

Michael Gerlach
Director of Business Services

April 10, 2019

Honorable Members of the Committee:

Representing the Fond du Lac School District, I am Michael Gerlach, Director of Business Services and this is Linda Uselmann, School Board President. We appreciate your efforts to address school district funding through these public hearings and the State Budget process. We're urging the Committee to consider two important components of reform to the school funding formula to address the long term impact of rising inflationary expenses faced by the Fond du Lac School District and many other districts across the State.

1. **Predictable and Sustainable Revenues:** Fond du Lac, like many other districts, is experiencing the inflationary pressure of rising operational expenses such as employee wages & benefits. Attracting and retaining staff is critical to providing an outstanding education to our students. We would like to see a predictable increase to the allowable Per-Member Change on the Revenue Limit that is aligned to an inflationary measure, instead of the current \$0 cap. An inflationary adjusted increase would provide predictable revenue growth to all districts over time. We would also like to see the Per Pupil Aid allocation preserved in the funding formula and indexed to an inflationary increase over time to benefit all school districts.
2. **Special Education Categorical Aid:** We would like to see an increase in the Special Education Categorical Aid Allocation/Reimbursement. The costs to provide students who have disabilities with a Free and Appropriate Public Education continue to rise in Fond du Lac, while the reimbursement rate has not. Included are two graphs illustrating the increasing costs of transferring funds from the General Fund to the Special Education Fund, to cover the costs of Special Education. Again this is an inflationary expense that we would like to see a predictable and sustainable solution to. We would like to see an increase in the Special Education Categorical Aid reimbursement to at least 30% of aid-able costs.

Predictable and sustainable additional revenues will provide the District with the ability to maintain high levels of student programming, meet rising operational expenses, and provide a Free and Appropriate Education to students with disabilities. The Fond du Lac School District has a history of fiscal responsibility under revenue limits and like all districts in the State, we are committed to maintaining high levels of student achievement and using our limited resources to benefit all students in our community



The mission of the Fond du Lac School District, in partnership with the family and the community, is to promote high achievement and foster the continuous growth of the whole child, so that each becomes a creative, contributing citizen in a global society by providing personalized learning opportunities in a safe, nurturing environment.

Thank you for your time today and thank you for your service to the students of the State of Wisconsin.

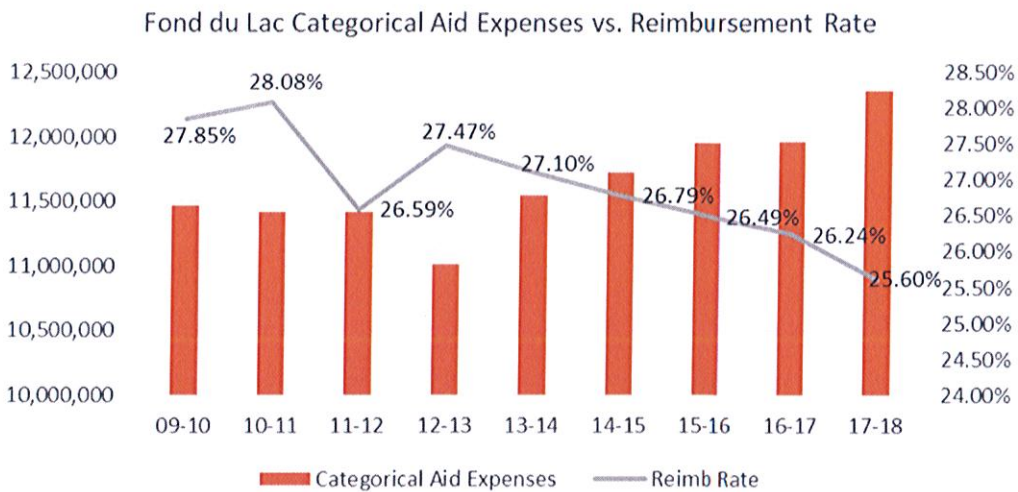
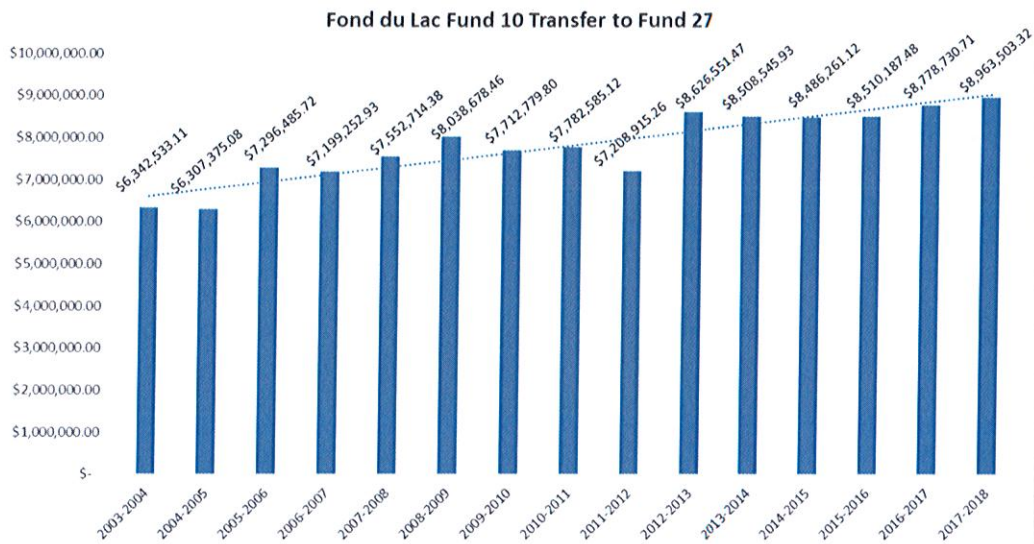
Sincerely,



Michael Gerlach
 Director of Business Services
 Fond du Lac School District



Linda Uselmann
 School Board President
 Fond du Lac School District



Source Data: WI DPI School Financial Services, State and Federal Aid, Special Education Aids, Special Ed & School-Age Parents Aid, Payment Worksheets.
<https://dpi.wi.gov/sfs/aid/special-ed/sped-sap/worksheets>