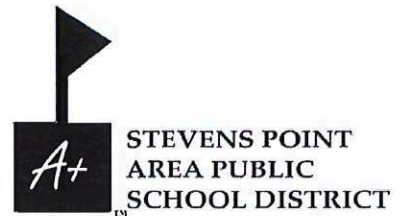


SAA Budget Talking Points

May 20, 2021

1. Discuss your district's 2020-21 spending on COVID safety, technology, additional staffing, etc., and how you used your initial federal aid for these purposes. Also, share your plans for using additional one-time federal aid on your district's student recovery efforts. Finally, make sure to explain that one-time federal aid is designed for COVID relief and recovery. Resources to support continuing educational opportunities for your students must come from the state budget process. Keep in mind that some legislators have openly expressed the opinion that, because of this one-time federal aid, public schools in Wisconsin don't need ongoing support in the 2021-23 state budget.
2. Express your strong support for the Governor's proposal to increase the level of special education aid to reimburse 50 percent of aidable costs by the end of the 2021-23 biennium. First and foremost, this proposal will help us meet the ongoing needs of our most vulnerable students. Also, Wisconsin school districts collectively transfer about \$1.15 billion annually from district general funds to cover the funding gap between required special education costs and current state funding. Explain your district's "general fund to special education fund" annual transfer and how significant increases in special education aid can help meet the needs of all students in your district.
3. Express your strong support for at least a \$200 per pupil general revenue increase in each year of the biennium. Explain the importance of these increases in per pupil revenues in both fiscal and human terms. In particular, emphasize the impact on educational opportunities for the kids you serve.
4. Express your strong support for comprehensive pupil count mitigation including: 1) Allowing districts to use the greater of the 2019-20 or 2020-21 pupil count for revenue limit calculations; 2) Increasing special adjustment aid from 85 percent to 90 percent of prior year general aid in each year of the biennium; and 3) Treating the non-recurring declining enrollment exemption and base revenue hold harmless as recurring adjustments for one year only. Be sure to explain your district's projected fiscal impact of the pupil count decline and what that could mean for educational opportunities for the kids you serve.
5. Express your strong support for the Governor's \$46.5 million proposed expansion of the School Mental Health Categorical Aid program to provide financial support for services provided by school psychologists, nurses, counselors, and social workers.
6. Express your strong support for setting the low revenue ceiling (LRC) at 90 percent of the statewide average maximum revenue limit per student. The current LRC amount of \$10,000 is 87.3 percent of the current state average revenue limit of \$11,450. A steadily improving LRC policy is an important part of ensuring equitable resources for all children no matter where they live.
7. Express your strong support for the High-Cost Transportation proposal being advanced by Senator Felzkowski and Representative Mursau. This proposal would lower the aid threshold in the program from 145% of the statewide average per pupil transportation cost to the statewide average (100%). An additional \$41 million annually would fully fund the proposal and positively impact 287 districts.



May 18, 2021

Senator Jerry Petrowski
Senate District 29
Sen.Petrowski@legis.wisconsin.gov

Dear Senator Petrowski,

Please support and encourage others in your caucus to support the inclusion of the following items in the 2021-23 biennial budget.

1. Provide a per pupil general revenue increase in each year of the biennium of at least \$200, but preferably \$250.
2. Support the inclusion of comprehensive pupil count mitigation by
 - a. Allowing districts to use the greater of the 2019-20 or 2020-21 pupil count for revenue limit calculations;
 - b. Increasing special adjustment aid from 85% to 90% of prior general aid each year of the biennium;
 - c. Treat non-recurring declining enrollment exemption and base revenue hold harmless as recurring adjustment for one year only.
3. Increase special education aid to 50% of aidable cost by the end of the biennium.
4. Support High-Cost Transportation to lower the aid threshold to 100% of the statewide average cost.

These budget items provide needed support to our district and other districts you represent. Pupil count alone this year accounted for a \$1.1 million declining enrollment exemption, that if not addressed via legislation will have serious consequences to our educational plan. Your support is vital.

Respectfully,

Thomas R. Owens, Ph.D., SFO
Director of Business Services

Just keeping in touch. Hope you are well. Tom

