

Attending a Precinct Caucus and Submitting a Resolution



Precinct caucuses are the beginning of the process that Minnesota's major political parties use for choosing the candidates and the issues they will support in elections. Their choices are especially important because the future of our state will be affected by the candidates we elect.

Currently, Minnesota has three major political parties: Democratic-Farmer-Labor, Independence, and Republican. By law, the precinct caucuses are scheduled to be held on the first Tuesday in February. They are open to the public.

There are 3 main caucus activities:

- Electing delegates who will go to party endorsement conventions held later in the spring and summer
- Debating and voting on resolutions on statewide policy issues (like early care and education). Anyone can submit a resolution, which may become part of the party platform at party conventions that occur later in the year.
- Electing a precinct chair and precinct officers to be local party leaders

Who can participate?

Anyone can *attend* precinct caucus to observe.

You can *participate and vote* in a party's precinct caucus if:

- You reside in the district
- Will be eligible to vote on the date of the general election (November 6, 2012)
- Are in general agreement with the party's principles

You must choose **one** political party's caucus in which to participate

Why be involved?

Attending your party's precinct caucus provides you with an opportunity to

- Advance an issue that matters to you, your community, or your organization
- Support the candidates of YOUR choice
- Build your involvement in the political process

Participate in Minnesota's unique grassroots dialogue about policies and politics

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How do I find my precinct caucus?

Republican Party

www.mngop.com

651-222-0022

February 7, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party

www.dfl.org

651-293-1200

February 7, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

Independence Party

www.mnip.org

651-487-9700

February 7, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

How do I find my precinct?

Call your party

Go to the Secretary of State's website:

<http://sos.state.mn.us/>

Or call the Secretary of State's office: 651-215-1440

Don't forget:

This process is about grassroots participation.

This is YOUR opportunity to bring forth the issues YOU care about.

Your input is valuable to your party!

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Presenting a resolution at your precinct caucus

What is a resolution?

- Party platforms are made up of party positions on a wide range of issues
- Resolutions are position statements that can be adopted at the precinct level and advanced to become party positions

Resolutions need to be presented in writing

What does a resolution look like?

A resolution is usually a one-page document that outlines:

- The problem or opportunity
- A rationale for a position for the issue

A policy statement about what should be done about the issue

How do I present my resolution?

- There is time for resolutions on the agenda
- Present your proposal and the reasons for it. Be persuasive! (It helps to lobby early and have copies).
- If there is disagreement, the caucus chair will facilitate debate (often 3 statements for and 3 against).

Vote!

What's next?

- If you are elected to be a delegate to the ward convention, plan to attend and participate fully.
- Nominate yourself to be a delegate to the congressional district convention and the state convention.

Promote your resolution and others that you support.

Have fun!

And be proud that you have been part of the initial steps of a process that is essential to shaping the future of your community and the state of Minnesota.

A sample resolution on early care and education is below

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Sample Precinct Caucus Resolution on Early Childhood February 2012

Whereas, the path to Minnesota's future prosperity begins with the well being of all our children; and

Whereas, early experiences shape how the brain gets built and a strong foundation in the early years increases the probability of life-long positive outcomes; and

Whereas, policies that support parents and other caregivers to interact positively with children in stable and stimulating environments help create a sturdy foundation for later school achievement, economic productivity and responsible citizenship;

Therefore, be it resolved that the _____ Party supports:

- home visits and parent education to every first time parent,
- doubling the number of at-risk children who receive scholarships to participate in high quality early learning,
- implementing a statewide quality rating and improvement system,
- creating community partnerships to serve children and families, and
- supporting implementation of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant to help our most vulnerable children be ready for kindergarten