

## Constitutional Obligation

Minnesota's Constitution reads, "... it is the duty of the legislature to establish a general and uniform system of public schools. The legislature shall make such provisions by taxation or otherwise as will secure a thorough and efficient system of public schools throughout the state." Article XIII, Section 1

## Who is SEE

- Schools for Equity in Education (SEE) formed in 1979 to advocate for adequate and equitable funding and policy that meets the needs of students in SEE districts.
- SEE represents 57 school districts that serve approximately 250,000 children; one third of all E -12 students in Minnesota.
- SEE member district's student populations are less likely to generate considerable categorical aid or other funding from the state. Thus, SEE districts tend to receive the minimum in state funding.
- SEE districts are mostly low-property wealth districts, making it more difficult to access voter-approved referendum revenue to make up for inadequate state funding.



## SEE School Districts

- Albany
- Albert Lea
- Annandale
- Anoka-Hennepin
- Austin
- Belle Plaine
- Big Lake
- Braham
- Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose
- Byron
- Cambridge-Isanti
- Cannon Falls
- Centennial
- Chisago Lakes
- Dassel-Cokato
- Delano
- East Central
- Faribault
- Forest Lake
- Fridley
- Hastings
- Hinckley-Finlayson
- Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted
- Hutchinson
- Jordan
- Kasson-Mantorville
- Kimball
- Lake City
- Litchfield
- Maple Lake
- Medford
- Melrose
- Milaca
- Monticello
- Mora
- New London-Spicer
- New Prague
- North Branch
- Northfield
- Owatonna
- Paynesville
- Princeton
- Prior Lake-Savage
- Rockford
- Rocori
- Roseau
- Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan
- Royalton
- Rush City
- Sartell-St. Stephen
- South St. Paul
- St. Francis
- St. Michael-Albertville
- Stewartville
- Stillwater
- Tri-City United
- Waconia
- **Associate Members**
- Board of School Administrators
- Resource Training and Solutions
- St. Croix River Education District
- SW Metro Intermediate District

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Schools for Equity in Education



## 2019 Legislative Platform

All public school children must have equal access to a high quality education regardless of where they live in Minnesota.

## EQUITY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

- ✓ **Increase state aid in low-property wealth school districts for local school operating levies and building bonds.** By increasing the equalizing factors for the referendum, debt service and lease levy equalization programs, the taxpayer cost will be reduced in low property wealth districts.
- ✓ **Index all tiers of equalization to inflation** to prevent the continued erosion of the program.
- ✓ **Funding for school levy equalization must come from the tax committee's budget target** rather than the education target. School levy equalization provides property tax relief and must be part of the overall state tax policy.

### Where do you live?

The state allows school districts to raise additional general education revenue, up to \$2,387 per pupil, in board- or voter-approved referendum operating levies. The cost to the local taxpayer for this levy is based on the individual property wealth of each school district. Without significant commercial and industrial development to expand the tax base, taxpayers in low-property wealth districts pay significantly more than taxpayers in high-property wealth school districts to provide the same amount of revenue for their local schools.

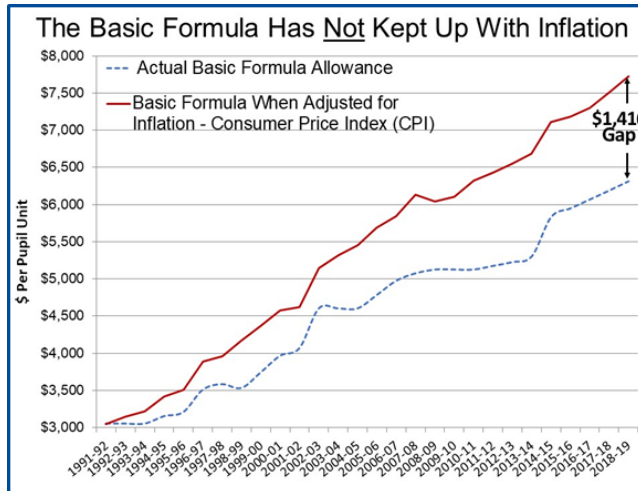
	*Taxpayer Cost for Max Levy	**Actual Operating Revenue per Pupil
Highest-property Wealth Districts - Top 5%	\$441	\$1,972
SEE Districts	\$1,016	\$964

\* The average annual taxpayer cost for a \$2,387 per pupil operating levy for a \$200,000 home or business if approved by the school board and local taxpayers.

\*\* The average actual amount in revenue per pupil that the school districts raise through local property taxes.

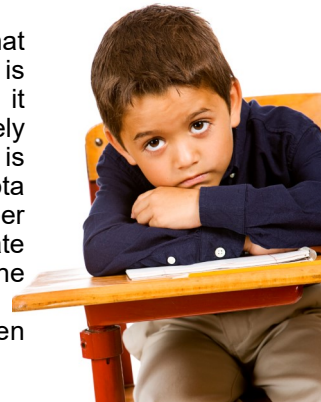
## ADEQUACY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

- ✓ **Increase the basic formula by a minimum of \$250 per pupil in each of the next two years.** The basic formula is the critical funding source from the state and is intended to provide the basic financial support for public schools. It is a per pupil dollar amount that a school districts receives for every student that walks through the doors. Recent increases in the basic formula have done little to make up for the significant loss of purchasing power due to inflation over more than two decades.

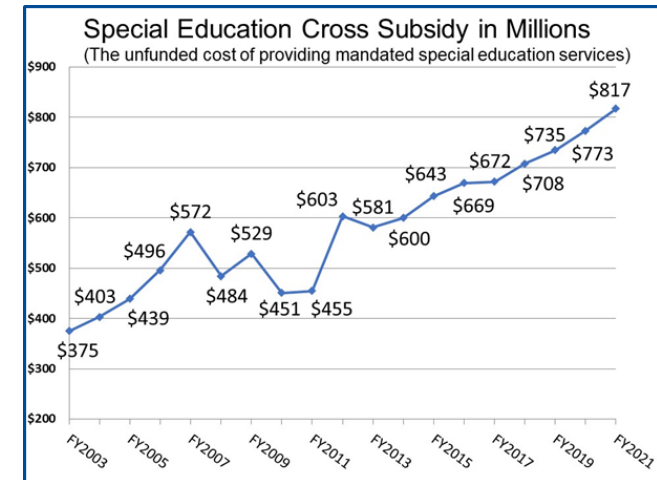


### Did you know?

The gap between what the basic formula is compared to what it should be if merely adjusted for inflation is significant. Minnesota spends over \$1,400 per student less to educate the children in the classroom today than it did to educate children in the early 1990s.



- ✓ **Increase the state's share of special education funding** and reexamine the new special education funding formula to address unintended inequities among districts. The average cross subsidy in Minnesota school districts is \$801 per pupil. The amount of revenue school districts must divert from their general fund to pay for mandated but unreimbursed special education services is not sustainable and jeopardizes the quality of public education in Minnesota.



- ✓ **Create a constitutionally-dedicated revenue stream** by increasing the sales tax by one cent per dollar spent and reserving the resulting revenue for E-12 public education. Due to the erosion of the basic formula and the special education cross subsidy, a new funding stream must be considered to maintain quality schools. As each district is unique, each school board must have the local control to direct the new resources where most needed. It's Minnesota responsibility to the future generations to ensure all children have access to high quality education that will help them reach their full potential.