



EAU CLAIRE
AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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My name is Mary Ann Hardebeck. I am the Superintendent of the Eau Claire Area School District.

I am joining you this morning to speak about the needs of our school district. We are 11,300 students with over 1400 employees in 20 school sites.

Like other urban districts in Wisconsin, we are experiencing an achievement gap. We find that our gaps are increasingly related to poverty and childhood trauma.

Last year as the 8th largest school district in Wisconsin, we ranked 281 in per pupil spending out of 424 school districts. We spent \$418 less than the state average in per pupil spending. Nevertheless, our district exceeded expectations as measured by the state report card.

We have historically done more with less every year since the revenue caps were put in place in 1993. Districts like ours have been penalized financially, as we have been frozen at a lower level than similarly sized school districts. We can only stretch our dollars so far. All of our children in school districts across Wisconsin should be receiving the same level of funding for their education so that they can develop as successful and productive adults.

Today, I would like to ask that you support governor's proposal to increase each district's per pupil categorical aid from the current \$250 per pupil by adding \$200 per pupil in 2017-18 and an additional \$204 in the next year. The \$200 per pupil would make a substantial impact for us, allowing us to maintain district programs and staffing.

I also urge you to support the school based mental health programs in the proposed budget. Student mental health needs to be a high priority. Supporting trauma informed care is essential to address the adverse effects that harmful childhood experiences have on students.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Eau Claire Area School District.