

## GENERAL EDUCATION FORMULA \$588M

The only way to provide equitable, sustainable and predictable funding for Minnesota's 850,000 public schoolchildren is to fully fund the cost of education. Each year our schools face more and more complex and costly issues. Today's kindergarteners will graduate in 2031 – into a world we are not able to predict. Meeting students' individual needs demands resources. The state has the opportunity to ensure every student is ready to meet 21st century career and college goals. Districts need the state to keep pace with inflation. **Therefore, MSBA proposes a 3% increase for each year of the biennium and index the per pupil formula to inflation.**

The special education funding formula is the primary funding source to help special education students meet their full potential. Over the years, state and federal mandates, costs of services and students receiving special education have all increased. These factors, plus the federal government not fulfilling its 40% obligation, has forced districts to use general education dollars and local levies to provide these required services. **Therefore, MSBA proposes fully funding Minnesota's portion of the cross-subsidy for special education.**

## SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING \$300M

## MENTAL HEALTH/SAFE SCHOOLS LEVY \$100M

One of the most pressing issues for school districts is the mental health of students. One in five students have a mental health illness, while less than half get the help they need. Children are more apt to get and receive treatment in a school-based setting. School psychologists, licensed counselors, social workers and other professional staff are necessary to help provide early interventions and violence prevention. School-based mental health, telemedicine and full-service community schools help bring students and healthcare providers together. **Therefore, MSBA proposes funding a multifaceted approach for equitable and accessible school-based mental health programs for all Minnesota students.**

The Legislature began work last year to improve safety for our students and staff. There were multiple bills introduced; however, only a \$25 million provision prevailed in the bonding bill. Grants were available for school building improvements relating to violence prevention and facility security. Over 1,187 applications totaling \$255 million were received - 10 times the funds available. **Therefore, MSBA asks the state to respond with urgency and fully fund all remaining qualified applications to ensure all staff and students are safe and secure.**

## SCHOOL SAFETY GRANTS \$255M

## SCHOOL BOARD VACANCIES

Special elections are costly and are paid for with general education funds. In 2017, 28 school districts held special elections. Costs were high, ranging from \$4,000 to \$60,000 and resulted in low voter turnout of 1% to 15%, depending on the district size. **Therefore, MSBA proposes allowing school boards to replace a school board member by appointment and the vacant seat would be filled during the next general election cycle.**

Special education paperwork mandates have become onerous and burdensome, often switching the focus from teaching to meeting requirements, and contribute to teachers leaving the profession. It is time to look at new ways to reduce state rules and regulations that exceed federal law. The focus needs to return to teaching special education students. **Therefore, MBSA proposes a plan to better align Minnesota rules and statutes with federal law. A reduction in mandates will lead to improved teacher retention and satisfaction and better outcomes for students.**

## SPECIAL EDUCATION MANDATES

## TEACHER SHORTAGE

Teacher shortage continues to be a challenge. Teachers of color are particularly underrepresented and make up only 4% of our teaching staff, while 34% of students in classrooms are students of color or American Indian. High-quality and effective teachers will help close costly opportunity and achievement gaps that limit student success. **Therefore, MSBA proposes supporting the Increase Teachers of Color Act of 2019 to help attract, develop and retain teachers across Minnesota.**

Over 332 school boards are elected by their communities. These members are trusted and charged with the governance of school property, budget, curriculum, technology, taxes, student achievement and teacher quality – ensuring excellence and equity in all public schools. **Therefore, MSBA asks that you honor and trust the work of these local officials by allowing school boards to renew an existing operating referendum, by reducing the current number of mandates, and provide flexibility to meet the unique needs of their schools and communities.**

## LOCAL CONTROL