



2017–19 Legislative Agenda

The SAA believes that comprehensive education reforms in Wisconsin should emulate the evidence-based best practices of the states and nations that have significantly raised academic performance and closed achievement gaps. In pursuit of this objective, the SAA offers the following legislative priorities:

School Revenue Limits

Increase the annual per pupil adjustment under revenue limits by \$200 per pupil in each year of the 2017-19 biennium, and by the annual percentage increase in inflation thereafter. Couple the revenue limit increases with corresponding increases in general school aid.

Low Revenue Ceiling

Increase the low revenue ceiling from the current \$9,100 per pupil to \$9,500 in 2017-18, and \$9,900 in 2018-19.

School Mental Health

Too many Wisconsin school children have unmet mental health needs leading to negative consequences for those children, their families, their schools and their communities. To help address the systemic shortcomings in how we provide mental health services to our children, the SAA supports:

- Creation of a School-Linked Mental Health Grant Program, modeled after a successful Minnesota initiative, to provide funding for start-up, services for uninsured kids, and coordination between schools, counties and mental health providers.
- Increase Medicaid payment rates for individual and group therapy.
- Increase financial support for staff training in mental health.
- Create a new categorical aid program to provide incentives for school districts to expand services provided by school social workers.

Expanded Summer Learning

Research shows that high-quality summer learning programs boost student achievement and can end the summer slide, while helping to close achievement gaps. With targeted increases in funding and more local control to innovate, Wisconsin should see more positive results. To this end, the SAA supports:

- Allowing school districts to count summer school students at 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) for revenue limit and state aid purposes.
- Increase funding for summer school transportation.

Special Education Categorical Appropriation

The SAA supports increasing the current level of state categorical aid funding for special education to reimburse at least 30% of aidable costs.

High Cost Special Education

The SAA supports increasing the current level of state categorical aid funding for high cost special education to fully reimburse districts for costs exceeding \$30,000 for any individual student.

Transportation Aid

The SAA supports increasing the current level of state categorical aid funding for school transportation by 10% in each year of the biennium. The SAA also supports providing districts which transport students the greatest distance proportionally greater aid, using the current method of distribution.

High Cost Transportation Aid

The SAA supports increasing the current level of state categorical aid funding for high cost transportation to fully fund the prior year's eligible claims under the program. Also, create a second tier of support for districts with per-pupil transportation costs between 125 percent and 150 percent of the state average.

Sparsity Aid

The SAA supports increasing the current level of state categorical aid funding to fully fund the eligible claims under the program.

Educator Preparation, Recruitment & Retention

The SAA supports the work of the commission created by the State Superintendent to focus on recruitment/retention of quality teacher and administrator candidates and to conduct a review of educator preparation programs and make recommendations for how best to prepare and support educators. The SAA also supports the following recommendations to tackle troubling educator shortages in the short-term:

- Allow districts significant flexibility in hiring retired educators to fill key positions.
- Maximize district flexibility in utilizing the current pool of licensed educators.
- Encourage greater use of paid "interns".
- Streamline the license reciprocity process.

School Start Date

Repeal the school start date law.