



## SEE in Action!

### SEE's Accomplishments from the 2015 Legislative Session

The SEE 2015 Legislative Platform focused on four main areas of equity and adequacy. The bullet points below come directly from SEE's legislative platform. Through SEE's efforts, which included lobbying key legislators, testifying in committee meetings, SEE day at the Capitol visits, distribution of signs and buttons, plus much more, significant progress was made. Overall, it was a successful legislative session with an additional investment of \$525 million for preK-12 education. SEE is proud of the funding and policy issues that were checked off the legislative platform. Looking ahead to the 2016 legislative session, SEE staff and members will continue the fight for the provisions that were not fully realized.


#### School Facilities

This was a top priority for most SEE districts during fall 2014 regional meetings.

-  Provide the benefits of the alternative facilities program to all school districts in the state to help with deferred maintenance issues and technology enhancements.— *All districts now have access to alternative facilities in the form of a new long-term maintenance levy.*
-  Increase the equalization factors in the debt-service equalization program and other facilities-related formulas that have low equalizing factors.— *The new long-term maintenance levy is equalized at a substantial level. Still, this provision only earned a half check due to levy streams that did not receive increased equalization.*



#### Basic Formula

After the early proposals for 1% formula increases, SEE doubled efforts to secure a minimum of inflationary increases to the formula.

-  Increase the basic formula to restore school funding and provide all school districts with the flexibility to meet unfunded mandates.— *Inflationary increases of 2% each year..*


#### Categoricals

The general education formula is of paramount importance to SEE districts as they have to use basic formula revenue to pay for shortfalls resulting from inadequate categorical funding. SEE is a leader in working to reduce these disparities.

- Establish a \$1,700 per pupil minimum for compensatory education students to reflect the actual cost of providing effective services for low-income students.
  -  Give school districts the flexibility to allocate compensatory revenue based on student need.
- Fully fund the Special Education mandate.
- Increase funding for Career and Technical Education.
- Provide districts below the state average in total general education funding per pupil with an option to bring them up to the state average through an enhanced voter-approved referendum.
-  Increase the amount for English language learners and extend eligibility to seven years.

#### Equalization

SEE is the only organization that has a laser focus on equalization to ensure taxpayer fairness.

-  Increase the equalization factor in the long-term maintenance program and index to inflation.— *Getting equalization on the long-term maintenance levy wasn't just a "score" it was a "slam dunk" as it is the only equalized funding stream that is indexed to inflation so it will not erode over time.*
- Both SEE and the School Facilities Finance Working Group recommendations call for an increase in the debt-service equalization program's equalizing factors.
- Even with the progress made in 2013, referendum equalization aid must be increased to provide taxpayers in low property wealth districts with greater fairness and should be indexed to prevent erosion in the tax relief delivered to property taxpayers.

In addition, the early childhood programs in the final education bill were fashioned in ways that are more user-friendly for school districts.— *Legislators listened to SEE's concerns about funding, space, staffing and transportation.*

#### SEE Districts

Albany  
 Albert Lea  
 Annandale  
 Anoka-Hennepin  
 Austin  
 Belle Plaine  
 Big Lake  
 Braham  
 Buffalo-Hanover-  
 Montrose  
 Byron  
 Cambridge-Isanti  
 Cannon Falls  
 Centennial  
 Chisago Lakes  
 Dassel-Cokato  
 Delano  
 East Central  
 Elk River  
 Faribault  
 Forest Lake  
 Fridley  
 Hastings  
 Hinckley-Finlayson  
 Howard Lake-Waverly-  
 Winsted  
 Hutchinson  
 Jordan  
 Kasson-Mantorville  
 Kimball  
 Lake City  
 LaCrescent-Hokah  
 Litchfield  
 Maple Lake  
 Medford  
 Melrose  
 Milaca  
 Monticello  
 Mora  
 New London-Spicer  
 New Prague  
 North Branch  
 Northfield  
 Owatonna  
 Paynesville  
 Pine River-Backus  
 Princeton  
 Prior Lake-Savage  
 Rockford  
 Rocori  
 Roseau  
 Rosemount-Apple Val-  
 ley-Eagan  
 Royalton  
 Rush City  
 Sartell-St. Stephen  
 St. Francis  
 St. Michael-Albertville  
 Stewartville  
 Tri-City United  
 Waconia

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