

MEMBERS OF THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Sue Todey and I serve on the Sevastopol School Board, chair the CESA 7 Board of Control, serve as a member of the Fair Aid Coalition, and am the second vice-president for the Wisconsin Association of School Boards. In these various capacities, I strongly support all public school students in our state.

I am pleased to support a state budget that in many instances aligns with the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission as well as the public opinion polls which support increased funding for public education.

I will speak to just a few of the specific funding issues today:

1. Predictable and sustainable funding. I support the revenue limit adjustment of \$200 per pupil in 2019-20 and \$204 per pupil in 2020-21 and indexing future revenue limit adjustments to changes in the consumer price index beginning in 2021-22.
2. Special education reimbursement. School districts like Sevastopol are utilizing general education funds to support special education programming to a greater extent as the reimbursement rate from the state has fallen. Fund 10 dollars are controlled by revenue limits and are intended to support regular education.
3. Mental health and school safety funding. While Sevastopol, like other school districts, has begun providing in school mental health therapy services through a small amount of grant funding. We are, however, just touching the tip of the iceberg. Without continued funding support, we cannot maintain and expand these needed services. Addressing mental health concerns is important to school safety as are the necessary resources for training for all staff and providing the necessary physical barriers to "harden the target."
4. School levy credit. Many school districts like Sevastopol do not receive any equalization aid. If in fact there is a movement of dollars from the levy credit to the equalization aid formula, it is absolutely essential that a per pupil amount of \$3,000

dollars minimum aid be allocated to districts like Sevastopol in order to prevent a huge increase to tax payers in those districts.

5. Gifted and talented grants. Currently many districts are unable to sustain quality gifted and talented programming compromising the ability to provide the kind of talent that our society so desperately needs.

In a speech recently, Johnny C. Taylor* described the perfect storm that we face as a nation:

- Low birth rate
- Flourishing economy
- Low unemployment
- Labor shortage
- Skill shortage
- No shortage of financial capital, but a shortage of human capital.

With this situation, we need better prepared high school graduates who possess these skills:

- Creativity
- Agility
- Adaptability/trainability
- Critical thinking/problem solving
- Writing
- Technology
- Public speaking
- Decision making
- Customer focus
- Teamwork
- Dependability/reliability

With this in mind, it is crucial to the success of our democracy, that we provide the necessary resources for our public schools to turn out young people who are college, career, and community ready!

*Johnny C. Taylor Jr., SHRM-SCP, President and Chief Executive Officer, Society for Human Resource Management, at the National School Board Association Conference March 30 – April 1, 2019.

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