



Open World Learning Community Integrated Math 1

Guiding Question:

"Does the budget of the state of Minnesota
match the values of the state?"

 Education

Contributing to a Better World

#WeAreCrew



Open World
Learning



Dear Reader,

What you have in your hands represents work from 7th and 8th graders who have spent months studying topics of interest to them and prepare a summary for them. As a teacher I have endeavored to provide space and support for them but not to influence their approach in any way. So why do this project at all?

For the first half of the year, we spend time solving problems that the students may find difficult. The purpose is two-fold; to get them to practice persevering in challenging mathematical tasks and to get them to see that math can have meaning in their lives. At the end of the first half of the year they are introduced to this project and told that we are going to spend 4-5 days per month working on their chosen topic in order to give them an opportunity to truly make a difference.

They want to make a difference. My students want to end homelessness. My students want safe streets and communities. My students want children to have safe drinking water. My students want a better world for everyone, children who cannot read and opioid users. And my students are future voters. I want to empower them to have a voice in the world that will come after us.

They have already made a difference too. One student who did this project many years ago went on to join a group that changed the smoking age in Minnesota from 18 to 21. I can't say that this project caused that change, but that student knew what was possible after doing this project. Who knows what else they will change moving forward when they are given the tools to understand how to impact their world.

Are their positions polished? Sometimes, after all they are 13- and 14-year-olds. They may not have the most nuanced views of the policies, but if you engage with them and understand where they are coming from you can see they are earnest. Engage, learn, and have hope that the future is bright with these young people.

Thomas Totushek
Saint Paul Public Schools Math Teacher
Open World Learning Community
Tom.Totushek@spps.org

Students and Groups

Alphabetical Order

Name	Group	District		Name	Group	District
Abby H.	7	65B		Kendall J.	5	67B
Adelaide S.	1	64A		Leah C.	11	65A
Alex H.	11	64A		Leo S.	14	67A
Alexander P.	16	66A		Louisa M.	7	66B
Amelia K.	3	40B		Lucas K.	17	64A
Amos L. H.	2	65A		Lulu V.	10	65B
Andre C.	8	65B		Maggie J.	13	67A
Annika R.	9	64B		Maisy W.	7	64A
Atlas S.	1	67B		Matteo A. P.	11	64A
Atom P.	4	65A		Myya W.	5	66B
Aubrey M.	3	66A		Nabella G.	9	65B
Beatrice C.	13	64B		Nazera K.	5	65A
Brisa BS.	13	65B		Noah L.	17	64B
Cecelia M.	14	66A		Nora X	9	66B
Charles H.	4	67A		Norman S.	15	64B
Charlie N.	14	65A		Olivia S.	8	64A
Chris Y.	11	47B		Olivia T.	2	64B
Dot L. C.	3	64B		Onyx O.	10	64B
Erik I.	6	64B		Phoojywg K.	6	67A
Evelyn P.	14	64B		Rafael P.	3	65B
Fintan G.	15	47B		Riley B.	16	67B
Gabe Z.	17	65B		Riley S.	8	64A
Garrett W.	16	65B		Ronin E.	4	64A
Hajaara S.	5	65A		Rosie D.	2	65B
Ireane V.	8	65A		Rowan S.	6	64A
Jarvez R.	15	65A		Samir K.	1	65A
Jay S.	10	65B		Tip K.	10	67B
Jillian W.	13	67A		Wesley S.	9	64B
Joseph S.	4	66A		Zania H.	7	64B
Julian S.	6	64B		Zinabu P.	1	67A

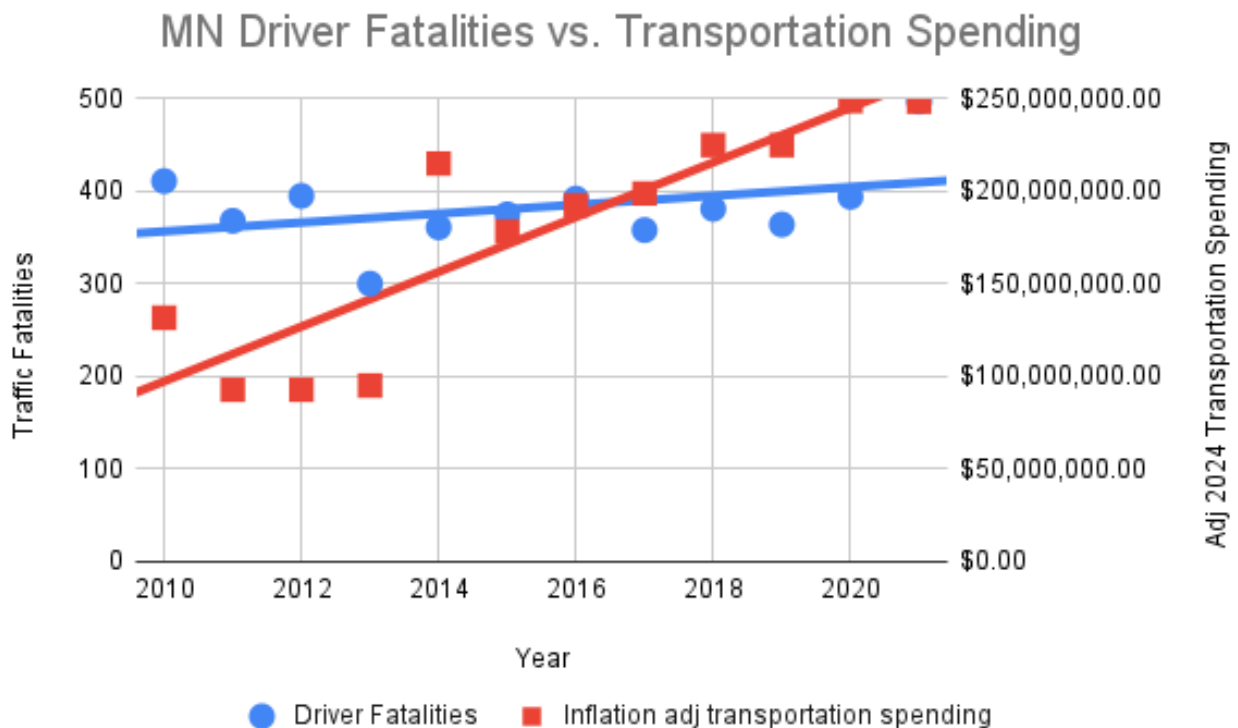
Students and Groups Ordered by District

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Chris Y.	11	47B		Amos L. H.	2	65A
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Alex H.	11	64A		Rosie D.	2	65B
Matteo A. P.	11	64A		Rafael P.	3	65B
Lucas K.	17	64A		Abby H.	7	65B
Olivia T.	2	64B		Andre C.	8	65B
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Zania H.	7	64B		Brisa BS.	13	65B
Annika R.	9	64B		Garrett W.	16	65B
Wesley S.	9	64B		Gabe Z.	17	65B
Onyx O.	10	64B		Aubrey M.	3	66A
Beatrice C.	13	64B		Joseph S.	4	66A
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				Maggie J.	13	67A
				Leo S.	14	67A
				Atlas S.	1	67B
				Kendall J.	5	67B
				Tip K.	10	67B
				Riley B.	16	67B

Traffic Fatalities in MN vs. MN Spending on Transportation

Adelaide S. (64A), Samir K. (65A), Zinabu P. (67A), and Atlas S. (67B)

Tamara Freiborg was driving West along Highway 12. Due to some road patching that had been done in the area, the rumble strip (which alerts drivers that they are crossing into oncoming traffic) along the yellow line was less pronounced, and they didn't realize they had drifted over the line. They collided head-on with a semi-truck and were pronounced dead at the scene when police arrived to investigate. The car driving directly behind Tamara also collided, but the driver survived. Tamara's case is one of the many fatal driving accidents in MN.



We are studying the relationship between transportation spending and the deaths from traffic-related incidents. All of our data is from the MN Department of Transportation and the General Fund Spending chart, released by the budget council. The graph shows the general upward trend of both transportation spending but we see that traffic deaths are rising very little.

We are suggesting spending more on transportation safety in order to lower driver fatalities in MN. We understand that the number of fatal car accidents will go up with more people driving, but it should still be a priority to keep as many people safe on the roads as possible.

Year	Driver Fatalities	Transportation Spending actual	Transportation Spending adj
2010	411	\$92,422,000	\$131,546,960
2011	368	\$65,051,000	\$92,589,010
2012	395	\$65,067,000	\$92,611,780
2013	300	\$66,634,000	\$94,842,140
2014	361	\$151,071,000	\$215,023,810
2015	375	\$125,134,000	\$178,106,910
2016	392	\$135,089,000	\$192,276,160
2017	358	\$139,089,000	\$198,772,240
2018	381	\$158,052,000	\$224,960,070
2019	364	\$204,508,000	\$291,082,270
2020	394	\$174,820,000	\$248,826,460
2021	497	\$174,550,000	\$248,442,160
Source	MNDOPS statistics	General Fund Spending by Major Area - MN budget & Management	Bls.gov inflation calculator (all \$ adjusted to January 2024 dollars)

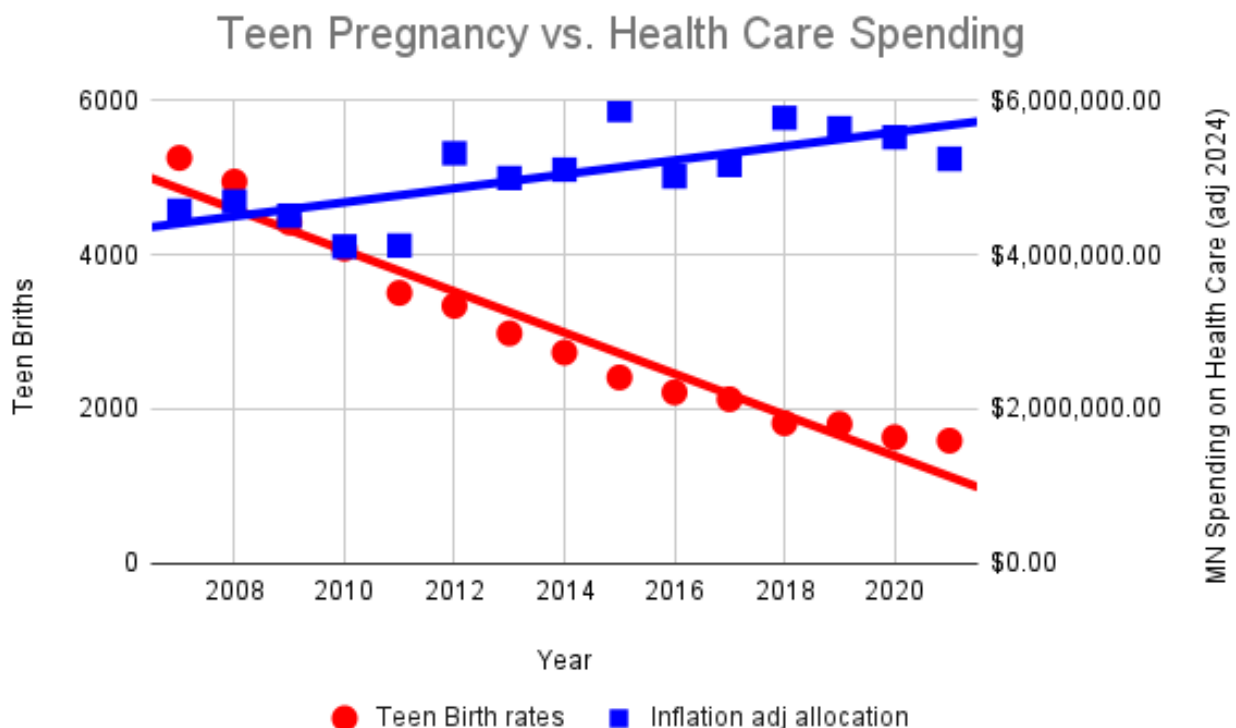
“Chelsea was not the first one to die on this highway, nor will she be the last.”

Group 2

Teen Pregnancy vs. Health Care Spending

Rosie D. (65B), Amos L.H. (65A), and Olivia T. (64B)

Every year there are upwards of 2000 teen births. One of these people is Tessily Gregory. She became pregnant at 15. She said one of the hardest parts was breaking the news to her parents. Her parents were fully supportive of her from the start. This though isn't the case for all teen moms. Reducing teen births is crucial due to its impact on various aspects of teen and child well-being. Comprehensive sex education and access to contraception empower teens to make informed choices and reduce unintended pregnancies. Support systems like counseling and parenting resources play a vital role in improving outcomes for teen parents and their children. Lack of such support can lead to increased challenges and unhappiness among teen parents, highlighting the importance of comprehensive approaches to address teen births effectively.



Our group has been studying teen births in MN. We used the University of MN sexual report, and the General Fund Spending by Major Area to collect our data. Our graph represents the amount of money and inflation put into preventing teen pregnancies and how many teen births there are. In our chart, the first line shows how there has been an increase in healthcare spending from 2007 to 2020. Our second line shows how with an increase in healthcare spending there has been a decrease in teen births from 2007 to 2020.

As a society, we have a responsibility to provide our adolescents with the necessary support to prevent teen births. By investing strategically in healthcare and ensuring that contraceptives are affordable, we can effectively decrease the number of teen pregnancies. Policymakers must continue to prioritize and sustain their support for teen pregnancy healthcare, and making contraceptives easily accessible during school hours can play a pivotal role in reducing teen birth rates.

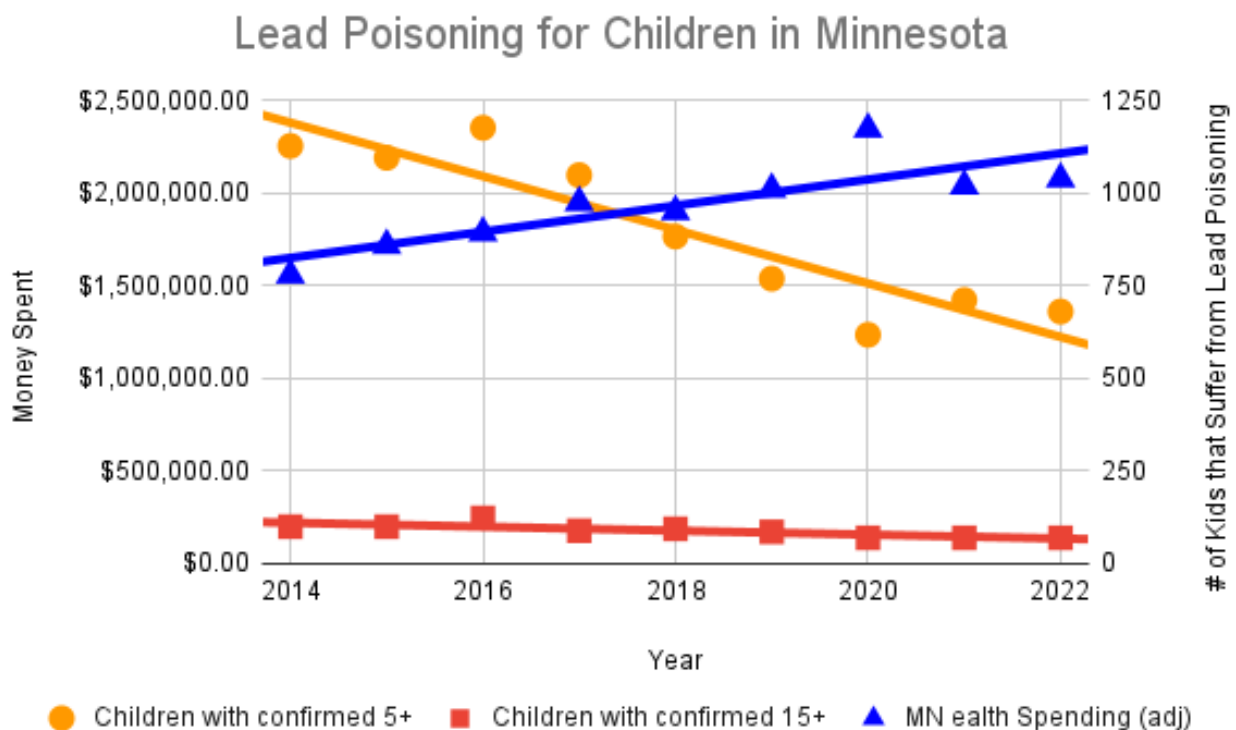
Year	Healthcare Spending Actual Thousands	Healthcare Spending Adj 2024 Thousands	Teen births
2007	\$3,292,509	\$4,573,168	5259
2008	\$3,524,154	\$4,693,997	4951
2009	\$3,385,813	\$4,508,388	4421
2010	\$3,166,111	\$4,107,980	4081
2011	\$3,227,869	\$4,120,863	3506
2012	\$4,288,490	\$5,319,306	3338
2013	\$4,093,265	\$4,997,452	2981
2014	\$4,248,812	\$5,106,726	2732
2015	\$4,889,416	\$5,881,936	2408
2016	\$4,229,041	\$5,018,599	2215
2017	\$4,464,982	\$5,169,354	2125
2018	\$5,093,997	\$5,777,966	1814
2019	\$5,051,639	\$5,642,394	1803
2020	\$5,072,579	\$5,528,317	1631
2021	\$4,880,869	\$5,245,952	1587
Sources	General Fund Spending by Major Area	bls.gov inflation calculator	CDC

Increased healthcare spending on teen pregnancy support reduces teen pregnancies. Continue focusing on reducing pregnancy rates while offering support to pregnant teens.

Lead Pipe Exposure in Minnesota vs. State Spending on Health

Amelia K. (40B,) Rafael P. (65B), Dot L.C. (64B), and Aubrey M. (66A)

Children who have been diagnosed with lead poisoning are affected by it everyday. One young toddler, who will stay anonymous for her privacy, is one of them. The lead poisoning that had settled in her brain made learning in school very difficult for her. But like any kid, she wanted to reach her full potential just like everyone else. She forced herself to put in more and more effort into school, but no matter what she did the lead had permanently damaged her brain development. Her teachers would describe her as 'hot headed' and 'impulsive' due to the lead in her blood, something out of her control. Even as an adult she never fully recovered. This child most likely got lead poisoning because her school water pipes, which tested positive for lead. Children in MN have to live with lead poisoning everyday just like this little girl, and we want to put a stop to it so no more children have to suffer.



Our project is about lead pipe exposure to children in Minnesota. We have gathered our data from the Minnesota Health Organization (MNHO), and general fund by spending area website. Our first data set shows the amount of money the MNHO is spending towards lowering lead pipe exposure before adjusting it with inflation in 2024. Our second data set shows the money the MNHO is putting towards lead pipe exposure after adjusting it to inflation in 2024. Our third data set shows the amount of Minnesota children with a 5+ µg/dL (micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood) and our 4th is the amount of children with 15+ µg/dL. The average blood test for a child without lead poisoning should show about 1.4 µg/dL. When a child has lead poisoning, it can seriously affect their health. This can include damage to their nervous system and their brain, and can slow down their development and growth. It can also result in learning, hearing, and behavior problems.

As seen on our graph, the more money that the MN health department is spending on health and human services, including replacing lead laced pipelines, the less Minnesotan children are diagnosed with high blood lead levels. Today we ask that you continue investing money into replacing these pipes so that no more children have to suffer from the awful effects that lead has on your brain and body. These effects include slowing growth and brain development which can result in a lower IQ, Learning disabilities, and underperformance in schools. The Department of health and human services has also stated that lead poisoning can lead to cancer, high blood pressure, and reproductive health issues.

Year	MN health Spending (act, thousands)	MN health Spending (adj 2024, thousands)	Children with confirmed 5+	Children with confirmed 15+
2014	\$1,181,078	\$1,557,245	1128	98
2015	\$1,301,626	\$1,717,722	1096	98
2016	\$1,372,120	\$1,786,224	1177	122
2017	\$1,479,023	\$1,950,084	1049	87
2018	\$1,527,624	\$1,900,798	883	92
2019	\$1,624,958	\$2,021,910	769	84
2020	\$1,962,788	\$2,346,609	617	68
2021	\$1,730,166	\$2,039,944	711	68
2022	\$1,893,816	\$2,077,500	680	68
Source	General Fund Spending by	bls.gov Inflation Calculator	MNHealth	MNHealth

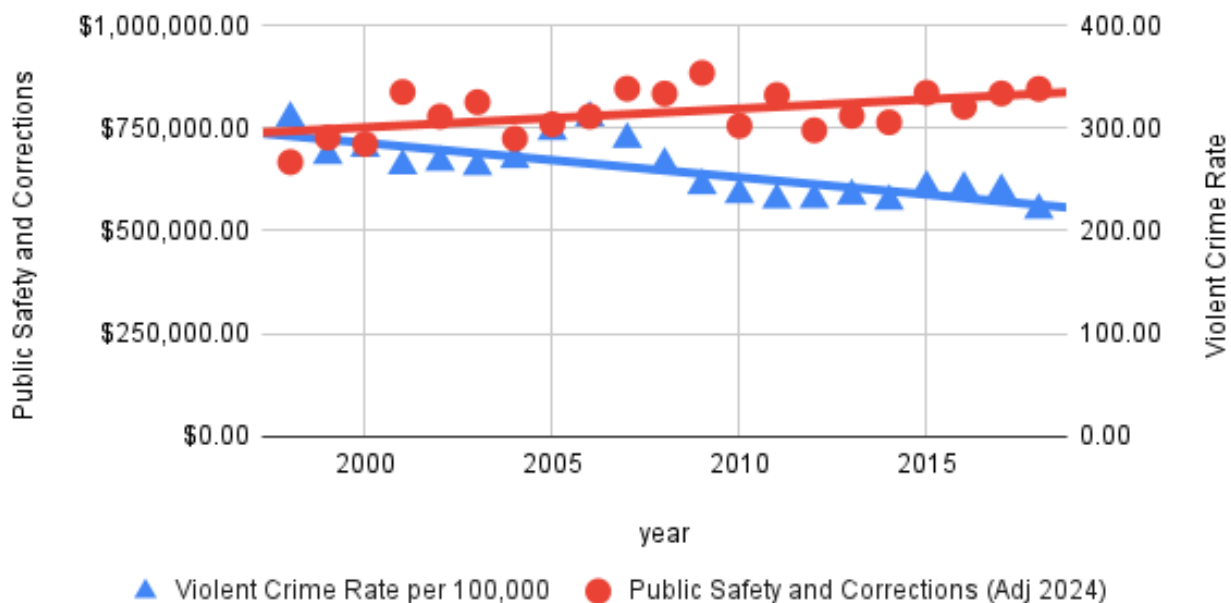
We need your investment for this problem to be resolved, so no more children suffer from degrading water systems that poison our children.

Funding Public Safety and Corrections vs. Violent Crime Rate in Minnesota

Ronin E. (64A), Atom P. (65A), Joseph S. (66A), and Charles H. (67A)

Omari Amili at the age of 16 was intrigued by living a life of luxury. This interest led him to start committing bank fraud that would give him the money to live this lavish lifestyle. But these crimes caught up to him when he was 21 getting charged with 30 felony's. Even though Omari was released after 2 years, the effects of having that many felonies on your record haunted him for many years. But Omari was able to flip his GED degree into a master and that enabled him to be able to get 3 more degrees at UW tacoma. After getting his degrees he became a teacher and public speaker.

Violent Crime Rate per 100,000 people vs. Public Safety and Corrections Spending



Our group is studying the funding of public safety and corrections vs. the amount of violent crime. We gathered our data using the Minnesota general fund spending chart after gathering our data we used the cpi inflation calculator to account for inflation. On our graph the red line shows public safety and corrections spending and the blue shows violent crime rate per 100,000 people. The combination of the lines shows the amount spent on public safety and corrections and how it correlates with crime rate. Our graph shows that the more we spend on public safety and corrections, the violent crime rate goes down.

As you spend on public safety and corrections, the Violent crime rate goes down. This concludes that it actually matters the higher you spend on public safety and corrections, because the violent crime rate will be lowered. So we are asking you to keep spending at this rate. According to our graph if you keep spending at this rate crime will completely disappear. But if you stop spending the crime rate will go up so please keep spending at this rate. The ROI

Year	Public Safety and Corrections (actual, thousands)	Public Safety and Corrections (adj 2024, thousands)	Violent crime rate per 100,000 people
1998	\$350,056	\$668,089	310.18
1999	\$387,689	\$727,753	274.00
2000	\$389,843	\$712,288	280.78
2001	\$476,388	\$839,099	263.72
2002	\$447,583	\$779,459	267.24
2003	\$479,791	\$814,396	262.95
2004	\$435,628	\$725,459	269.81
2005	\$470,205	\$760,457	297.32
2006	\$501,213	\$779,539	310.46
2007	\$556,075	\$847,280	289.63
2008	\$571,652	\$835,262	265.36
2009	\$606,324	\$885,659	244.46
2010	\$531,507	\$756,510	235.66
2011	\$593,990	\$831,869	230.45
2012	\$548,095	\$745,778	230.85
2013	\$582,952	\$780,755	234.41
2014	\$580,405	\$765,261	229.15
2015	\$634,412	\$837,217	242.94
2016	\$616,920	\$803,106	241.90
2017	\$672,085	\$835,580	239.67
2018	\$680,538	\$846,783	220.44

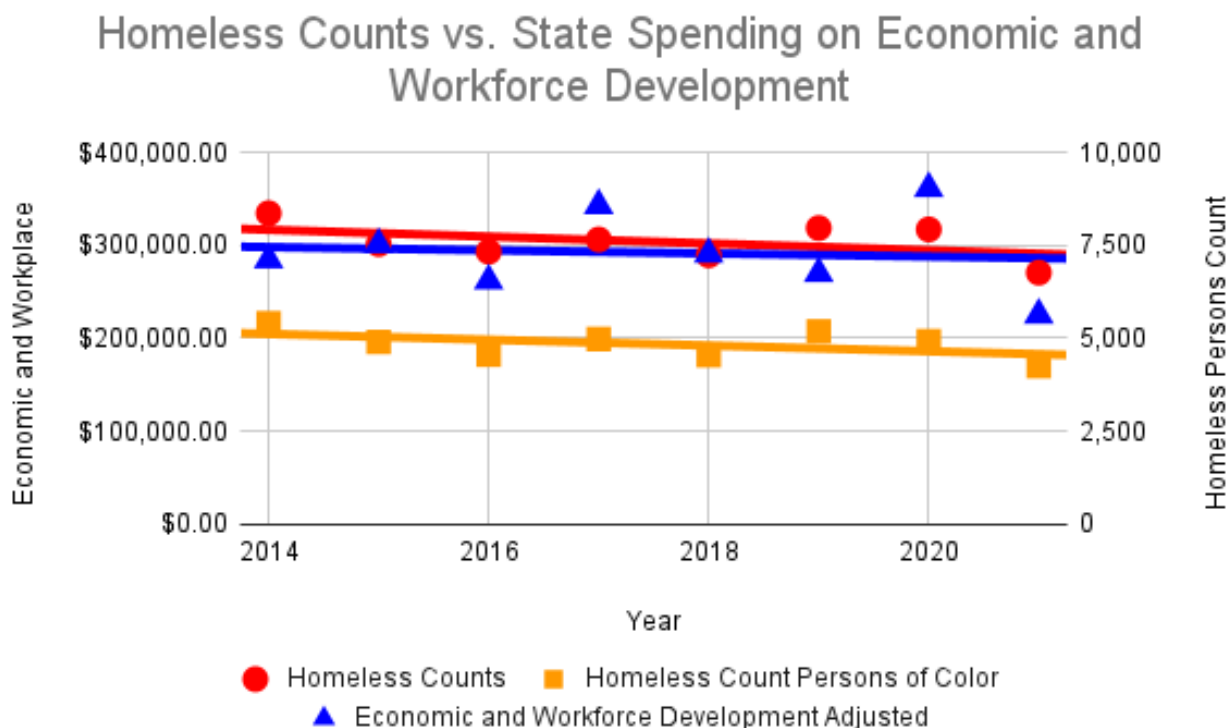
As the spending on Public safety and corrections goes up, Violent crime rate goes down. If you keep spending at this rate the violent crime rate will keep going down, so please keep spending at this rate.

Group 5

Homeless Count in MN vs. MN Spending on Economics and Workforce Development

Nazera K. (65A), Myya W. (66B), Kendall J. (67B), and Hajaara S. (65A)

The over-representation of Black women in the homeless population is not by accident. Women are more responsible for taking care of children and the elderly so they have less time to commute, which means they have less time at work. They are not making as much money as they could be. Issues of mental health, poverty, and domestic violence are not exclusive to Black women. However, Black women experience the impact of these conditions with a different intensity.



We are studying the homeless count in MN vs MN spending on economics and workforce development. Our group got the homeless count from 2014-2021 from the Point In Time Counts, our Economics and Workforce Development spending from the General Fund Spending by Major Area. The homeless rate overall and for persons of color is slowly decreasing. The Economic and Workforce Development spending is also slowly decreasing. To lower both homeless counts and increased spending in Economic and Workforce Development should increase.

It is known that steep health care costs exist among individuals that experience homelessness. It's expensive for the homeless because most of them experience poor health and use the Emergency Room. Furthermore, in big cities a major challenge is affordable housing for the homeless. If the state spends more money to help the homeless get better jobs, they will be able to afford homes.

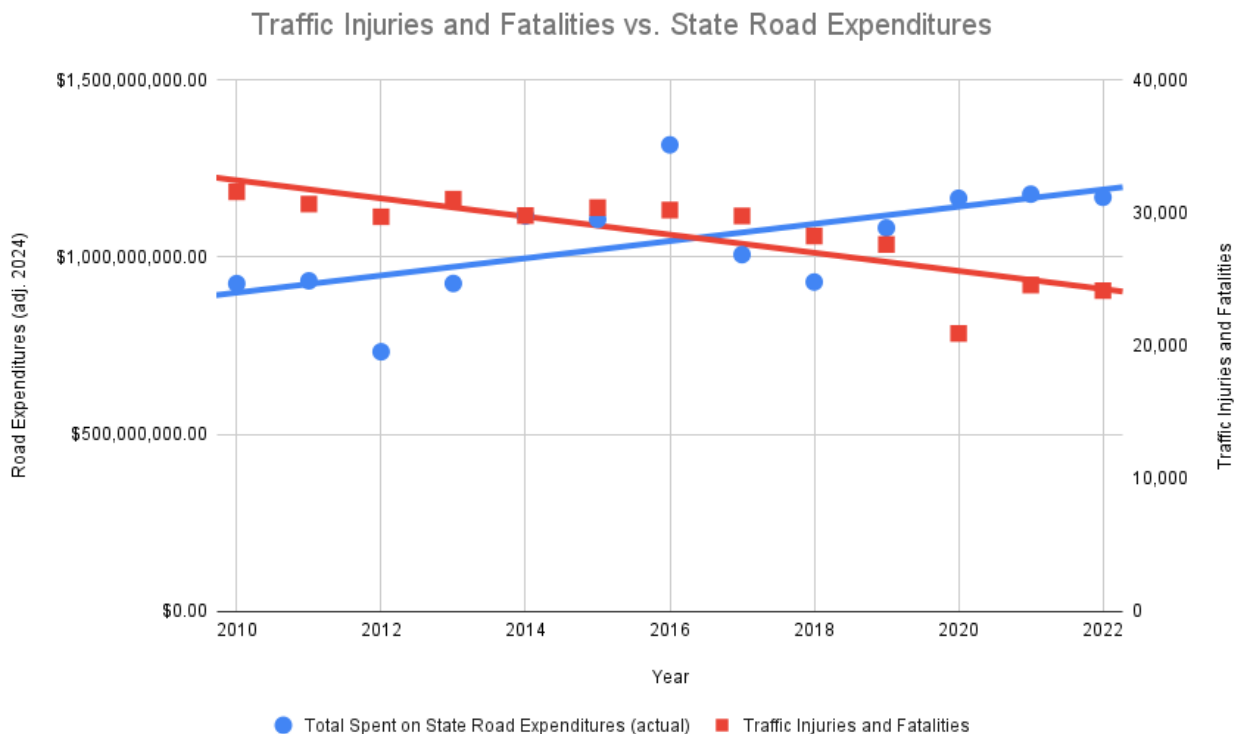
Year	Homeless Count	Homeless Count Persons of Color	Economic and Workforce Development Actual, thousands	Economic and Workforce Development Adjusted 2024, thousands
2014	8,377	5,411	\$216,068	\$284,885
2015	7,546	4,905	\$228,371	\$301,375
2016	7,341	4,561	\$198,722	\$262,248
2017	7,668	4,983	\$260,318	\$343,535
2018	7,243	4,545	\$220,596	\$291,115
2019	7,977	5,192	\$204,761	\$270,218
2020	7,940	4,924	\$174,251	\$361,922
2021	6,775	4,254	\$170,750	\$225,334
Source	Point in Time Counts	Point in Time Counts	General Fund Spending by Major Area	Bls.gov January 2024 dollars

Having homeless people is expensive and helping people get better jobs will help lower the number of homeless people.

Rate of Traffic Injuries and Fatalities vs. State Funding Towards Road Maintenance

Erik I. (64B), Julian S. (64B), Phoojywg K. (67A), and Rowan S. (64A)

A teenage girl, Cecelia Braun, received a grave brain injury in a car accident in late summer of 2023. She was driving in the intersection of 35W and County Road 2, which was repeatedly complained about because of poor sight lines, high speed differentials, and a prominent blind spot that made it difficult to see 50 mile-per-hour traffic coming from County Road 2. Braun was transported to Hennepin County Medical Center and remained in the ICU for about a month and a half. This accident and many other accidents on this same intersection could've been prevented if the road was in a safer condition, which is why more effort needs to be made to improve hazardous roads all across Minnesota.



We are studying the correlation between Traffic Injuries and Fatalities vs. State Funding Towards Road Maintenance. We found this information through local news stations and government websites. Our first line (blue) shows that funding on roads has increased in recent years. Our second line (red) shows that the number of crashes has gone down in the past few years. These lines together show that when funding towards improving roads increases, the number of injuries and fatalities caused from accidents decreases.

Our project is about traffic injuries and fatalities vs road maintenance funding in Minnesota. Our graph proves that the more funding towards road maintenance, the fewer traffic fatalities and injuries occur. Minnesota’s strong climate and the high range of weather is a big contributor to road accidents, and poor quality roads only make this worse. Funding towards public roads would improve major and minor roads. For every one dollar we invest more in road maintenance, we can expect two and a half dollars in benefits.

Year	Total Spent on State Road Expenditures (actual)	Total Spent on State Road Expenditures (Adj, 2024)	Traffic Injuries and Fatalities
2010	\$925,312,690	\$1,325,176,000	31,587
2011	\$933,156,590	\$1,314,951,520	30,663
2012	\$732,862,234	\$1,003,357,960	29,709
2013	\$925,730,165	\$1,247,516,450	31,040
2014	\$1,116,413,030	\$1,481,095,700	29,800
2015	\$1,106,778,012	\$1,469,626,450	30,392
2016	\$1,317,154,702	\$1,748,972,570	30,217
2017	\$1,007,149,678	\$1,287,044,180	29,770
2018	\$929,849,980	\$1,164,157,880	28,258
2019	\$1,082,527,857	\$1,334,605,720	27,624
2020	\$1,166,328,258	\$1,403,033,300	20,923
2021	\$1,177,838,607	\$1,397,319,980	24,571
2022	\$1,169,033,047	\$1,290,357,160	24,149
	Minnesota Transportation Finance Database	bls.gov	MN Compass

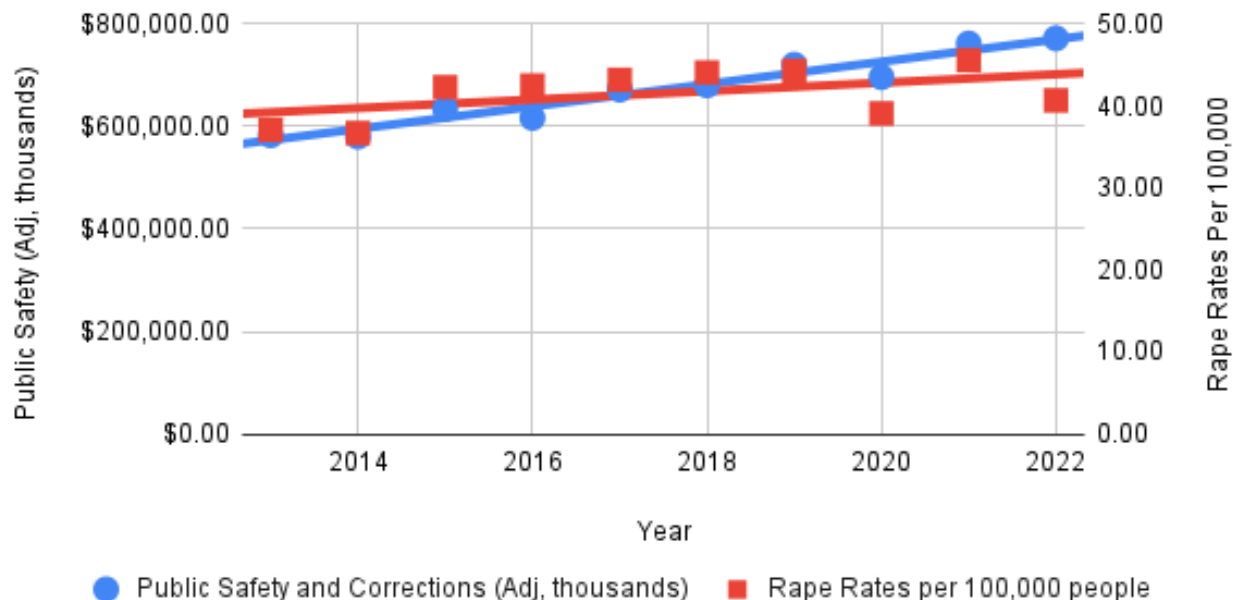
We would like to spend additional funding toward improving roads because it will decrease injuries and fatalities.

Minnesota State Spending on Public Safety and Corrections vs. Rape Rates

Maisy W. (64A), Zania H. (64B), Abby H. (65B), and Louisa M. (66B)

In 2014, Abby Honold, a University of Minnesota student, was raped by a fellow student, Daniel Drill-Mellum. Abby felt unsafe for weeks after she was assaulted, and slept holding a taser given to her by her mom. Abby also suffered from PTSD and was unable to move without flashbacks of the assault. She was given a lack of support from law enforcement officers, and was once told by a police officer, "It doesn't sound like you said the word 'no' - boys really understand the word 'no'. You should try that next time." In 2016, 2 years after she was raped, Abby spoke up and shared her story to the public. Her case was recognized, and she was able to introduce a federal bill, the Abby Honold Act, which aims to better train law enforcement for sexual assault cases. As a result, Daniel was charged with two counts of third-degree criminal sexual conduct, but only faced 74 months in prison. Although Abby's story was heard and her assaulter was convicted many other women and girls aren't given the same opportunity.

Minnesota State Spending on Public Safety and Corrections vs. Rape Rates



We are studying Minnesota State Spending on Public Safety and Corrections vs Rape Rates. We used data from General Fund Spending by Major Area and Crime Data Explorer. The information for our paragraph was taken from AbbyHonold.com, Men as Peacemakers, and Wikipedia. The graph above shows the rape rates per 100,000 residents, which is shown in the red line, and how it corresponds with state spending on public safety and corrections, which is shown in the blue line. This graph shows that the number of rapes are rising despite the increase in public safety and corrections spending.

We are asking policy makers to increase state spending on funding bills similar to the Abby Honold Act, which is part of a trial period that will end this year, to better train law enforcement officers for sexual assault cases. According to a Star Tribune investigation that reviewed more than 1,000 sexual assault cases in Minnesota, 75% were not forwarded to prosecutors. In Minnesota, the number of rapes has gone up due to this lack of prosecution. In order to keep these numbers down, more effort to investigate and convict sexual assault offenders is needed. The expected ROI includes less rapes and more sexual assault offenders being convicted.

Year	Public Safety and Corrections (Actual in thousands)	Public Safety and Corrections (Adjusted in thousands)	Rape Rates per 100,000 people
2013	\$582,952	\$780,755	37.1
2014	\$580,405	\$775,809	36.7
2015	\$634,412	\$837,217	42.3
2016	\$616,920	\$803,106	42.5
2017	\$672,085	\$853,580	43.2
2018	\$680,538	\$846,783	44.1
2019	\$720,728	\$883,092	44.3
2020	\$696,470	\$832,664	39.1
2021	\$762,068	\$898,513	45.6
2022	\$772,234	\$847,134	40.7
Source	General Fund Spending by Major Area	BLS.gov Inflation Calculator	https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/

In order to decrease rape rates in Minnesota, we are asking to increase state spending on better training law enforcement officers for sexual assault cases.

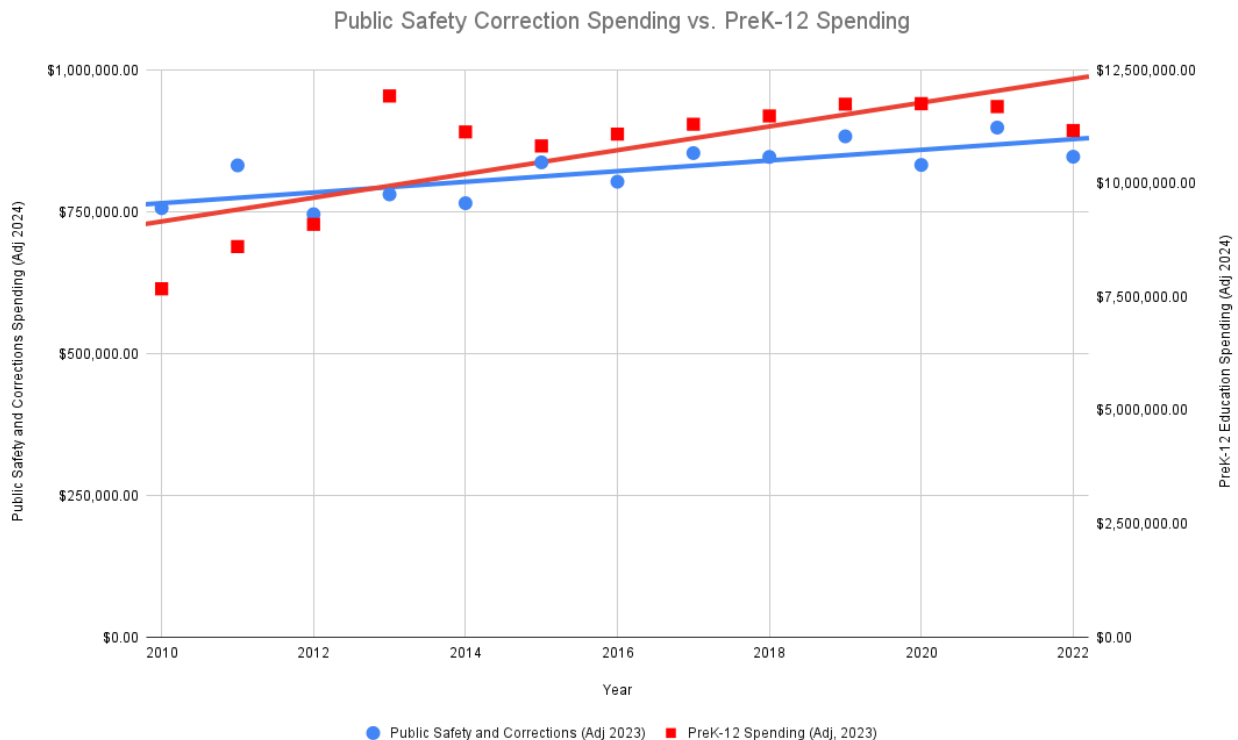
Group 8

MN Spending on Public Safety and Corrections vs. Spending on PreK-12 Education

Olivia S. (64A), Ireane V. (65A), Riley S. (64A), and Andre C. (65B)

Heartland Boys academy is a boarding school for troubled teens, it is a non-denominational Christian Boarding school, it's a school that detaches troubled boys from the negative things going on at home. They go on adventures and introduce teenage boys to be more motivated, calling a lead way for teens to fulfill a purpose individually in Christ.

Heartland mostly works with boys who are troubled, under performing, and on a bad path. Parents usually send their boys into this program to help put them on a better path and help to grow within nature and Christ.



Our group is studying Minnesota spending on public safety and correctional spending vs. spending on preK-12 education. We got our data from bis.gov inflation calculator and general fund spending by major area. Education spending from 2010-2022 is increasing. During that same period public safety and corrections also increased. However, education spending is growing faster than public safety spending.

It is clear that the rate of increase of spending on PreK-12 is higher than the rate of increase of Public Safety and Corrections. It would seem troubling if Public Safety and Corrections increased faster than PreK-12, even if PreK-12 has higher spending yearly. We believe this is very important for the future of our community.

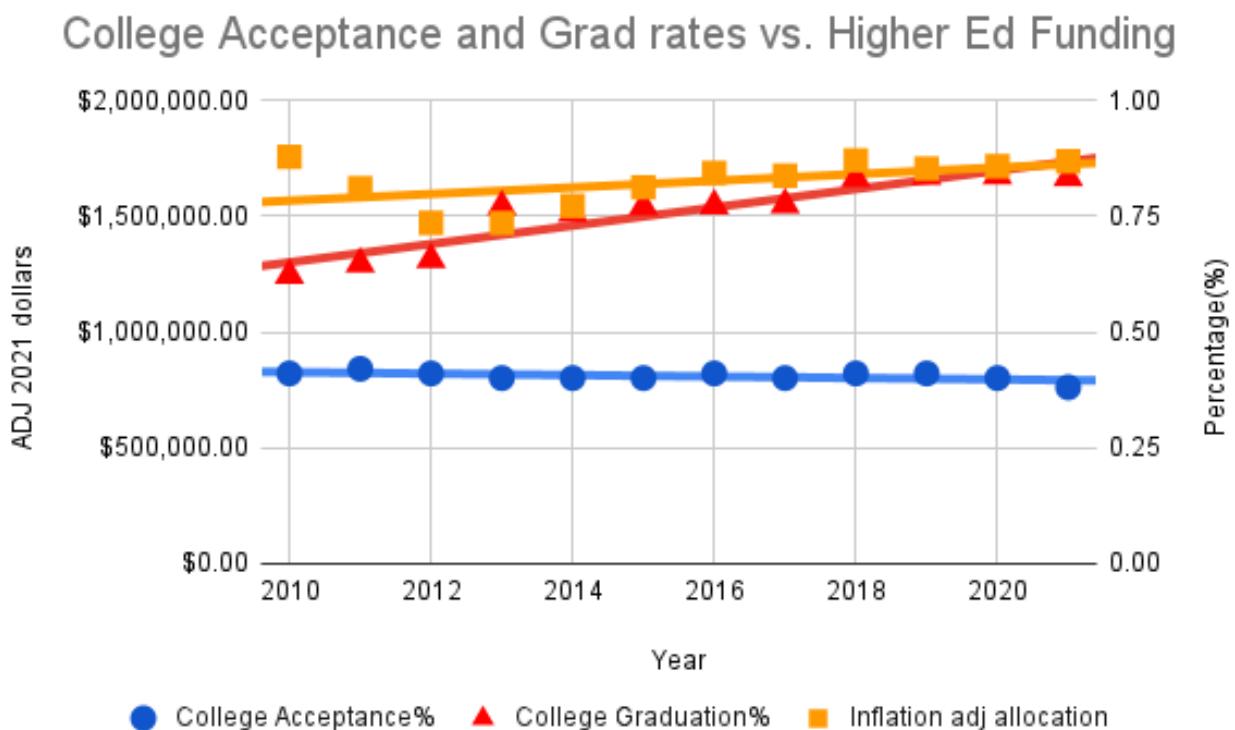
Year	Public Safety and Corrections, thousands	Public Safety and Corrections (Adj 2024, thousands)	PreK-12 Spending, thousands	PreK-12 Spending (Adj 2024, thousands)
2010	\$531,507	\$756,510	\$5,395,913	\$7,680,162
2011	\$593,990	\$831,869	\$6,148,293	\$8,610,536
2012	\$548,095	\$745,778	\$6,687,479	\$9,099,474
2013	\$582,952	\$780,755	\$8,905,875	\$11,927,754
2014	\$580,405	\$765,261	\$8,446,137	\$11,136,187
2015	\$634,412	\$837,217	\$8,204,234	\$10,826,912
2016	\$616,920	\$803,106	\$8,516,938	\$11,087,341
2017	\$672,085	\$853,580	\$8,901,333	\$11,305,113
2018	\$680,538	\$846,783	\$9,233,048	\$11,488,536
2019	\$720,728	\$883,092	\$9,587,811	\$11,747,727
2020	\$696,470	\$832,664	\$9,835,739	\$11,759,109
2021	\$762,068	\$898,513	\$9,919,135	\$11,695,108
2022	\$772,234	\$847,134	\$10,180,844	\$11,168,301
Source	General Fund Spending by Major Area	bis.gov inflation calculator	General Fund Spending by Major Area	bis.gov inflation calculator

The spending on preK- 12 education is outpacing spending on public safety and corrections, and this is consistent with our state's values.

College Graduation and Acceptance Rate in MN vs. State Funding of the College Education System

Nora X. (66B), Wesley S. (64B), Nabella G. (65B), and Annika R. (64B)

Mandi Conway is a non-graduate student that managed to get her job as a fundraiser because of her skill sets and knowledge. She struggled with college and was very nervous because college acceptance rates were pretty low back then, but the graduation rate stressed her out even more. Her parents wanted her to attend University but she refused and dropped out of college. She thought she wouldn't find a job because she didn't have a college degree, but luckily found a job that suits her and she is now working hard.



Many colleges are starting to accept fewer people over time, although graduation rates do increase, that's because of the small amount of people actually getting into a college. Info from Signature College Counseling shows that over the years, it gets harder to be accepted into a college. Graduation rates are starting to rise, but even with a large graduation rate, some students don't manage to graduate and some end up dropping out of college. Even with more money spent to support colleges, only the graduation rate increases while the acceptance rate decreases over time.

Our studies show that college rates for graduation are taking over the rates for acceptance into a college. Acceptance rates are slowly decreasing while the government spends money on higher education, yet the graduation rate increases. Fewer people will have a chance to attend college because of these slow changes, and some students end up dropping out because of the college tuition fees. Although being a dropout seems bad, college non graduates can still find a job, but the difference between the income for a college graduate and a college non graduate is slowly widening. Jobs are focusing on the education one has from school experience, so college non graduates are getting paid less than college graduates.

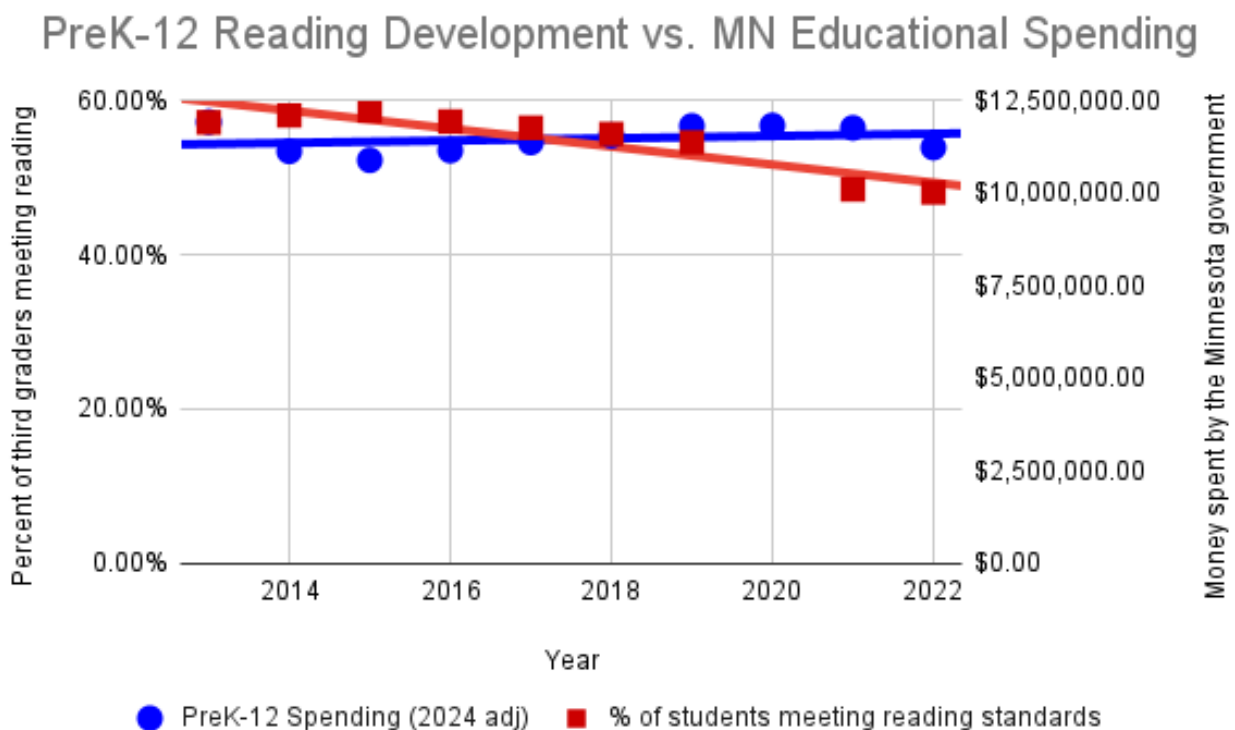
Year	College Acceptance%	College Graduation%	MN funding on higher ED	Inflation adj allocation
2010	41%	62.23%	\$1,455,940	\$1,757,593.66
2011	42%	64.71%	\$1,356,673	\$1,622,153.34
2012	41%	65.66%	\$1,275,446	\$1,471,924.27
2013	40%	77.10%	\$1,295,095	\$1,471,137.49
2014	40%	75.70%	\$1,381,461	\$1,544,850.85
2015	40%	77.10%	\$1,452,199	\$1,625,407.54
2016	41%	77.30%	\$1,529,168	\$1,688,374.04
2017	40%	77.50%	\$1,555,720	\$1,675,794.86
2018	41%	83.20%	\$1,651,198	\$1,742,562.24
2019	41%	83.70%	\$1,642,451	\$1,706,853.93
2020	40%	83.80%	\$1,693,377	\$1,717,080.38
2021	38%	83.40%	\$1,714,340	\$1,738,336.81
Sources	https://nces.ed.gov/pr/ogams/coe/indicator/cpb/college-enrollment-rate	https://nscresearchcenter.org/signaturereport16/ https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNMDE/bulletins/2403562 https://nscresearchcenter.org/completing-college/	General Fund Spending Major Areas	Inflation calculation: BLS.gov inflation calculator+

The dropout crisis overlooks disengaged students in school, missing those who don't enjoy or benefit from it, unaccounted for statistically.

PreK-12th Educational Spending vs. 3rd Grade Reading Development

Onyx O. (64B), Lulu V. (65B), Jay S. (65B), and Tip K. (67B)

Wanda struggled with reading in elementary school. She never learned how to read in full sentences, and never got the help she needed. In middle school during group reading, she would stop on words she didn't know and the teacher would then pass the reading on. Wanda now has 4 kids and has to create stories that go along with pictures in the book to make up for the fact she couldn't read it. When the kids got sick she would take out the medicine bottle but couldn't read the labels, so she didn't know the dosage to give. The one thing she wanted to accomplish the most is to learn how to read. She went back to school and could read simpler words but the larger words are the ones she had issues with. She would get frustrated with reading the words, but she would get back up and try again. She came a long way and she couldn't be more proud of herself.



We are studying PreK-12th grade reading development vs MN educational spending. We got our data through the Inflation Calculator and the General Fund Spending by Major Area pdf. Our first line on our graph says the percent of third graders meeting reading standards. Our second says money spent by the Minnesota government on PreK-12 education. The combination of our lines show the amount of money being spent is inclining, but the percent of students meeting the reading standards is declining.

Not being able to read has a massive impact not only on the person that struggles with reading, but can also have an effect on all the people they interact with and the world around them. More educational spending needs to be spent on having a direct intervention on not only reading but PreK-12 learning as a whole.

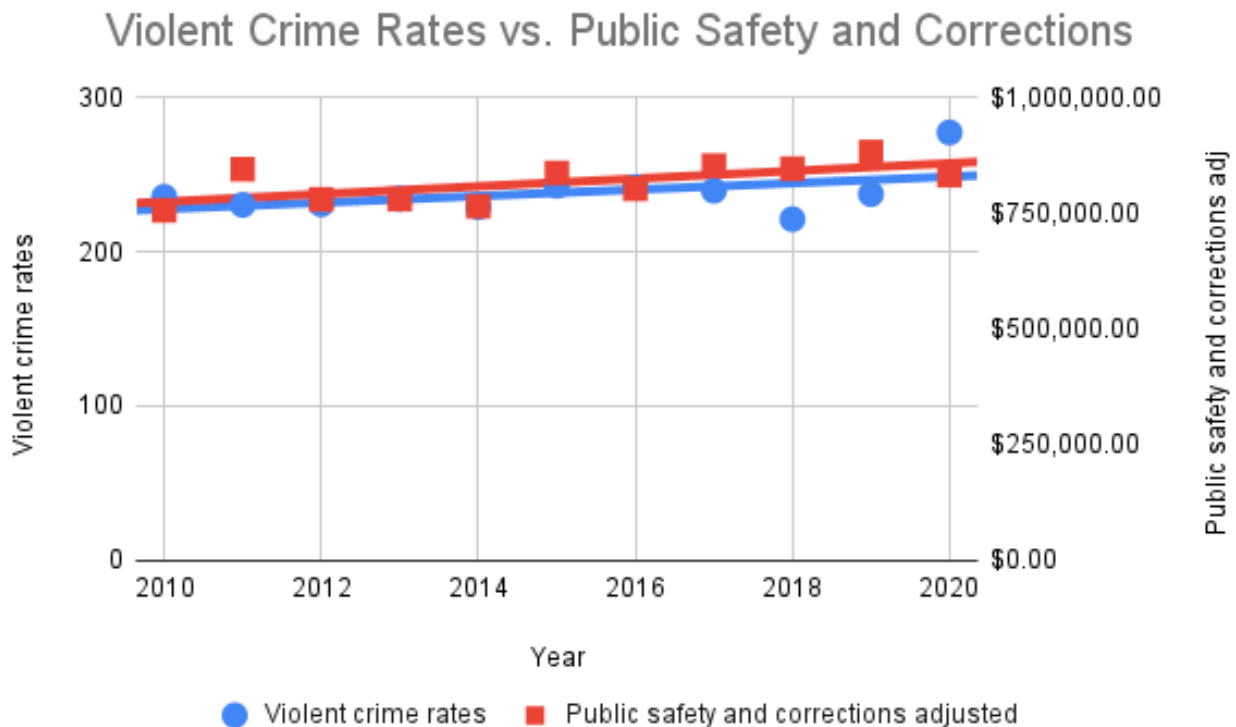
Year	% of 3rd grade students meeting reading standards	PreK-12 Spending actual, thousands	PreK-12 Spending (2024 adj) thousands
2013	57.2%	\$8,905,875	\$11,927,754
2014	58.1%	\$8,446,137	\$11,136,186
2015	58.7%	\$8,204,234	\$10,893,927
2016	57.3%	\$8,516,938	\$11,155,967
2017	56.5%	\$8,901,333	\$11,375,088
2018	55.7%	\$9,233,048	\$11,559,646
2019	54.6%	\$9,587,811	\$11,820,441
2020	no data	\$9,835,739	\$11,831,894
2021	48.5%	\$9,919,135	\$11,767,497
2022	48.1%	\$10,180,844	\$11,237,420
Source	MN Compass	General Fund Spending by Major Area	bls.gov Inflation calculator

Rather than simply increasing funds for educational spending, funding targeted literacy intervention for kids who are struggling will be more effective for combating illiteracy.

Violent Crime Numbers vs. MN Spending on Public Safety and Corrections

Alex H. (64A), Chris Y. (47B), Leah C. (65A), and Matteo A.P. (64A)

In 2010 a man named, 'Nick Firkus' a 40 year old man, had hid his financial problems and the bills that he said he was taking care of from his wife. When Nick finally told his wife the truth they got into a nasty fight that lasted a couple hours. They soon went to bed and around 6:30 in the morning Heidi woke up to the sound of someone supposedly breaking into her house so she called the police. Near the end of the call the operator heard a loud noise that soon followed with a scream from Heidi shortly after. Around 65 seconds later Nick, Heidi's husband called 911 from Heidi's phone claiming that someone had forced entry and shot him and his wife, when police arrived they found Heidi dead and Nick shot in the leg and they quickly took him to hospital and treated him for a shotgun wound to the leg.



After he was treated for his wound he was taken to the police station for questioning. Nick said he was getting a glass of water from the bathroom when he heard someone trying to open the front door and he grabbed his shotgun and woke up Heidi telling her to call the police. He also claims that he was trying to rush him and his wife down the stairs so they could escape but the person who was trying to get in broke in and shot him and his wife and they ran off soon after. This was proven to be false when a neighbor came forward and talked to police saying that they had cameras to see what really happened and the cameras show that there was no one trying to break in at any point of time. In 2021 the police soon had enough evidence to send Nick to trial. On January 27th 2023 he was found guilty with two counts of murder and life in prison, without a chance of parole.

We are studying spending on Public Safety and Corrections versus Violent Crime Rates. We got our data for violent crime rates from the Federal Bureau of Investigation Crime Data Explorer. We found the spending on public safety and corrections (not adjusted for inflation) in the General Spend Funding by Major Area PDF. We found our spending on public safety and corrections adjusted for inflation in the same PDF. We ran the numbers through an inflation calculator to find out the amount in today's currency. Our graph shows the trend lines for violent crime rates and public spending on safety and corrections over the ten years between 2010-2020. The blue line and its points represent the violent crime rates. The red represents the spending on public safety and corrections. Overall Spending and Violent Crime Rates have both gone up showing a positive correlation. Therefore spending more to prevent Violent Crimes is not enough to reduce the rates and more needs to be done.

We are asking the Policy Makers to not increase the budget, but to use the money for other important causes such as funds for the many homeless shelters so that they can be more effective. The reason that we are saying not to increase the budget is because it is not causing crime rates to go down, in fact, both spending and crime rates were going up from 2010-2020. Therefore, we need to focus our money on different areas of safety, such as healthcare.

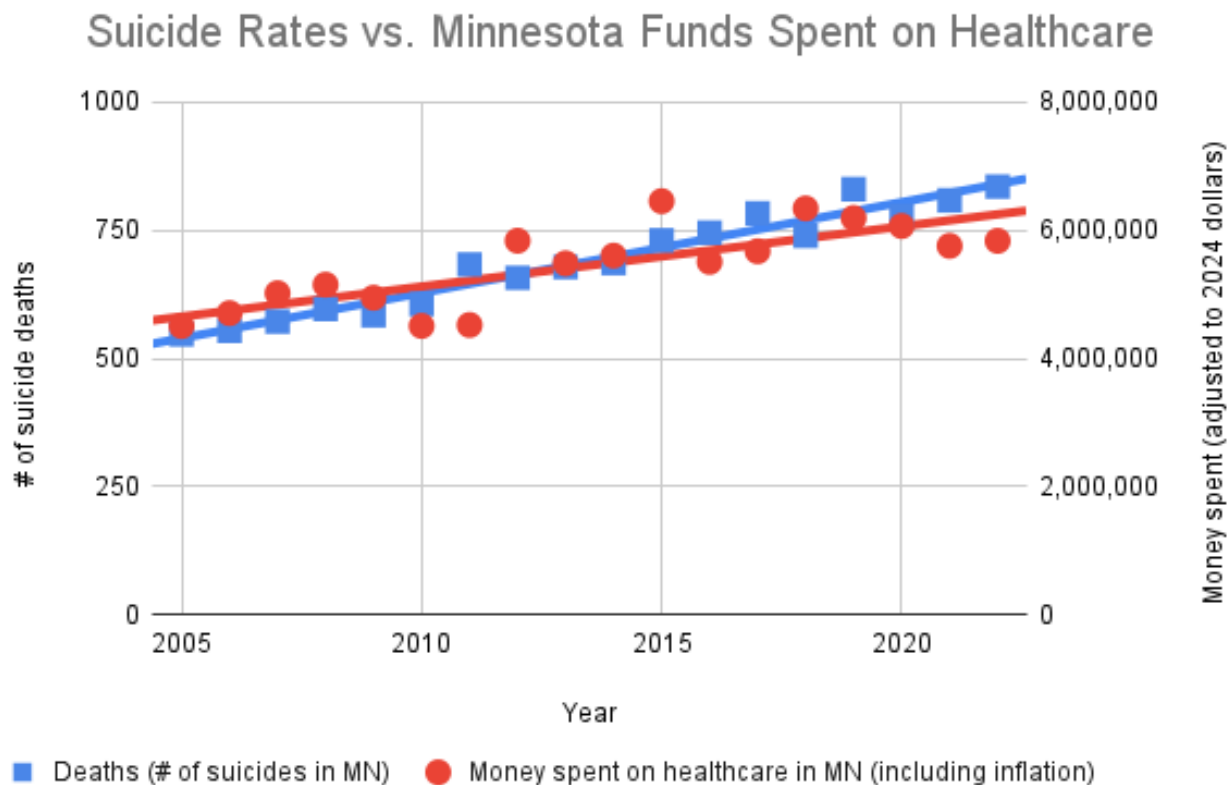
We need to stop increasing our spending because it isn't getting us anywhere. We need to use the money for other causes, like homelessness and healthcare.

Year	Violent Crime Rate	Public Safety and Corrections Actual Thousands	Public Safety and Corrections Adjusted 2024 Thousands
2010	235.7	\$531,507	\$756,509
2011	230.5	\$593,990	\$845,443
2012	230.9	\$548,095	\$780,119
2013	234.4	\$582,952	\$780,755
2014	229.1	\$580,403	\$765,206
2015	242.9	\$634,412	\$837,216
2016	241.9	\$616,902	\$803,105
2017	239.7	\$672,085	\$853,579
2018	221.2	\$680,538	\$846,782
2019	237.5	\$720,728	\$883,091
2020	277.5	\$696,470	\$832,663
Source	FBI Crime Data https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/	General Fund Spending by Major Area	Bls.gov inflation calculator January 2024

Suicide Rates vs. Minnesota Funds Spent on Healthcare

Maggie J. (67A), Brisa BS. (65B), Beatrice C. (64B), and Jillian W. (67A)

In 2016, Hennepin County citizen Toni Plante lost her 15-year-old daughter, Ana, to suicide. Ana had been struggling with her mental health for years and had attempted to overdose several times in the past. Toni took Ana to see therapists, social workers and psychiatrists once she saw Ana's condition worsening. Ana was prescribed antidepressants and medication for attention deficit disorder. Shortly after receiving medication, Ana seemed to be recovering, and Toni went out to walk their dogs. When she returned, Ana had taken her life. Toni had tried to help Ana the best she could. Unfortunately, not all families are able to help their loved ones like Toni was able to as a result of insurance and financial issues.



We looked at the rates of suicide in Minnesota compared to the amount of money spent on healthcare in the state. We used the general fund spending by major areas to determine how much the state spent on healthcare per year, then adjusted for inflation. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention allowed us to access the suicide rates and deaths by suicide in Minnesota throughout the years. The data shows that although spending on healthcare has risen, suicide rates have gone up, showing that the money being spent on healthcare in Minnesota is not reaching those with mental health struggles in need of help.

In the U.S, 42% of adults cannot afford mental health help. Money going towards healthcare is evidently not getting to those struggling with their mental health and therefore should be put towards making mental healthcare affordable and accessible to all Minnesota residents. 28.3% of Minnesotans struggle with their mental health. If Minnesota healthcare spending went to those 819,000 people, suicide rates would lower significantly. The benefits will include an increase in jobs and available facilities for mental health help, less suicide attempts and subsequently a decrease in hospital and emergency services, multiplying available hospital beds. Affordable and attainable mental health help will foster a more content population, benefitting the workforce and education systems due to increased regular attendance.

Year	Deaths (# of suicides in MN)	Money Spent on Healthcare	Money Spent on Healthcare (adj. for inflation 2024)
2005	547	\$2,785,008	\$4,504,163
2006	554	\$3,025,384	\$4,705,395
2007	572	\$3,292,509	\$5,016,727
2008	596	\$3,524,154	\$5,149,275
2009	584	\$3,385,813	\$4,945,664
2010	606	\$3,166,111	\$4,506,419
2011	683	\$3,227,869	\$4,520,553
2012	657	\$4,288,049	\$5,835,234
2013	678	\$4,093,265	\$5,482,163
2014	686	\$4,248,812	\$5,602,036
2015	730	\$4,889,416	\$6,452,434
2016	745	\$4,229,041	\$5,505,361
2017	783	\$4,464,982	\$5,670,738
2018	739	\$5,093,997	\$6,338,380
2019	830	\$5,051,639	\$6,189,659
2020	778	\$5,072,579	\$6,064,517
2021	808	\$4,880,869	\$5,754,765
2022	835	\$5,317,469	\$5,833,219

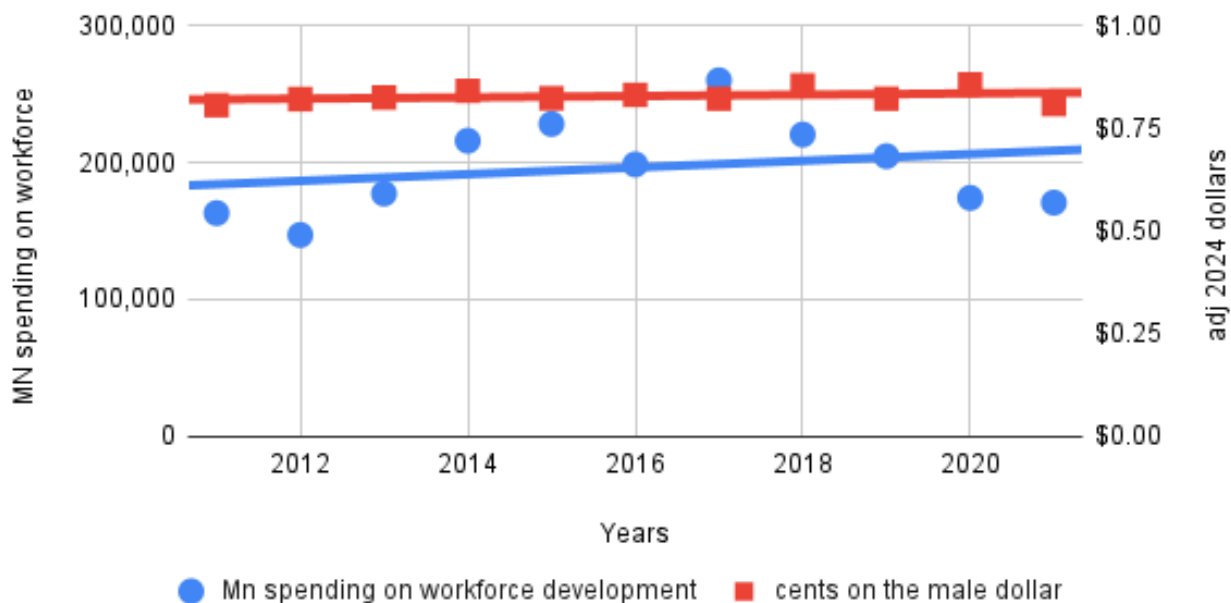
“28.3% of Minnesotans struggle with their mental health. If Minnesota healthcare spending went to those 819,000 people, suicide rates would lower significantly.”

Women's and Men's Pay in the Workspace in MN vs. MN Spending on Workplace and Economic Development

Cecilia M. (66A), Charlie N. (65A), Evelyn P. (64B), and Leo S. (67A)

Her water broke at 27 weeks, which means she was in the hospital for a month. The babies were born eight weeks early, which means mom had gone through all her sick time much earlier than she thought she would. As a result, she had five weeks unpaid. Mom went back to work for two weeks so that she could get back on her insurance over the summer, (because she was paying out of pocket for insurance she had to do COBRA which is about \$2,000 a month). She rushed back to work before she was ready just to get insurance for three months over the summer.

MN Spending On Workforce Development vs. Cents On The Male Dollar



Our graph represents that though the cost of workforce development in Minnesota has gone up, women have still consistently been paid less than men. Data collected from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) U.S. The Department of Labor shows that despite the MN Spending on Economic and Workforce Development only going up, women are still being paid less than men. The two lines shown on the graph representing MN spending on workforce development and cents on the male dollar, both are going up. This combination of lines shows that we must find a different way to fix this unequal pay because it's clear that the current government spending hasn't changed much.

One of the primary drivers of gender pay inequality is the absence of paid Family and Maternity leave for women. Childbirth and childcare demand significant physical and emotional labor from mothers, often necessitating their full attention postpartum. Despite these challenges, maternity leave is frequently unpaid, placing considerable financial strain on mothers. New mothers are often having to return to work too early, missing out on important developmental moments of their child. Particularly single mothers who may face months without income when they need it most. We strongly urge policymakers to institute a 12-week paid Maternity leave policy for pregnant individuals and new mothers. Providing paid leave would not only reduce the likelihood of medical complications during and after pregnancy but also improve maternal and infant health outcomes. For instance, paid leave enables mothers to prioritize their health, enhancing fetal development and reducing the risk of health issues such as diabetes and cancer. Moreover, by ensuring financial stability during this critical period, paid maternity leave

Year	MN Spending on Economic and Workforce Development thousands	MN Spending on Economic and Workforce Development (Adj 2024) thousands	Cents on the Male Dollar
2011	\$163,109	\$228,430	80.7
2012	\$147,069	\$200,113	82.2
2013	\$177,400	\$237,594	82.6
2014	\$216,068	\$284,885	84.2
2015	\$228,371	\$301,375	82.4
2016	\$198,722	\$258,696	83.2
2017	\$260,318	\$330,616	82.3
2018	\$220,596	\$274,484	85.5
2019	\$204,761	\$250,889	82.3
2020	\$174,251	\$208,326	85.8
2021	\$170,750	\$201,322	81.0
Source	General Fund Spending by Major Area	Bls.gov inflation calculator	bls.gov

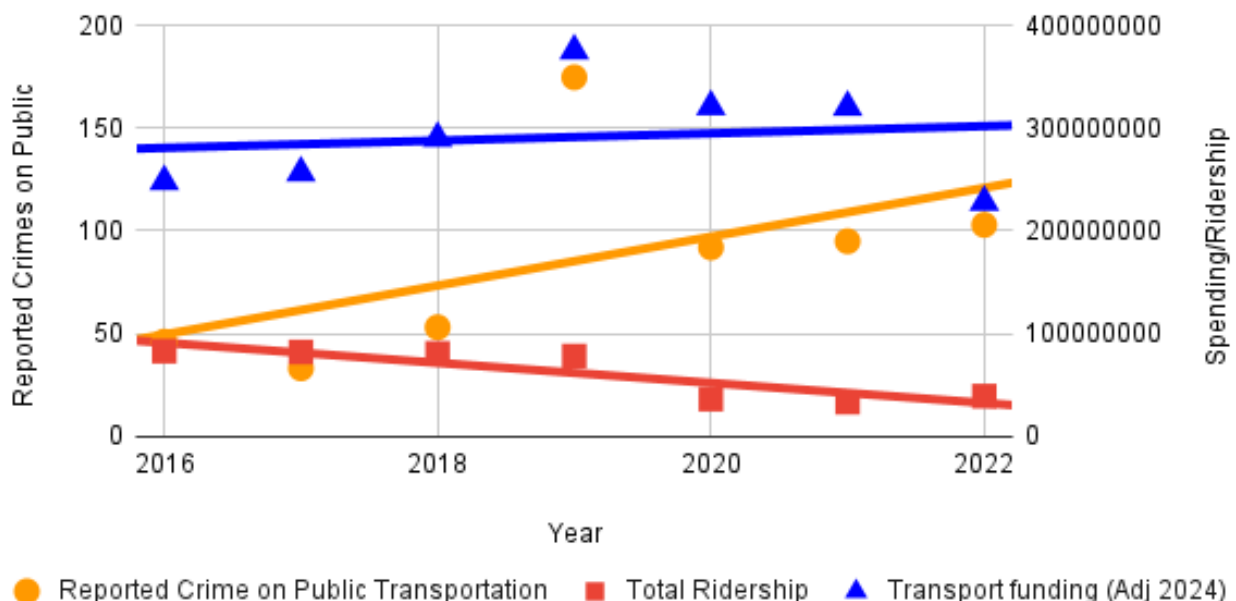
When you're stressed about not having enough in your paycheck for necessities, not having paid parental leave just adds to the level of stress of being a mom.

Funding For Transportation vs. Crime on Public Transportation

Fintan G. (47B), Jarvez R. (65A) and Norman S. (64B)

In 2018 a Metro Transit bus driver was BRUTALLY attacked on the job. He was assaulted in north Minneapolis on the Route 5 bus. A passenger caught the completely unprovoked attack on camera and put it all over social media. "I don't know anybody who can look at this video and think that it is anything less than how disgusting and horrific this attack was," said Metro Transit spokesman Howie Padilla. The attack was so brutal that the bus driver left the bus driver with blood on his nose and upper lip, an abrasion to his right eyelid, and several scrapes on his forehead, according to the complaint. "When we saw the video on Facebook, we were disgusted. When I saw it, I cried, "It was such a horrible attack." said Christy Bailly, Metro Transit's director of bus transportation. The bus driver told authorities he was suffering from double vision from the attack. 26 year old Sterling Verloz Smith is facing third degree assault and obstruction of a transit vehicle.

Crime and Ridership on Public Transportation vs. Transportation Spending over time



Our graph shows how funding is trending slowly upwards and crime is skyrocketing on Metro Transit. If funding from. Crime will continue upwards and surpass funding and so ridership will continue its downward trend. This means that its funding will probably go down because of less demand and it will make people not want to go on the buses and trains. This makes it a more appealing place to do criminal acts. The total ridership stats given to us by the Metropolitan City Council show that ridership has been decreasing slowly but steadily, probably because it's still recovering from Covid.

If you funded security for public transportation, people who used things like the bus to get to work, an appointment, or a job interview could use the bus without fearing for their safety. There would be fewer instances where bus drivers are brutally attacked, and if people aren't being assaulted and there aren't people committing crimes, then people won't go to prison, which would decrease the crime rate, increase profits from public transportation, and improve society. This, in turn, would benefit the world.

Year	Transportation Funding (Actual)	Transport Funding (Adj 2024)	Reported Crimes (assault, robbery, etc)	Total Ridership
2016	\$135,089,000	\$248,350,000	46	82,624,185
2017	\$139,653,000	\$256,741,000	33	81,927,424
2018	\$158,052,000	\$290,566,000	53	80,653,414
2019	\$204,508,000	\$375,972,000	175	77,927,249
2020	\$174,820,000	\$321,393,000	92	35,862,563
2021	\$174,550,000	\$320,896,000	95	32,864,284
2022	\$124,556,000	\$228,286,000	103	38,794,642

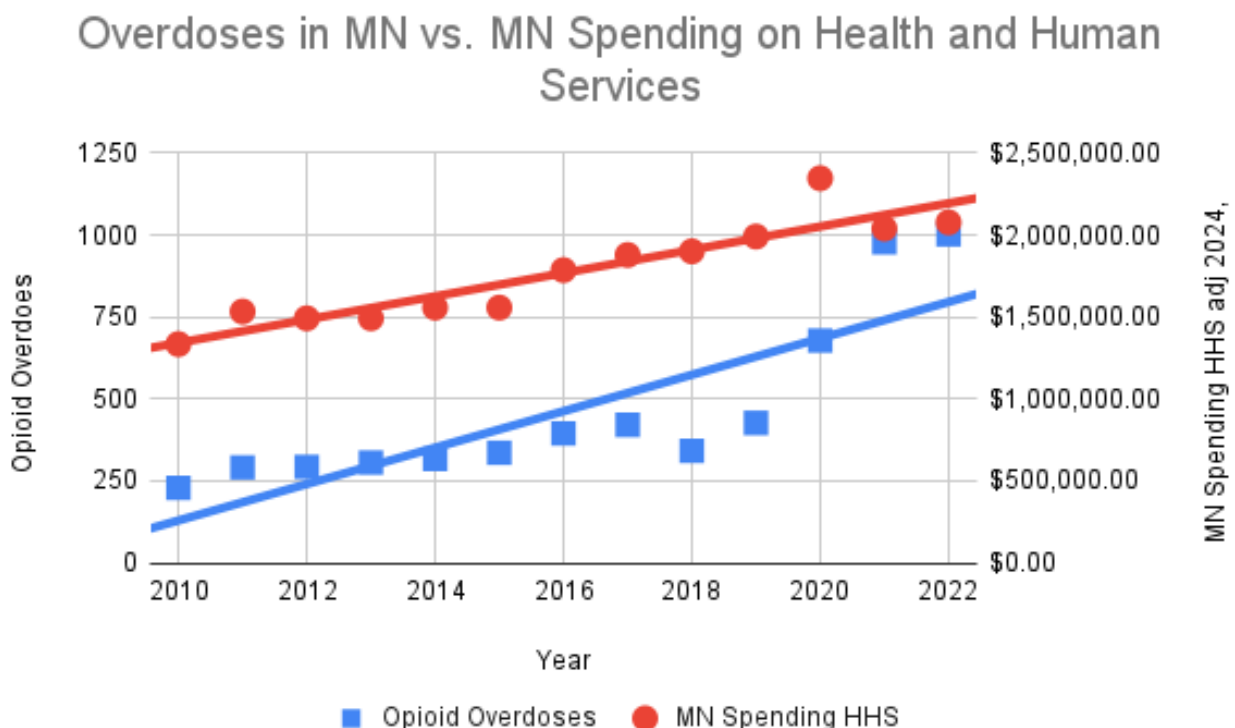
The more you spend on transportation, the more you make, because your spending on safety makes people feel safer.

Overdoses in MN vs. MN Spending on Health and Human Services

Garrett W. (65B), Riley B. (67B), and Alexander P. (66A)

A friend of my mom had to deal with multiple overdoses within the past two years; her niece and husband. Her husband overdosed on a commonly found street drug that contained fentanyl. Her niece died due to an overdose on an unknown drug in her beverage.

We're studying overdoses in MN vs MN Spending on Health and Human Resources. We got some of our data from the Minnesota Department of Health and Human Resources. Our lines show that as the spending on health and human resources go up so do overdoses. Resources, like money, are supportive when they are intentionally placed on interventions that have been proven to be effective. Right now, people are dying because we're just throwing money around, were not putting it in the right places like a rehabilitation center or an opioid den.



We're not putting it in the right places like a rehabilitation center or an opioid den. We need more places like this so when people overdose they can get help. An organization that could use funding is the South Side Harm Reduction Services.

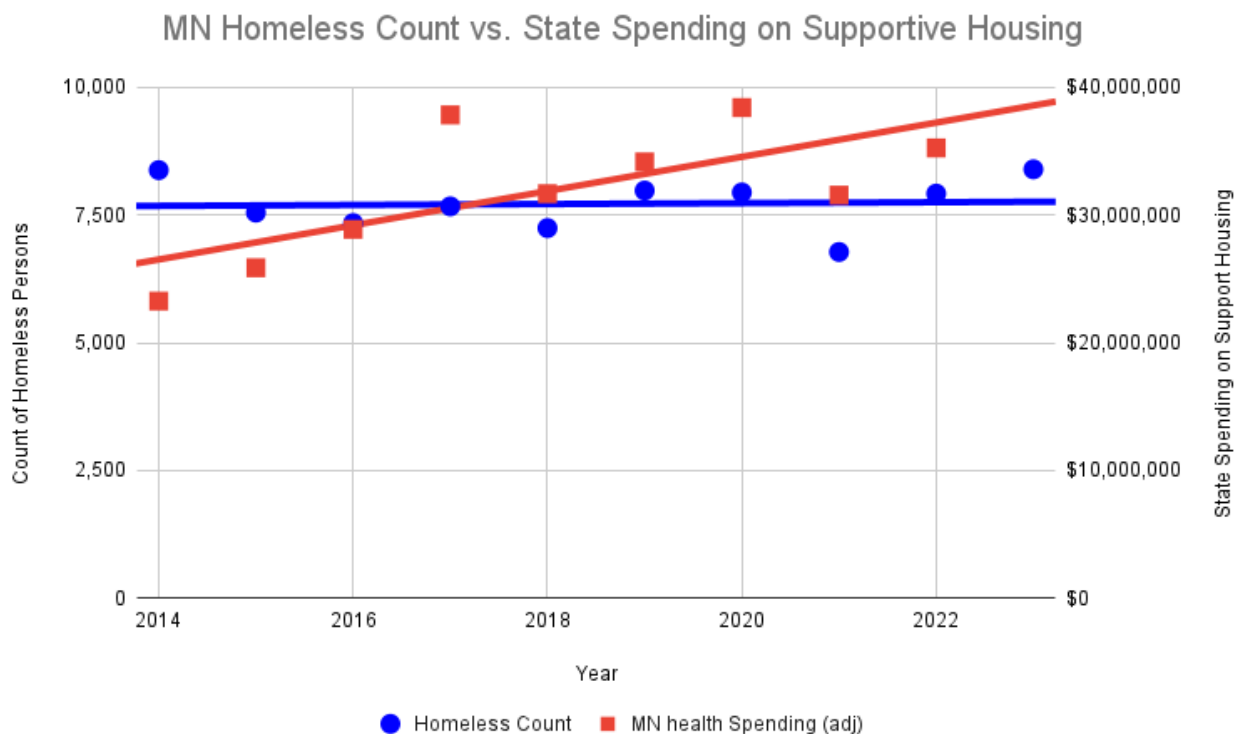
Year	Health and Human Services actual, thousands	Health and Human services adjusted 2024, thousands	Opioid overdose deaths by year
2010	\$937,767	\$1,334,751	229
2011	\$1,095,006	\$1,533,529	291
2012	\$1,096,604	\$1,492,119	293
2013	\$1,114,303	\$1,492,400	306
2014	\$1,181,078	\$1,557,245	317
2015	\$1,301,626	\$1,557,245	336
2016	\$1,372,120	\$1,786,224	395
2017	\$1,479,023	\$1,878,429	421
2018	\$1,527,624	\$1,900,798	342
2019	\$1,624,958	\$1,991,024	427
2020	\$1,962,788	\$2,346,609	678
2021	\$1,730,166	\$2,039,943	978
2022	\$1,893,816	\$2,077,500	1002
Source	General Fund Spending by Major Area	Bls.gov Inflation Calculator January 2024	Opioid Dashboard

The way money is being distributed is clearly not stopping opioid overdoses. We must get resources and help people with addictions.

MN Homeless Count vs. State Spending on Supportive Housing

Gabe Z. (65B), Noah L. (64B), and Lucas K. (64A)

David worked as a chimney sweep in Minneapolis for 23 years. However when the economy crashed work dried up, leaving him jobless. This unfortunate turn of events led both David and his wife down the path of homelessness, moving from one shelter to another. they find themselves couch surfing, squeezed into a cramped apartment with friends. The thought of being homelessness in Minnesota is simply unimaginable. David recounts a time when they resided beneath a freeway bridge, feeling fortunate to have escaped unscathed when the bridge collapsed



We are researching how the spending on supportive housing benefits the homelessness problem in Minnesota. In the spreadsheet above you'll find the year of the data on the far left, next how many homelessness are in Minnesota in that year, then how much Minnesota spent on supportive housing that year and what the money looks like today is shown on the right. This together shows the spending on homelessness and how that affected the number and f homeless each year. We interpreted that data into a graph so the reader can get a better understanding of what the spending to homelessness ratio looks like. We found most of our data from the Department of Human Services yearly spending report.

Our ask of policymakers is to increase state spending on supportive housing based on the MN homeless count data. By doing this we expect a decrease in homelessness rates and associated social costs, leading to a more stable and healthier community. The expected ROI includes reduced emergency service usage, healthcare costs, and criminal justice expenses, with potential gains in productivity and quality of life for individuals. This ask is crucial as it addresses a difficult issue in MN, offering a sustainable solution that benefits both individuals experiencing homelessness and the community as a whole.

Year	Homelessness Count	Supporting Housing Actual	Supportive Housing 2024 dollars
2014	8,377	\$17,530,000	\$23,256,000
2015	7,546	\$19,483,000	\$25,870,000
2016	7,341	\$22,039,000	\$28,868,000
2017	7,668	\$29,603,000	\$37,830,000
2018	7,243	\$25,287,000	\$31,658,000
2019	7,977	\$27,282,000	\$34,156,000
2020	7,940	\$31,153,000	\$38,407,000
2021	6,775	\$31,543,000	\$31,543,000
2022	7,917	\$31,929,000	\$35,242,000
2023	8,393		
Source	PIT Count MN	MHFA Agency at a Glance	bls.gov Inflation Calculator

"Minnesota's homeless count reveals a dark reality. State spending on supportive housing must increase to address this urgent issue effectively."

