



Our Kids. Our Community. Our Future.

Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) faces inadequate state funding, increasing educational costs and continued budget cuts. To help, the SPPS Board of Education unanimously approved asking voters to consider a school funding increase on the Nov. 6, 2018 ballot.

The Challenge

To **keep pace** with the educational needs of our students with adequate financial resources

The Ballot Question

Consider an operating levy increase to enable **SPPS to invest more in our schools** and limit additional budget cuts

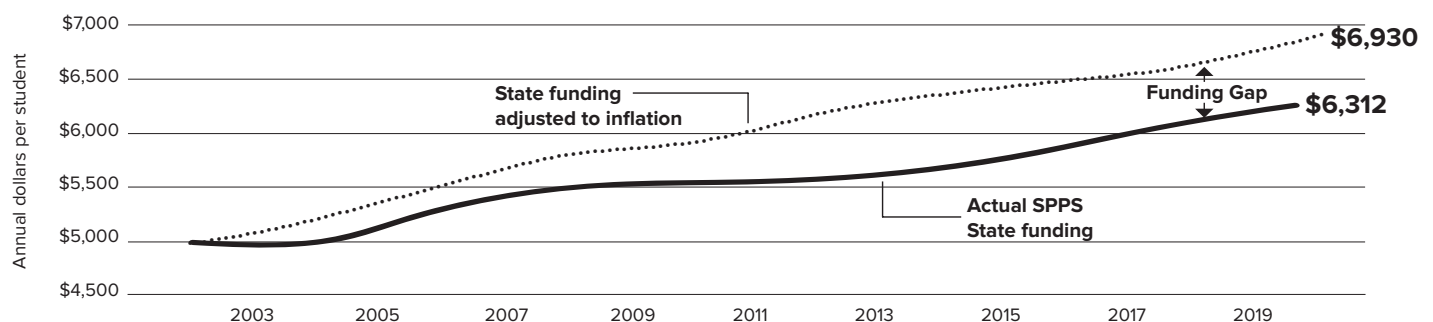
Why Now?

- **SPPS has cut more than \$50 million in the past three years** and approved cuts of \$17.2 million for the 2018-19 school year.
- **Federal, state and local funding is not keeping pace with inflation** or the educational needs of our students.
- **Required special education programs cost the District \$42 million more than it receives each year**, putting additional pressure on the operating budget.

What is an Operating Levy?

Operating levies provide essential funding for classrooms, instruction and other school operating costs.

State Basic General Education Funding per Student



If state funding had kept up with inflation since 2003, SPPS would receive nearly \$620 more per student, or a total of \$21.6 million more this year.

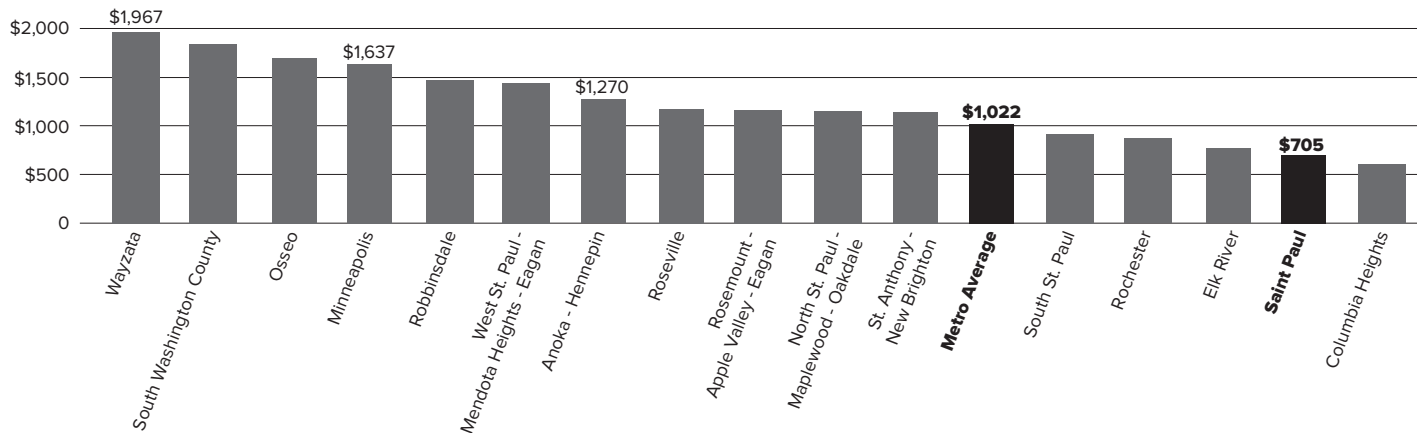
Source: Minnesota Department of Education and the Association of Metropolitan School Districts
June 2018 inflation estimates

Strong public schools are directly linked to the well-being of our city and strong property values.

Levy Facts

The funding request would increase the school district's operating levy by \$475 per student, providing an increase of approximately \$18.6 million per year for 10 years. The estimated tax impact on an average homeowner (\$175,000 home) would be about \$11 per month.

Voter Approved Operating Levies, 2018-19



SPPS is the second largest school district in Minnesota, but has one of the lowest voter-approved operating levies when compared to the state's ten largest districts and SPPS neighbors. These levies provide critical funding for classrooms, instruction and other operating costs.

If voters approve the request, the funding would help:

- Invest more in schools and student needs at all grade levels
- Implement the District's Strategic Plan to increase achievement for all students
- Increase mental health and social-emotional learning support for students
- Create middle schools designed to meet the academic and developmental needs of this age group and better prepare them for high school and beyond
- Limit additional budget cuts

If voters do not approve the request, SPPS will face continued multimillion-dollar budget cuts, likely resulting in:

- Cuts to programs that help students struggling with basic academic skills
- Cuts to staff and academic programs in all schools
- Cuts to the number of classroom aides, clerical, custodial, administrative and other support staff throughout the District
- Severely limiting the District's ability to implement its new community-supported Strategic Plan

SPPS Strategic Plan long-term student outcomes:

- Decrease disparities in achievement based on race, ethnicity, culture and identity
- Increase achievement of English Learners
- Increase achievement of students receiving special education services
- Improve kindergarten readiness
- Increase academic growth in reading and math for all students
- Prepare all graduates for college, career and life



Financial Accountability

SPPS works hard to use taxpayer dollars wisely and continues to seek ways to be more efficient and effective in educating our kids. The District:

- Saved taxpayers more than \$9 million in long-term interest costs by refinancing bonds in the past three years
- Received the Minnesota Department of Education 2018 School Finance Award for timely and accurate financial reporting
- Has a bond rating in the top 15 percent of rated Minnesota school districts, which helps save taxpayers money
- Is the second largest school district in the state, but spends less than the state average on district administration and more on classroom instruction as a percent of the operating budget

Learn more: Visit spps.org/referendum2018 • Call 651-767-8157 • Email referendum@spps.org