



## SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE

901 15th Ave. South Milwaukee, WI 53172

414-766-5000 | [www.sdsm.k12.wi.us](http://www.sdsm.k12.wi.us)

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Members of the Joint Finance Committee,

The School District of South Milwaukee boasts of its long history of wise financial stewardship. We are virtually debt free, passed a referendum in 2018, and continually consider the needs of our students when making financial decisions.

With all of that said, the community of South Milwaukee has just completed a grueling months-long process in which the School Board has been forced to consider ways to mitigate a potential \$1.6 million deficit for the 23-24 school year. We have already made the heart-wrenching decision to reduce 4 teaching positions, non-renew 4 support staff, and significantly scale down building and department budgets. All of this in a time of increasing student need.

Every cut is harmful to our students, and destructive to our staff morale and overall culture. Our students, half of whom are classified below the poverty level, need every position - every opportunity - to succeed. Indeed, they need and deserve more than we can give them.

South Milwaukee is in desperate need of additional funds in the upcoming biennium budget in order to prevent an even worse deficit in 24-25. Since we did not receive additional revenue limit authority in the last biennium, South Milwaukee has been forced to rely on ESSER funds to close budget gaps. When those funds go away at the end of next school year, the district will face a deficit of approximately \$2 million.

South Milwaukee is not alone in this predicament. The majority of school districts in Wisconsin are facing some form of deficit next year. With the fate of our states' children on the line, it is absolutely imperative that we come together to do what's best for our schools.

Please approve the Southeastern Wisconsin Schools Alliance (SWSA) ask for \$1,510 of per pupil adjustment in the next biennium budget, along with 60% special education reimbursement. This additional funding will allow school districts across Wisconsin to meet the enduring educational needs brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, enable districts to face inflationary pressures head on, and ultimately make education competitive with other fields of employment.

For the sake of our children and the future of our state, South Milwaukee implores you to act and fulfill the state's responsibility to fully fund education in Wisconsin.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'James J. Shaw'.

Dr. Jim Shaw  
Interim Superintendent  
414-766-5035

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dan Arnold'.

Dan Arnold  
Director of Business Services  
414-766-5027