

Southeastern Wisconsin Schools Alliance (SWSA) 2019-2021 Legislative Advocacy Framework *Revised 2/3/2019*

SWSA advocates for the benefit of all students by driving education policies supporting strong public schools to ensure world class practices, economic vitality, and community well-being.

The purpose of this legislative agenda is to proactively influence public policy related to education through coordinated legislative advocacy efforts for the benefit of students, families, and communities. The SWSA is committed not only to the 200,000+ students we educate in our traditional public schools, but also the 860,000 traditional public school students served across the state. Our 2019-21 Legislative Priorities are founded in our mission and our core beliefs (found on our website at www.schoolsalliance.com).

This legislative agenda outlines our key priorities for the 2019-21 biennial budget. All of these items are extremely important and most of them have been brought to the attention of the Blue-Ribbon Commission that held hearings for the first half of 2018.

Many of the SWSA member districts have provided testimony (written and verbal) to the commission. Our organization was specifically asked to provide testimony at the first hearing and provided a foundation for others to build upon.

Although there have been many committees commissioned to examine school funding, the Blue-Ribbon Commission spent a majority of their time and effort (up to this point) **listening** to the concerns of educators, district administrators, parents, business leaders, policy makers, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), and many others with a vested interest in education. Each of the committee members had been tasked with providing their recommendations to the co-chairs and then the full team reconvened and provided a list of recommendations as a full committee early this year (found on SWSA website at: [Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission 1-4-2019](#)).

SWSA provided many recommendations to the Blue-Ribbon Commission and many are included in the current 2019-21 legislative agenda. However, one of the most important pieces of information we provided to the Blue-Ribbon Commission was the **No Time to Lose Report** that was developed by the National Council of State Legislatures. SWSA believes that there are many short-term adjustments that can be made to the current school funding system. However, we strongly urged the committee to make a recommendation to begin the journey of creating a shared vision for public education in the state of Wisconsin and create an inclusive team to begin this work.

The SWSA legislative agenda is a combination of some short-term recommendations and some longer time issue areas that would be best supported by coordinating efforts with a cross sector team of partners. We will continue advocating to advance opportunities for children, their well-being, and their future.

Below is a summary of the 2019-21 Legislative Advocacy Framework for the SWSA organization. The SWSA membership has developed an outline of actions recommended for the organization to engage in.

SWSA 2019-2021 Legislative Advocacy Framework

Legislative Priority 1	Provide a comprehensive, predictable, and sustainable funding system for public school district students.
Legislative Priority 2	Increase state support for the most vulnerable, underrepresented, and high need populations including students with disabilities (SWD), English Language Learners (ELL), and children in high poverty.
Legislative Priority 3	<p>Increase support to ensure adequate resources are available for Wisconsin children to succeed. Areas for additional support include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health • Early Childhood (Birth to 3, full day 4K) • Wrap around services for children to support learning
Legislative Priority 4	Develop, attract, and retain high quality educators.
Legislative Priority 5	Provide taxpayers with a transparent and valid accountability system for all publicly funded schools.
Legislative Priority 6	Preserve and maintain local control of public schools and advocate for no future unfunded mandates on public education.