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## Election For St. Paul Mayor Could Be Record Low


 Reporting  
 Pat Kessler

ST. PAUL (WCCO) — It could be a record turnout at the election in St. Paul Tuesday. A record low, that is.

There hasn't been a lot of excitement in this off-year election for mayor. Voters will choose between the incumbent, Democrat Chris Coleman and Republican-endorsed business woman Eva Ng.

On one side -- an independent business woman promising to freeze property taxes and shrink city government.

On the other -- the man already in the job asking voters to give him another four years to see through plans for the light rail and improve education.

Both candidates went head-to-head in the studios at Minnesota Public Radio earlier Monday.

Radio host Larry Eichten asked each candidate what they thought the mayor's role was in education for St. Paul schools.

"The mayor's role is an advisory one," Ng said, "and we're having a bigger achievement gap than ever. We're looking at a 62 percent graduation rate and \$17,000/a child to educate and that's just about as much as college."

Coleman said that's not the only role, however.

"To say that a mayor's role on education is purely advisory, I think is to miss the boat on what is happening across this country," Coleman said. "I do think the mayor has to be an absolute critical and integral partner with the school district, with the education community to figure out how it is our kids are going to be successful."

Still, the election for Tuesday will likely be low key -- certainly not the long lines seen in the 2008 presidential election.

"We're probably not going to have a high turnout in this election," said political scientist Larry Jacobs of the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota.

In a city that went overwhelmingly for President Barack Obama, things are looking good for Coleman.

But Jacobs said, for being such a political newcomer, Ng has really gotten her name out there.

"I think she'll probably get some republican support, maybe some independent support. But she's got a very steep hill to climb against a well-known and largely popular incumbent," Jacobs said.


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It could be a record-low turnout for Tuesday's election for St. Paul mayor. (File)  
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