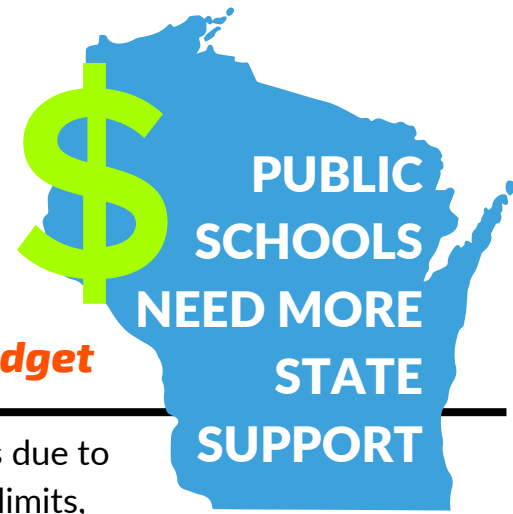


# LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY PRIORITIES *2025-2027 State Biennial Budget*



Wisconsin's public school districts face significant financial challenges due to stagnant state funding and revenue limits established in 1994. These limits, which rely on state aid and local property taxes, have not kept up with inflation. As a result, more than 80% of districts statewide have approved operational referenda to maintain essential programs.

*Adequate and predictable funding is crucial for the strength of our schools and community.*

We urge Wisconsin lawmakers to prioritize funding and policies that support the Mequon-Thiensville School District and *eliminate the need for continual operating referenda.*

**Discussions regarding the 2025-2027 state biennial budget are underway at the state level. We ask Wisconsin state lawmakers to:**

**1 Reimburse school districts for at least 90% of special education costs to match the state's investment in voucher/charter school special education reimbursement.**

Public schools are legally required to serve all students, including those with disabilities, regardless of the cost. In the 2023-2024 school year, MTSD was reimbursed for just 31% of our total special education costs, meaning the remaining 69% had to be transferred from the general education budget. This diverts resources from essential programs and operations and creates an imbalance where private institutions benefit disproportionately from public funds, including taxpayer dollars.

**2 Increase per-pupil categorical aid (actual, spendable dollars) in the amount of \$404 in 2025-26 and \$204 in 2026-27.**

With increased categorical aid of \$404 per-pupil in 2025-26 and an additional \$204 per pupil in 2027-28, schools can provide appropriate compensation and realistic wages to recruit and retain high-quality educators, maintain comprehensive academic and co-curricular programming, support students' social and emotional health, and cover increasing costs of goods and services necessary to operate.



## **Did You Know?**

*If Wisconsin lawmakers honored both of these requests, it would eliminate MTSD's need for an operational referendum.*