



SAFF 2025 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

The quality of a student's education should not depend on their zip code.

The levy equalization programs that promoted tax fairness and equitable access to educational programming across the public school system have greatly eroded since they were first established in the 1990's. Levies are a necessary component of the education funding system, but equalization formulas must be updated to protect students and property taxpayers in low property wealth districts.

Failure to update these programs is penalizing students and property taxpayers in low property wealth school districts. Improving levy equalization is SAFF's top budget priority for Minnesota Legislative action. Specifically, during the 2025 legislative session SAFF is advocating for:

Legislative Plank #1: Make Education-Related Levies Fairer & More Consistent by

- Converting all equalization formulas to fixed percents of property tax wealth per pupil instead of fixed dollar amounts of property wealth per pupil. The current system relies too heavily on the latter format, which erodes state funded equalization as property valuations naturally increase. The former method will help keep state equalization support more consistent over time.

Legislative Plank #2: Improve the Stability of School Funding to Promote Greater Fairness

- Make certain that the new programs enacted in 2023—particularly the expansion of unemployment insurance and the investments in curriculum acquisition and professional development in the Read Act—are fully funded and that new cross-subsidies are not created for school districts to navigate.
- Increase and improve the amount of equalized Local Option Revenue a district can generate to the statewide average operating referendum revenue amount per pupil unit to provide support for districts without operating referenda.
- Increase and improve the amount of equalized revenue districts can access through the Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue formula.
- Improve the Equity Formula to help districts that don't receive resources either through the current array of categorical formulas or the operating referendum.

Proper levy equalization programs promote tax fairness and help narrow funding gaps between high property wealth and low property wealth school districts.