



## Stillwater Area Public Schools (ISD834)

# LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM 2023

### Priority #1: Stabilize education funding

- A. Increase the basic education formula by 4% each year; indexed to inflation.
  - We have a \$1,263 per student gap this year because the state's general education funding formula has not kept pace with inflation since 1992 - that equates to **\$11.2 million in lost revenue** this year alone for our district.
- B. Fully fund the Special Education and English learner (EL) cross subsidy.
  - The special education shortfall resulted in a **\$12 million adjusted net cross subsidy** for fiscal year 2022.
  - The English Learner shortfall resulted in a **\$650,000 funding gap** in 2022.
- C. Increase Transportation Sparsity revenue to eliminate the funding gap for pupil transportation costs.
  - For fiscal year 2023, the district's transportation revenue will cover just **\$2.4 million (or 23%) of the total transportation costs** of \$10.5 million.
- D. 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.
  - Federal Covid support ends in 2024. **The district is losing \$1.7 million** for social/emotional and mental health supports that has been used to pay for social workers, school psychologists and behavior support staff.

### Priority #2: Empower local decision-making

- A. Allow local school boards to renew an existing operating referendum.
  - Our existing operating levy equates to **14.5% of our total operating budget**.
- B. Resist new, statewide unfunded mandates.
  - Universal school meals could impact our compensatory funding, which equates to **\$271,000 annually**.
  - Legislation like Parental Leave, Sick Time, Unemployment and TRA Rule of 90 would increase the district's budget and compete with general fund dollars needed to support our students.
- C. Provide sustainable funding for Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and programs like BARR, Responsive Classroom, etc.
  - **We're losing \$1.3 million in federal COVID funds** for academic support (ie. intervention teachers, student engagement specialists, BARR coordination, tutoring, etc.).
- D. Provide districts the flexibility to adapt learning environments for positive student outcomes and the ability to make decisions based on local needs.
- E. Remove barriers and provide incentives to address staffing shortages.
  - Example: Our child care waitlist has been as high as 400 students.

### Who We Are:

The Stillwater Area Public School District serves about 8,200 students from 18 unique communities along the St. Croix River – from Marine to Afton and a portion of Woodbury. Our boundaries stretch 30 miles and cover approximately 150 square miles.

### 2022-2023 School Board

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