



Real Impact: Student Opinions for a Change

An initiative of Education|Evolving to connect today's students with public policy leaders

Wanted: Student Voices To Influence Minnesota Education

Minnesota adults interested in improving education regularly need information only students can give us. This is your invitation to contribute your voice; your ideas. We're seeking students from all schools: district; alternative; charter; magnet; and home schools.

You are in school. You experience what happens in your classrooms and buildings and social settings. You can identify what works and why. Unfortunately, too few people are asking you to help answer important questions. And if they're asking, they're often not revealing your thoughts to those making decisions about "school" and "education."

Education/Evolving wants to provide concrete opportunities for junior high and high school students, and those who have graduated within the past two years, to have a REAL IMPACT on education policy issues currently in debate. We present your explanations about what school is like today, and your ideas for school improvement, to policymakers, journalists, and educators.

Contributing your observations and ideas will clearly make a positive difference. In 2002, Education/Evolving submitted students' quotes into testimony during a hearing about alternative schools at the Minnesota legislature. Legislators relied heavily on students' opinions about their schools when making their decisions.

Get Involved Today!

Choose one or more of the following options.

1. Log on to www.educationevolving.org/studentvoices. Click on "Student Input." Get involved in message board discussions. Read and respond frequently (topics will change regularly). You can also submit your viewpoints through editorials, poems, essays, student newspaper articles, or some other format. We'll write papers, newspaper articles, and summarize what you say and discuss for brief memos for legislators, journalists, and educators. The links and papers including student voices that are posted elsewhere on the Web site might also inspire you.
2. Get in the "Real Impact Student Network." Send your name, year in school, school name, email address, and phone number to Kim Farris-Berg: kfarris_berg@cox.net. When Education/Evolving is preparing memos needing student input, we'll send an email asking you to send your opinion so we can include it in our work. We may also call on you to testify about your experiences at the legislature or other events.
3. Become a "Real Impact Reporter." We're looking for students to serve as reporters to Education/Evolving. We'll send reporters an assignment, such as: How should schools measure student achievement – standardized tests or something else? We'll ask reporters to interview diverse students from their school and to report the results to us so we can publish them. You will be credited as a contributor to the work. If you're interested, send your name, year in school, school name, email address, and phone number to Kim Farris-Berg: kfarris_berg@cox.net. Tell us why you want to be a reporter.
4. Spread the word. Send this document to your friends from all types of schools and encourage them to get involved, too.

We look forward to hearing from you.