

Minnesota’s 4th and 8th grade reading and math scores have been in serious decline for years. And even more disturbing, Minnesota’s declines are much worse than the national averages.

Not only that, per pupil spending in MN has risen dramatically since 2015. Yet, there has been no improvement in test scores since 2015. Instead test scores continue to tank while spending continues to rise indicating an *inverse* relationship between per pupil spending and academic achievement. Something disastrous is happening in Minnesota public schools. What could it be?

Educational scholar Katherine Kersten describes the decline. She says:

Minnesota parents, are you ready for the coming “woke” invasion of your child’s public school? By 2022, as your first grader is learning that 2 plus 2 is 4, the Minnesota Department of Education intends to mandate that she also “learn to recognize” “stereotypes,” “biased speech,” and “injustice at the institutional or systemic level.”

Your middle-schooler will be drilled in how his “identity” is a function of his skin color. Your high-schooler will be required to explain that Europeans invented “Whiteness” and that America’s 19th century westward expansion was the shameful product of “Whiteness, Christianity, and capitalism.”

The next generation of Minnesota citizens will not only be uninformed—but scandalously misinformed—about our state’s and nation’s history and democratic institutions. They will, however, be programmed to become the next generation of “woke” social activists, having spent their public-school years immersed in the lingo and thought world of the progressive left.⁴

Kersten identified the radical shift in the purpose of education which has occurred in Minnesota and across our country. The teaching of academic knowledge is no longer the primary purpose of K-12

education. Instead, its purpose is to indoctrinate our children into cultural Marxism, also called “wokism.” I wonder how many parents would have approved of this woke indoctrination had they been advised of the new educational goals? How many would have voted for their local school referendums?

The answer to the disaster occurring in Minnesota schools is simple. *When you require education to teach the precepts of a political ideology, it will necessarily replace the teaching of academic knowledge.*

For example, KTTH 770 AM (HD Radio 97.3 FM HD-Channel 3, a talk radio show out of Seattle, reported:

A 10th grade Ethnic Studies World History teacher at [Chief Sealth International High School](#) in Seattle gave students a quiz titled, “Understanding Gender vs. Sex.” . . .

Question 4 was a true or false question with the statement, “All men have penises.” The student labeled the statement “true” since it is, in fact, true. But the teacher penalized the answer, marking it incorrect. The teacher claims women can have a penis.

Similarly, Question 7 was a true or false question with the statement, “Only women can get pregnant.” Again, the student marked the statement “true” because only women can get pregnant. Again, the teacher penalized the student, insisting the answer is false. The teacher believes men can get pregnant.

. . . [Seattle Public Schools](#), through a spokesperson, defended the quiz as “inclusive,” arguing it was appropriate for an Ethnic Studies course. [This spokesperson also said:]

“Seattle Public Schools is dedicated to establishing inclusive environments that allow exploration of contemporary issues, specifically examining the impacts of power systems such as racism and patriarchy,” the spokesperson said to the Jason Rantz Show on KTTH. “This commitment extends to fostering welcoming and inclusive settings where students, staff, and families have the freedom to express their authentic selves.”

. . . [Talk show host Jason Rantz explained]: “The spokesperson said the quiz was in line with state and local guidelines covering such topics. . . . The student was failed for refusing to answer politically motivated questions intended to legitimize an extremist gender identity movement claiming gender is fluid. The students aren’t being taught; they’re being indoctrinated.”⁵

This means then that many public-school teachers will be required to teach ideas that contradict their own beliefs. It also means they will be required to teach positions they know are objectively false.

Cultural Marxism argues that objective truth and genuine morality don’t exist. Students are taught to follow their feelings and personal truths...not information. It’s all about creating revolutionaries. Revolutionaries who are easily confused, predictable and controllable....not educated citizens who can think critically.

Higher education in Minnesota and America is no better. We have witnessed presidents of three major universities unable to admit that promoting genocide is wrong or violates school policy. (“Genocide” is defined as the murder of members of a group with the intention of killing all members of the group.)

Beginning in the fall of 2024, all Minnesota’s state higher education institutions (the university, state colleges and vocational schools) will be required to reorganize their programs around “equity” and “inclusion”—the central doctrines of cultural Marxism.⁶ This means that all outcomes must in aggregate

be the same for all groups based on race, gender, and various other identity group classifications.⁷ (Expect illegal status to be added to the list soon.) Professors know this woke vision of equity is impossible, but they also know they must comply or risk being fired.

The harsh reality we are seeing is the destruction of higher education in Minnesota.

The bottom line for the Minnesota State System of higher education is, in its own words, “The Office of Equity and Inclusion consults, advises, trains, and provides policy development in the areas of equity, inclusion, diversity, equal opportunity, and affirmative action.”⁸ This means the entire state system will be reorganized to adhere to the dictates of cultural Marxism.⁹

What will schools of engineering and other professions such as nursing, teaching, law enforcement, accounting, and so on do when the aggregate outcomes for all groups in these programs must be the same but many of the students they were required to accept can’t do the work?¹⁰ Professors will have little choice but to pass them regardless. And if subpar or unskilled students must be hired to fill quotas, the public is at risk too.

This madness means the end of liberal arts in Minnesota state schools. It is not possible to focus on the pursuit of knowledge at a school where the only acceptable “knowledge” must be consistent with the woke revolution.

Where does this hostile takeover of Minnesota education leave those of us who believe the real purpose of education is the teaching of academic knowledge and skills? What schools can we enroll in, teach at, or send our children to? Here are some guidelines that should be considered:

1. Parents should avoid entrusting their children to Minnesota public schools but should make use of other alternatives such as private schools and home schools.
2. Persons with sound moral understanding should not teach in Minnesota public schools where they will be required to teach principles and values contrary to their own beliefs and contrary to what they know to be factually true.
3. Private colleges that adhere to a liberal arts vision should differentiate themselves from the woke state schools and woke private colleges. Promoting themselves as “classical” liberal arts colleges and/or colleges that reject the woke agenda may be possible ways for doing so.
4. Private liberal arts colleges should develop their own program of teacher certification that is consistent with their own beliefs and values and defines liberal arts education as the pursuit of knowledge and academic skills.
5. All candidates for public office, at all levels, including school boards, should be asked to declare whether they support or oppose the woke agenda in education and elsewhere. Voters should then reject candidates who support the destructive woke agenda.
6. All superintendent candidates should be asked by the school board whether they support or oppose the woke agenda in education and elsewhere. School boards should then reject candidates who support the destructive woke agenda.

Author

Allen Quist is a former 3-term Minnesota state legislator and retired professor of religion and political science at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota. He also taught as an adjunct professor of Christian apologetics at Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. He has authored ten books on education and theology.

¹ "As US schools struggle, Minnesota eighth-grade math scores lowest in decades," *Duluth News Tribune*, October 24, 2022

² Wigfall, [Minnesota 4th grade reading & 8th grade math scores on national tests lowest in 30 years \(americanexperiment.org\)](#)

³ Wigfall, [Majority of Minnesota students aren't meeting reading and math standards - Alpha News](#)

⁴ Kersten, [Woke revolution looms for Minnesota schools \(startribune.com\)](#)

⁵ [Rantz: Seattle student failed quiz for saying men can't get pregnant - MyNorthwest.com](#) (The same article can be found at World Net Daily.)

⁶ Quist, [Defining the Terms of Cultural Marxism - CPL Action](#)

⁷ Kersten, ['Equity 2030': Higher ed's brave new world \(americanexperiment.org\)](#)

⁸ [Minnesota State - Office of Equity and Inclusion \(minnstate.edu\)](#)

⁹ op. cit. Quist

¹⁰ op. cit. Kersten