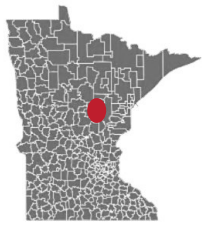
MSBA Executive Search Service

Aitkin Public Schools
is seeking an exceptional leader to serve as
Superintendent



Aitkin Public Schools is located in northeastern Minnesota. The district covers 822 square miles and serves the areas north of Palisade, east toward McGregor, northern Mille Lacs Lake, Glen, Malmo, south nearly to Garrison, and west to Cedar Lake. District Points of Gobbler Pride include:

- Consistently demonstrate strong student achievement, ranking at or near the top of area schools on MCAs
- Exceptional staff that care for and encourage students, see them as individuals, and help look for ways to enrich their learning experience
- School Board collaborative culture
- Many staff with advanced degrees
- Kids Club provides optional care throughout the day
- 1 to 1 technology, excellent tech support
- Pre-K school from age 3 with before and after school child care
- College in School, many college credits offered
- Intergenerational Community Ed programming
- Highly competitive in Arts, Athletics, and Activities
- The district operates their own nutrition and transportation services

By the Numbers

- Student enrollment: 980
- Licensed staff members: 85
- Non-licensed staff members: 180
- Principals: 2
- Assistant Principals/Deans: .5
- Central Office staff: 5.5 FTE
- District buildings maintained: 3

Application Deadline

To be considered for this position, an applicant's completed file must be received by MSBA prior to 11:59 p.m. on March 11, 2026.

About the Community

The city of Aitkin offers a friendly, small town atmosphere located 15 miles north of Mille Lacs Lake and 30 miles east of Brainerd. The area offers endless outdoor opportunities including scenic wildlife, snowmobile and ATV trails, golf courses and biking trails, just to name a few. Additional highlights include:

- Award winning health care system
- The county is home to over 365 lakes as well as the Mississippi and Ripple Rivers and over 700 miles of recreational trails
- A variety of shops, restaurants, and churches all within walking distance of each other
- Aitkin County seat with affordable property tax
- Multiple annual cultural events and festivals
- Vibrant arts community including an art center, a restored opera house, a gallery and unique venues for live music
- Welcoming, safe community

Search Timeline

Announce Vacancy	February 9, 2026
Application Deadline	March 11, 2026
Applicant Screening	March 12-16, 2026
Announce Finalists	March 16, 2026
First Round Interviews	March 24 & 25, 2026
Second Round Interviews	March 26, 2026
Superintendent Begins	July 1, 2026

Leadership Profile

The Aitkin Public School Board seeks a superintendent with proven leadership experience who:

- Acts with integrity and adheres to ethical principles in interactions with the school board, staff members, students, parents, and members of the broader community
- Communicates information in a manner that is clear, self-assured, and flexible, adjusting messaging as needed to effectively reach different audiences
- Builds confidence and fosters collaborative relationships with individuals and groups from varied backgrounds and communities through transparency and mutual respect
- Approaches challenges with forward-thinking vision and creativity, consistently seeking innovative solutions to complex problems
- Encourages active participation and engagement from local businesses and community organizations to enhance educational experiences within schools
- Maintains a visible presence and exemplifies a dedication to open and approachable leadership
- Works in partnership with the school board by presenting well-considered options and professional recommendations, supporting informed decision-making processes

Previous superintendent experience is preferred, but is not required.

District Financial Highlights

General Fund Revenue:	$ 16,399,005
General Fund Expenditures:	$ 16,318,693
Unassigned Fund Balance:	$ 2,846,810
Total General Fund Balance:	$ 5,525,642

Salary and Benefits

A competitive compensation and benefits package, with a starting salary range of $138,000 - $150,000 will be negotiated commensurate with experience and qualifications. Contract length is negotiable as provided in Minnesota statute. Additional benefits available may include health insurance, 403(b), PTO among others.

School District Mission

To inspire and prepare our students with the tools and skills to succeed in an everchanging world.

Search Team

A team from the Minnesota School Boards Association's Executive Search Service (MSBA) has been selected to assist the School Board throughout the process and in securing and screening applicants. The search team will be led by Lee Warne, MSBA Service Provider.

Deadline and Selection

MSBA's Executive Search Service uses an online application process. Applicants begin the application process at mnmsba.myrevelus.com. To be considered for this position, an applicant's completed file must be received by MSBA prior to 11:59 p.m. on March 11, 2026.

Contact Lee Warne at 507-828-2468 (lwarne@mnmsba.org) with questions.

Applicants are requested to not contact school board members.

Aitkin Public Schools is an equal opportunity employer. The MSBA Executive Search Service is an equal opportunity search agency.

Deadline to apply: March 11, 2026