2022 Legislative Platform

Presented to the school board
January 20, 2022

Priority #1: Stabilize education funding

- Link the basic formula to inflation to provide a reliable and predictable funding stream.

- Increase special education and English learner (EL) funding to reduce shortfalls.

- Lift the Safe Schools levy cap and/or provide additional funding to allow districts to hire additional support staff to address the safety and mental health needs of students.

Stillwater
AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Why stable education funding matters

In Stillwater Area Public Schools:

- We have a $598 per student gap this year because state funding has not kept pace with inflation - that equates to **$4.2 million** in lost revenue this year alone.

- The special education shortfall resulted in a **$9 million** adjusted net cross subsidy for 2020.

- The EL shortfall resulted in a **$519,342** funding gap in 2020. EL funding has not increased since 2003, and yet the need for this program has increased significantly.

Stillwater
AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Priority #2: Support local decision-making

- Resist enacting new unfunded or underfunded mandates.

- Remove barriers and provide incentives to allow districts to address the shortage of teachers, substitute teachers, school bus drivers, paraprofessionals and other staff.

- Provide districts the flexibility to adapt learning environments for positive student outcomes and the ability to make decisions based on local needs.

Stillwater
AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Why local decision-making matters

- Unfunded mandates make it more difficult for us to focus limited resources toward student achievement through academic catch-up and social emotional/mental health support.

- It has been challenging to provide full transportation services and to fill positions (ie. childcare, food service, health office and special education staff, bus drivers, custodians, paraprofessionals, substitutes, social workers)

- We need flexibility to design systems to meet the needs of our own students, such as online/blended learning options, seat time requirements and assessments.

Stillwater
AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Questions