



Nov. 2, 2021

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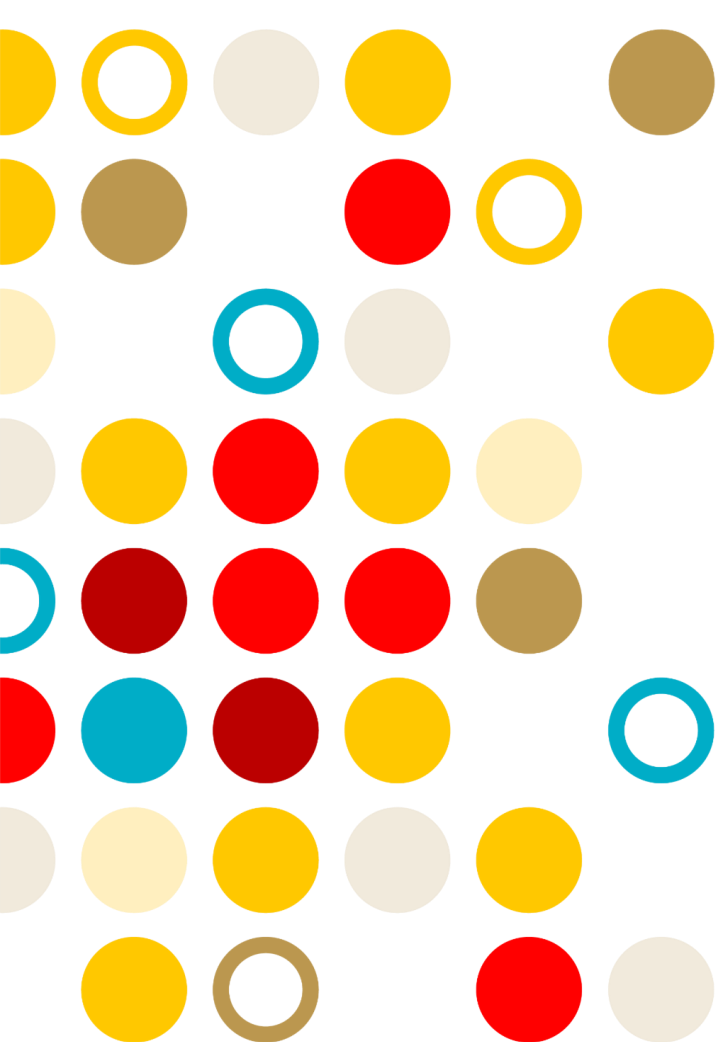
Stability and Technology for our Kids

Operating and Capital Projects Levies

DAN PYAN, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

JULIE NIELSEN, SUPERINTENDENT

SEPT. 9, 2021



Our Commitment



- **Provide a welcoming and individualized learning experience** for more than 18,600 students
- **Provide a balanced budget and establish financial stability** so focus can return to kids and achievement
- **Recruit, develop and retain** high quality employees
- **Maintain taxpayer trust** with ongoing and transparent communication about the district's finances

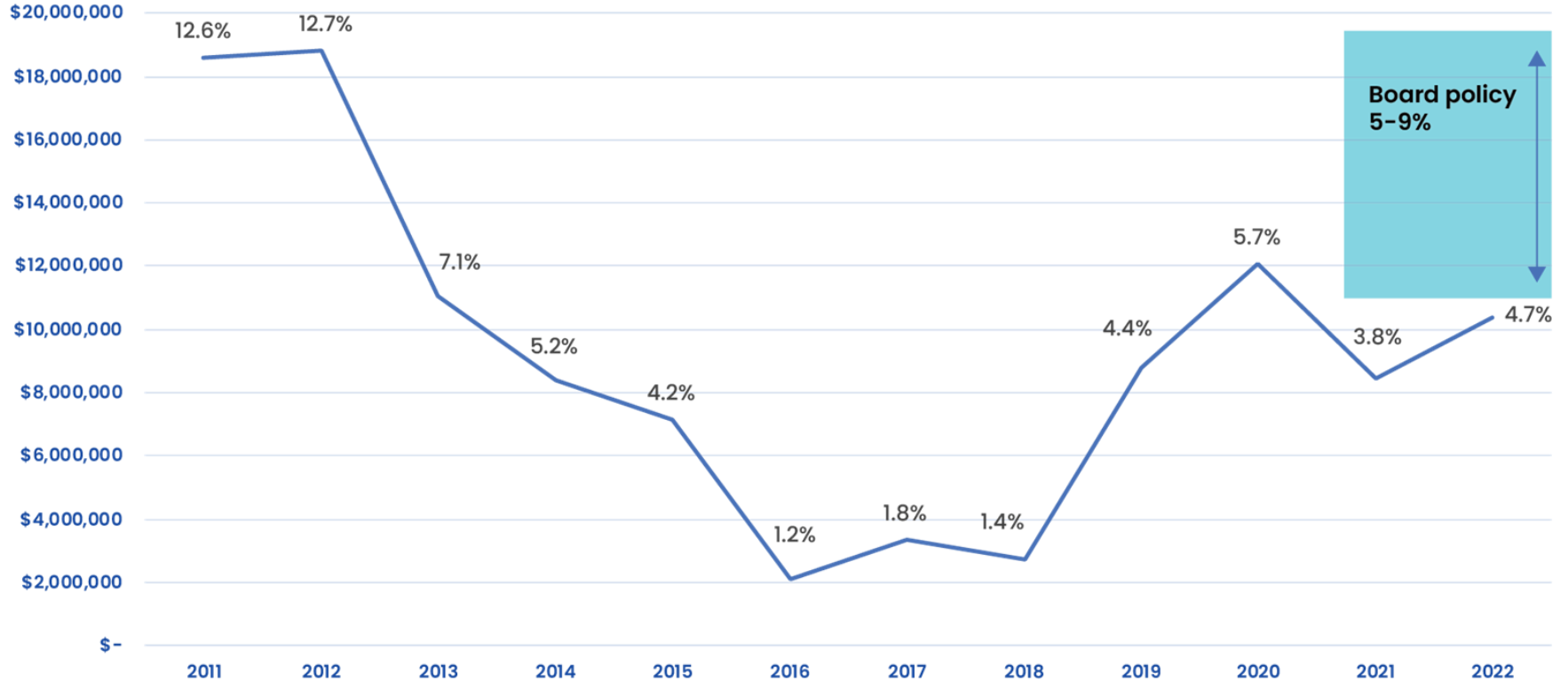
Background

- **2021-22 school year budget** is \$260 million (state, federal and local funds)
- **Approval of \$9.4 million** in cuts for the 2021-22 school year
- **Our savings** (unassigned fund balance) is below school board policy of 5-9%
- **Currently operating at 4.7%** which equates to 2.5 weeks of operational costs
- **Required special education and English learner services** cost \$24 million more than the district receives each year



4.7%
FUND
BALANCE

Unassigned Fund Balance



What's on the Ballot Nov. 2

REQUEST INCREASE TO OPERATING LEVY

- **Revoke operating levies** from 2015 and 2017 and combine and replace them with one operating levy
- **Would not need renewed until 2031**
- **Increases funds** from \$1,536 to \$1,886 per student
- **Annual increase at rate of inflation for 10 years**
- **The estimated tax impact** on the average homeowner (\$300,000 value home) would be about \$13.16 per month or \$158 a year



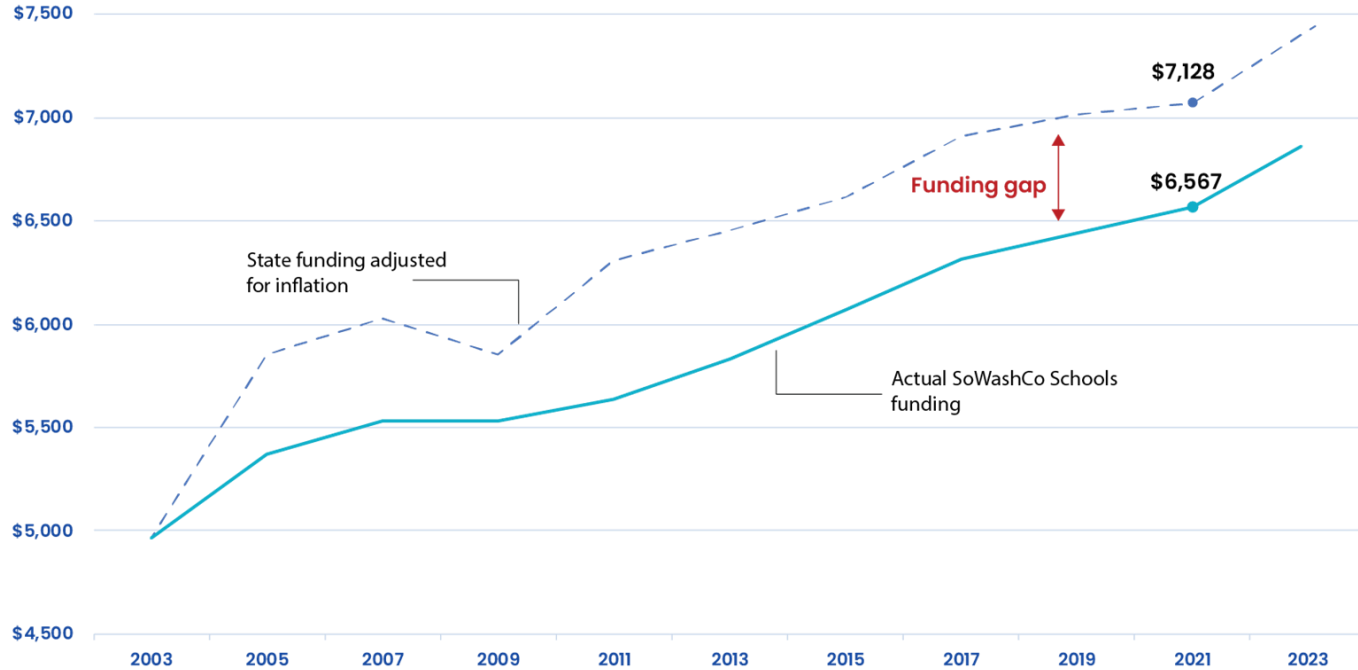
Question

1

OPERATION
S



State Basic General Education Funding per Student



If state funding had kept pace with inflation over the past 18 years, we would have received nearly \$561 more per student last school year – or a total of \$10.4 million.

If Voters Approve the Request

- **Stability in operations** so the district can focus on academics and facilities planning
- **Invest more** in schools and student needs at all grade levels
- **Limit additional budget cuts** to programs and staffing
- **Offset required and unfunded costs** for special education, English learner and related services
- **Create financial stability** and meet the board policy for an unassigned fund balance that requires 5-9% of savings



If Voters Do Not Approve the Request

- **Potential cuts to**
 - Staff and academic programs
 - Athletics and activities programming
 - Administration and support staff
- **Reexamination of attendance boundaries** to balance enrollment and reduce transportation costs
- **Closing or repurposing low-enrollment schools** (before a long-range facilities plan can address these challenges properly)

Question

1

OPERATION
S

What's on the Ballot Nov. 2

REQUEST INCREASE TO CAPITAL PROJECTS LEVY

- **Revoke \$2 million capital projects levy** from 2017 and replace with \$5 million levy for technology
- **Would not need renewed until 2031**
- **Increases funds** from \$112 to \$270 per student for 10 years
- **Directly funding technology** allows current general education funds to be redirected to classrooms
- **The estimated tax impact** on the average homeowner (\$300,000 value home) would be about \$4.16 per month or \$49.92 a year



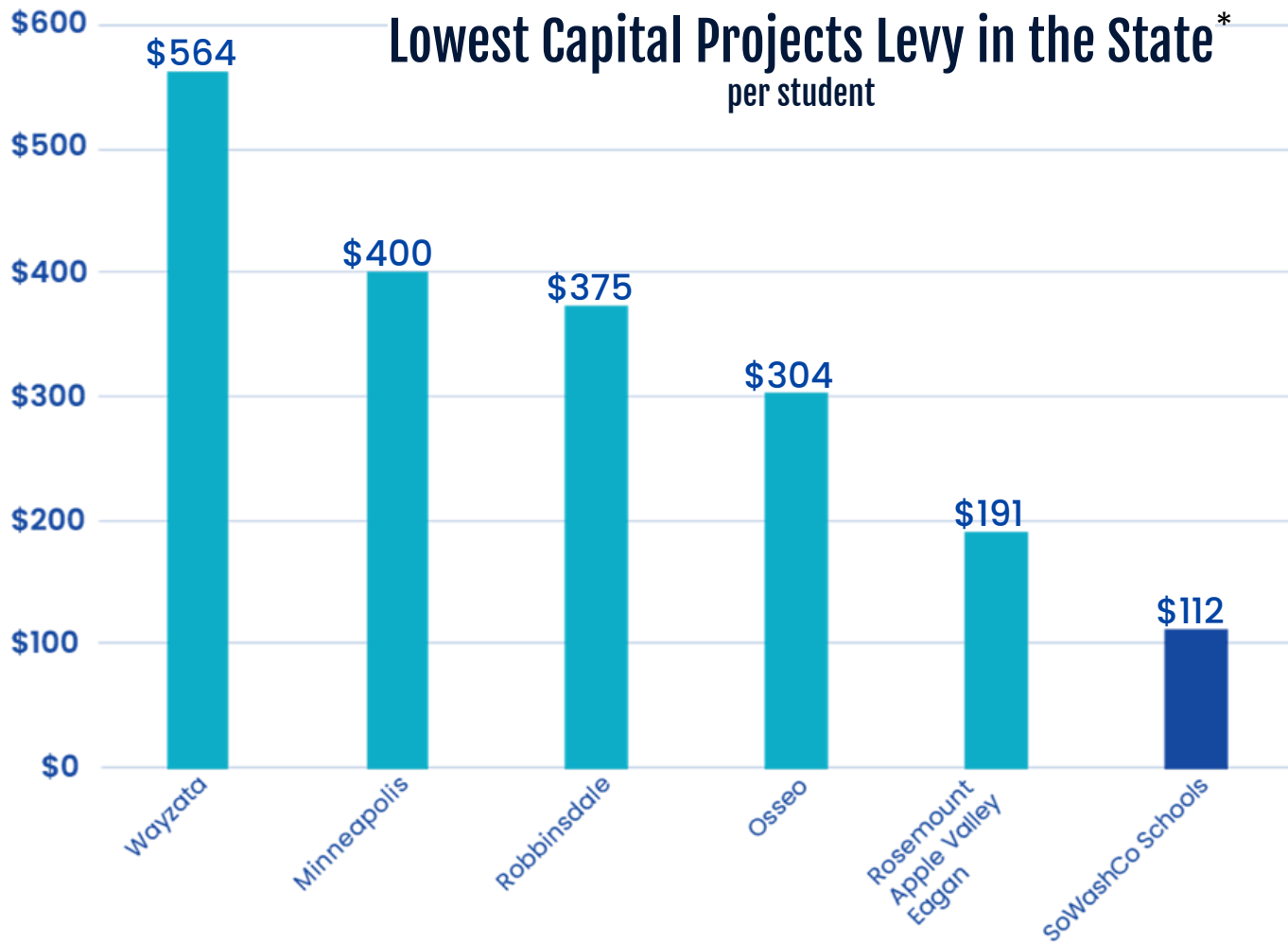
Question

2

TECHNOLOG
Y

Lowest Capital Projects Levy in the State*

per student

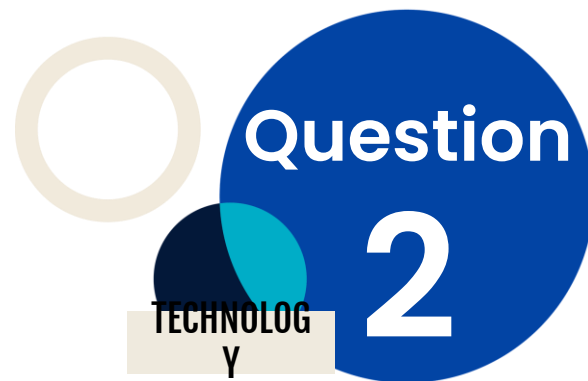


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Shown: School districts with a capital projects levy among the top 10 districts by student population.

If Voters Approve the Request

IF VOTERS APPROVE THE REQUEST, THE FUNDING WOULD HELP:

- **Expand digital access** to curriculum and learning tools
- **Update educational and business** software licensing
- **Maintain the devices** distributed to students during the pandemic with a refresh cycle to keep devices updated
- **Strengthen personalized learning** through technology
- **Enhance technology infrastructure** (wifi, network equipment, etc.)



If Voters Do Not Approve the Request

- Device and technology costs would come from the general fund at the expense of other programs
- Technology support for families would be severely limited without additional staffing



*We believe
SoWashCo Schools
create strong
communities and
property values.*

Finance Highlights



FINANCIAL REPORTING

2020 Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Association of School Business Officials



RECOGNITION

Minnesota Department of Education School Finance Award (2020) for the seventh year in a row



BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

Navigated budget reductions of \$9.4 million during the 2020-21 school year for a balanced budget



EFFICIENT SPENDING

Spent less than both the state and metro averages on district administration

Technology Highlights



STUDENT DEVICES

Massive distribution of more than 18,000 devices to students during the pandemic



EQUITABLE ACCESS

Distribution of wifi hotspots for families who needed internet access at home during distance learning



SOWASHCO ONLINE

Preparing for our districtwide online school in the 2022-23 school year



ADVANCED CLASSES

Set up advanced classes to run digitally (Project Lead the Way) so students did not have to attend a physical lab

Summary

Nov. 2 ballot request to increase the operating levy and the capital projects levy for technology

- **Provide critical funds** for classrooms, instruction and other school operating costs
- **Invest** in improved instructional technology, support staffing, and maintenance and support for student devices



**so
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co** SCHOOLS



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thanks!