



# WASA

WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS



## Spring Conference FOR SMALL SCHOOLS LEADERS

*"You are never too small to make a difference" - Greta Thunberg*

MARCH 21-22 | WENATCHEE, WA

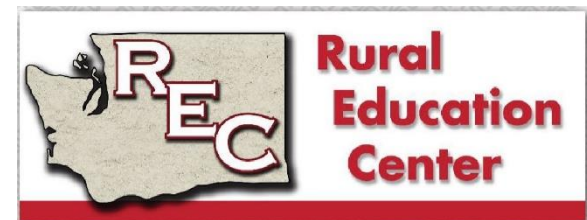
# Championing Our Small Schools:

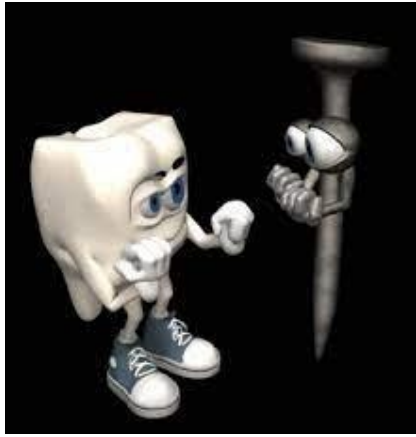


## *Lessons Learned*



**Jim Kowalkowski**  
**Superintendent – Davenport School District**  
**&**  
**Director – Rural Ed. Center**





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**PHRASE OF THE DAY**

19JUN20

# fight tooth and nail

(phrase)

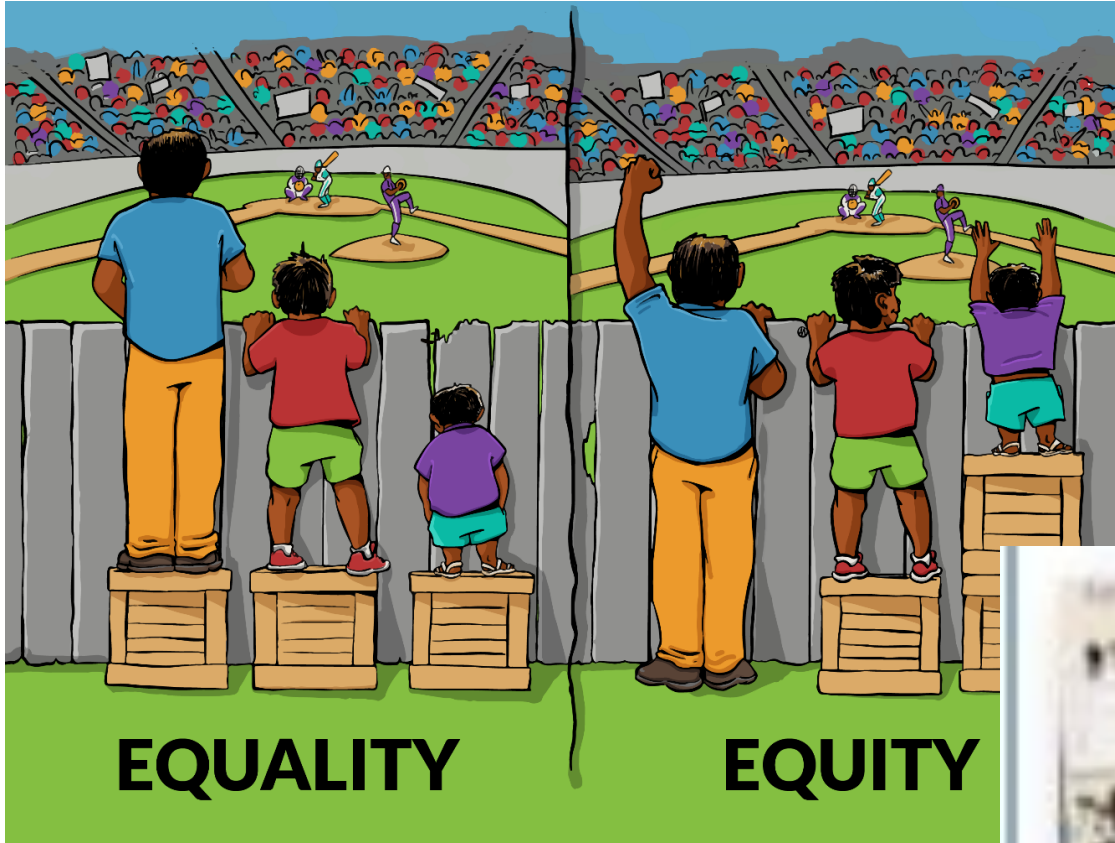
use all your "effort and will power" to get something  
you want or to prevent something happening.

The adverbial phrase “tooth and nail” (originally “with tooth and nail”) literally means “with the use of one’s teeth and nails as weapons; by biting and scratching,” according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

But, as the *OED* notes, the expression has almost always been used figuratively to mean “in the way of vigorous attack, defense, or action generally; vigorously, fiercely, with one’s utmost efforts, with all one’s might.”

# Purpose of this Presentation:

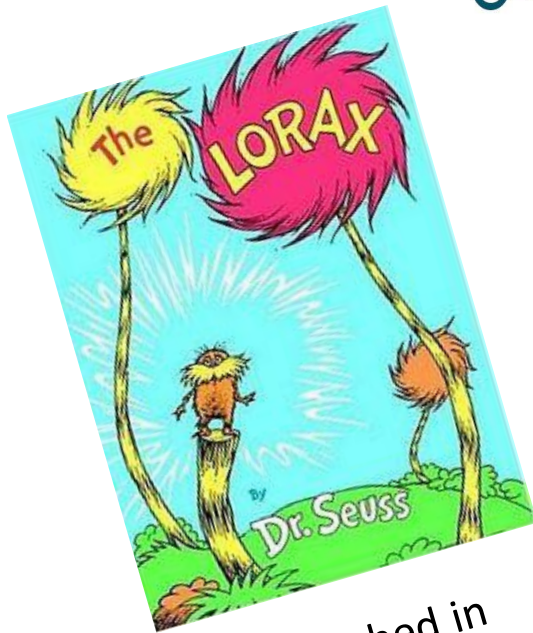
- ▶ Provide some reflections/insights for you to consider
- ▶ Reflect on how **you** can make a difference
- ▶ Learn from each other
- ▶ Encourage you to commit to fighting “tooth & nail” for our small school districts



# Why Advocate?

“Unless someone like you cares  
a whole awful lot, Nothing is  
going to get better. It's not.”

- Dr. Seuss, The Lorax



Published in  
1971





Hey, why do you  
always talk about  
our small and rural  
schools?

Because our small and  
rural schools are so darn  
important to our students  
and to the communities  
we serve!

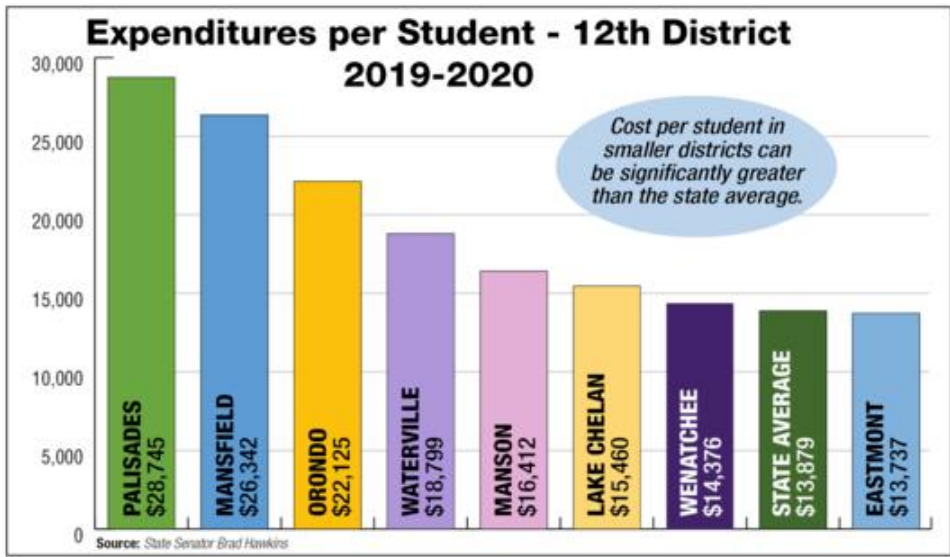




January 25, 2022

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Since the 2012 State Supreme Court's *McCleary decision* regarding education funding, the Legislature has significantly increased funding to K-12 education and school districts have also sought expanded property tax levies to fund local schools. The combined revenues have resulted in annual costs of nearly \$15,000 per student – on average – across Washington state. In many North Central Washington school districts and throughout other areas of the state, some “per-student” annual costs are much greater than the state average. After studying the data, it appears that smaller school districts have higher “per-student” costs than mid- or larger-sized districts, with much of those higher costs attributable to central administration and maintenance expenses.



## SB 5487- Voluntary Consolidation Bill

- ❑ Introduced 2022 Leg. Session
- ❑ Passed Senate 40-9 on Feb. 10
  - ❑ *Only 1 person testified in support during public hearings in Senate*
- ❑ “Died” in House Capital Budget Committee on Feb. 28





We know that our small school districts are a big deal. We know how much of a difference our small districts can make in the lives of our kids. We know how important and critical we are to the communities we serve. We know this in our heads, in our hearts, and in our guts.

**How can we get our policy makers to know that small schools are a big deal?**



# Are our small districts valued, respected and supported by the following?

- ❖ Wa State Legislature
- ❖ Governor's Office
- ❖ OSPI
- ❖ State Board of Education
- ❖ Professional Educators' Standards Board
- ❖ Dept. of Health – State & Local
- ❖ Other?



# -Fiscal Impacts & Challenges-

*Perspectives from a Small & Rural District*

Presentation to  
Senate Ways & Means Committee  
Work session  
**January 21, 2019**

Jim Kowalkowski,  
Superintendent - Davenport School District  
Director – Rural Education Center

# Reflection Sheet Activity

- What have you had to fight “tooth & nail” to get for your district?
- What have you had to fight “tooth & nail” to prevent from happening to your district?



# Small but Mighty!

- Davenport School District
  - K-12 district
  - 549 students
  - Home of the Gorillas!
- Rural Education Center
  - Statewide cooperative of over 80 small and rural districts and several educational organizations, including ESD's.
  - Program support received from the College of Education at Washington State University



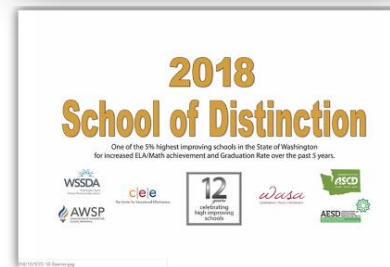
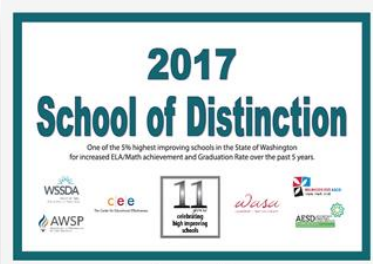


# Gorilla Pride!



2016-17 State B Basketball State Champions &  
**State Academic Champions (3.873 GPA)**

# We are working really hard!



# On-time Graduation Rates

Year	Rate
2013	75%
2014	80.4%
2015	88.6%
2016	<b>97.2%</b>
2017	<b>97.5%</b>
2018	<b>100%</b>

# On-time Graduation Rates

Our  
Free/Reduced  
Rate is  
54.5%

Year	Rate
2013	75%
2014	80.4%
2015	88.6%
2016	<b>97.2%</b>
2017	<b>97.5%</b>
2018	<b>100%</b>



How has the change in LEVY policy affected my school district?



# Feb. 2016 – M & O Levy Proposal Approved by Davenport Patrons

## Levy Newsletter Davenport School District

*Special Edition  
Levy Newsletter  
to Community  
January 2016*

### Replacement M & O School Levy Election February 9, 2016



The Davenport School District will be asking our patrons to vote on renewing the Maintenance and Operation Levy. This election will be held on February 9, 2016. Here are some key facts regarding the school levy:

- ✓ This replacement levy renews an expiring three-year levy that was approved by Davenport School District patrons in 2013.
- ✓ The levy makes up approximately 14% of the school district's total budget.
- ✓ Remember, this is a replacement levy.

The current levy amount for 2016 is \$1,045,000. The current tax rate per \$1,000 of assessed value is \$4.12. These are the proposed M & O Levy rates for 2017-2020.

Levy Collection Year	Levy Amount	Estimated Tax Rate (per \$1,000 of assessed value)
2017	\$1,066,000	\$4.12
2018	\$1,087,000	\$4.12
2019	\$1,109,000	\$4.12
2020	\$1,131,000	\$4.12

# HB 2242 - Impacts

✓ Local levy capacity reduced significantly

## Levy Approved in 2016

Levy Collection Year	Levy Amount	Estimated Tax Rate (per \$1,000 of assessed value)
2017	\$1,066,000	\$4.12
2018	\$1,087,000	\$4.12
2019	\$1,109,000	\$4.12
2020	\$1,131,000	\$4.12

## Changes to Levy Due to HB 2242

We will be required to “roll back” dollars in 2019 & 2010

Levy Collection Year	Levy Amount	Tax Rate
2018	\$1,087,000	\$4.03est.
2019	\$419,000 (estimate)	\$1.50
2020	\$432.000 (estimate)	\$1.50

2019 voter approved  
M & O LEVY  
\$1,109,000|

Facilities  
Upkeep

Supplies

Facilities Repair

Books

Utilities

Technology

Security

Teachers,  
Classified,  
Administration

Professional  
Development

Transportation  
Building Repair

Curriculum

Transportation Supplies  
& Upkeep

Athletics

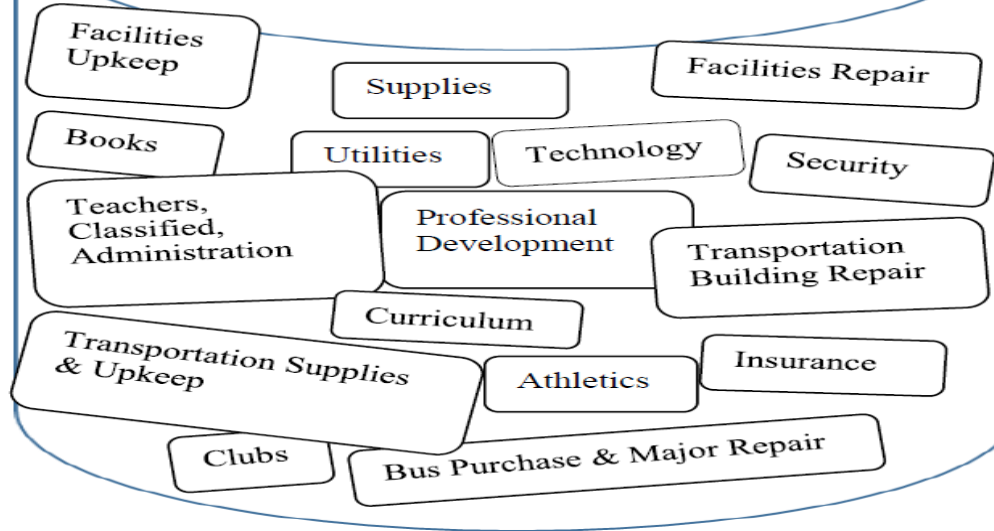
Insurance

Clubs

Bus Purchase & Major Repair



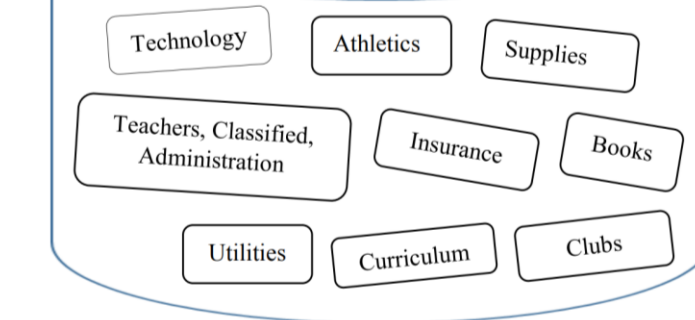
2019 voter approved  
M & O LEVY  
\$1,109,000



Estimated tax rate  
**\$4.12/\$1,000**

**Enrichment Levy  
Limit  
\$1.50 /\$1,000**

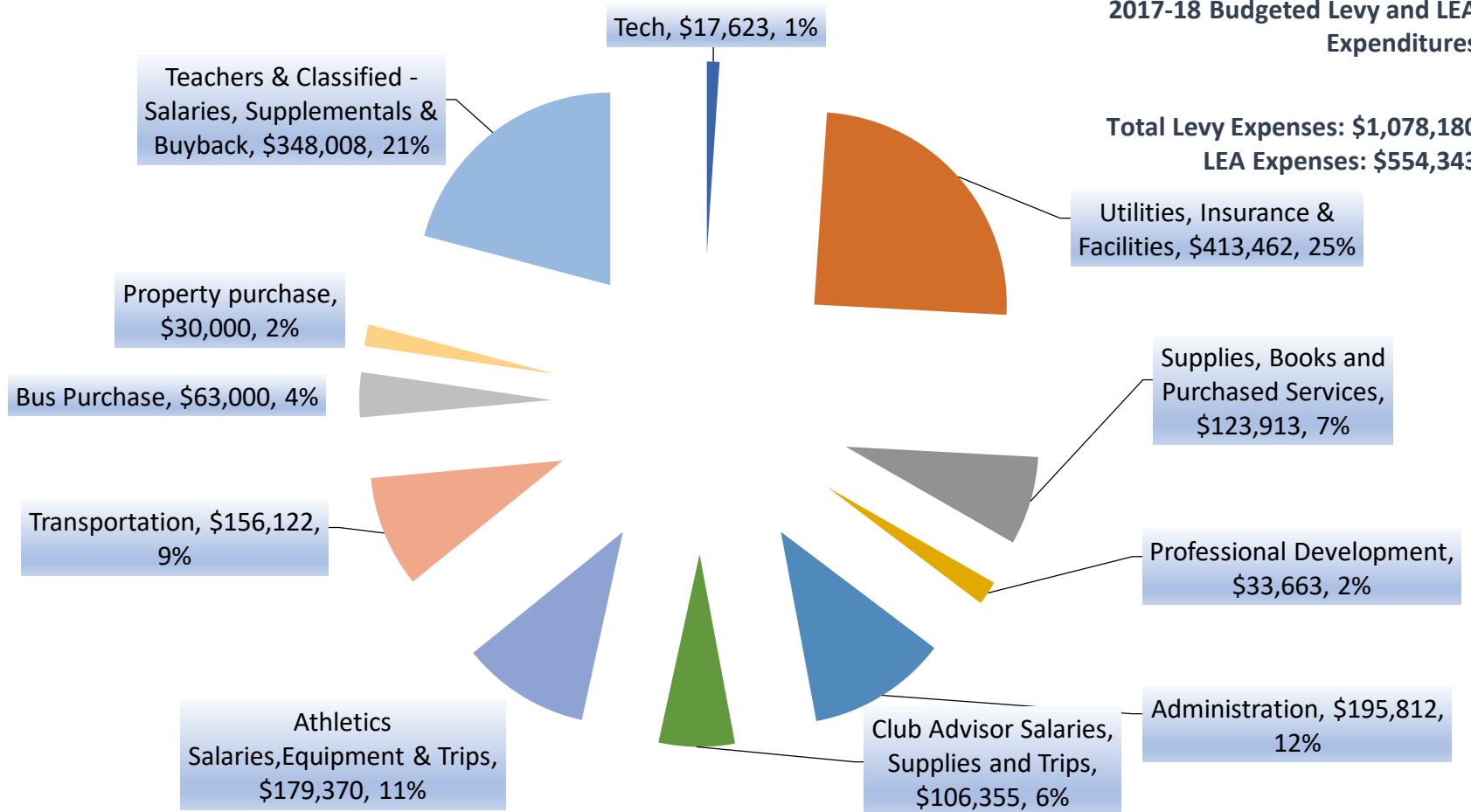
Enrichment Levy  
Approximately \$419,000



# 2017-18 Levy/LEA Budgeted Expenditures Davenport School District

## 2017-18 Budgeted Levy and LEA Expenditures

**Total Levy Expenses: \$1,078,180**  
**LEA Expenses: \$554,343**



# Overall Tax Rates

Your taxes will go up this year, regardless of the special levies! (Levy “swap”)

Tax Impact History & Projected –mil rate/\$1,000	2017	2018	2019	2020
M & O Levy	4.01	4.00	1.50	1.50
Proposed Capital Projects Levy			.90	.90
Proposed Transportation Vehicle Levy			.45	.45
K-8 & HS Construction Bonds	2.68	2.63	2.59	2.58
State Tax Rate for K-12 Schools	2.07	2.83	2.87	2.92
<b>Totals</b>	8.76	9.46	8.31	8.35

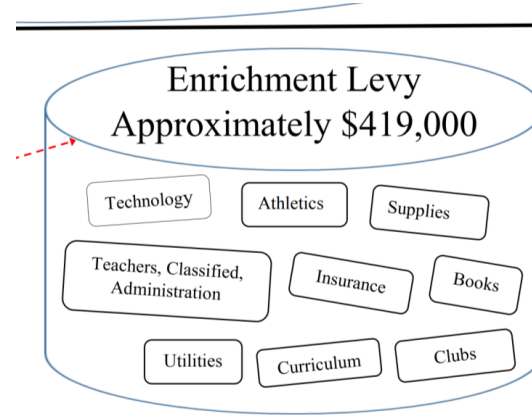
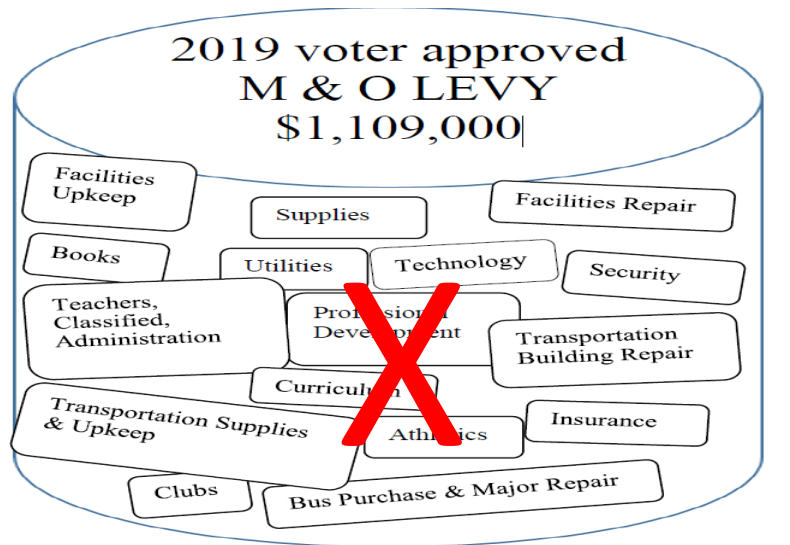
In 2019, your overall taxes will go DOWN due to the \$1.50 enrichment levy limit

# What are the Shortcomings in the Prototypical School Model?

MSOC's – What's funded vs. What's Budgeted - 2017-18 School Year

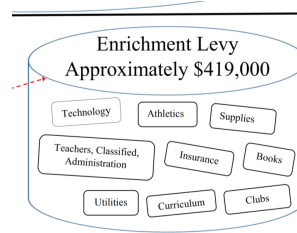
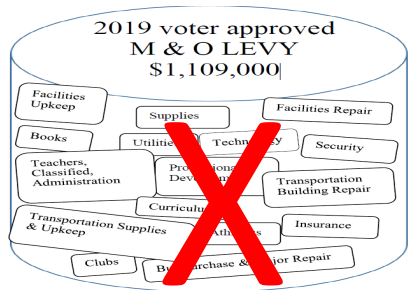
Category	State Funding Amount	Budgeted Dollars	Comments
Technology	\$85,029	\$152,925	*we did receive some grants
Utilities/Insurance	\$203,198	\$355,015	*Property & Liability Insurance: \$86,015 *Utilities: \$269,000
Curriculum	\$80,646	\$75,603	*1/2 Math Adoption/AP Science/Character Strong
Library/Other Supplies	\$170,771	\$195,675	
Professional Develop.	\$12,604	\$40,300	Doesn't include per diem days *One day of PD for our teachers costs approximately \$15,000
Facilities Maintenance	\$112,765	\$144,500	
District-Wide Support	\$62,920	\$94,250	
Totals	<b>\$727,933</b>	<b>\$1,107,826</b>	<b>\$379,893</b>





**Approximately \$600,000 loss in local levy dollars each school year**

- What do we cut?
- What will happen to those support systems we have put in place to help struggling students?
- What will happen to our graduation rates?



**Approximately \$600,000 loss in local levy dollars each school year**

**Do we cut AP offerings?**

**Do we cut College in the High School course offerings?**

**Do we cut teachers?**

**Do we cut paraprofessionals?**

**Do we cut professional development?**

**Do we cut technology?**

**Do we cut safety and security expenses?**

**Do we cut curriculum updates?**

**Do we cut our preschool program?**

**Do we cut our drama programs?**

**Do we cut our Knowledge Bowl teams?**

**Do we cut our after school academic programs?**

# Hey, we just gave you a bunch of new state money, why are you complaining?

- Yes, we are getting additional state funding, reflected mostly in the average salary allocations..

BUT...

- When you factor in the loss of local levy and/or LEA dollars, many districts (over 100) are going backwards financially
- WASA is working on specific recommendations for your consideration

As you consider changes to levy policy, please keep the following in mind...

- Some of our property-poor districts have historically had levy rates below the \$1.50 rate for many years—some of these districts will not be able to increase their local levy rate. This is especially true of some districts in Stevens County
- Some districts have made promises to their voters that their local levy rate would go down due to the “levy swap”. In some cases, districts proposed and passed a bond levy or a capital projects levy.

As you consider changes to levy policy, please keep the following in mind...

If you do increase local capacity, please do the following:

- Keep the increases at a modest level
- LEA must be enhanced to limit inequities between property rich and property poor districts

As you consider changes to levy policy, please keep the following in mind...

The **current prototypical funding model** needs to be improved:

- Funding for school nurses
- Funding for technology
- Funding for curriculum
- Funding for safety and security
- Funding for more counselors & social workers
- MSOC's – Current funding levels are inadequate



Consider...

- Equalize **all** districts to \$2500
- Rewrite the E2SSB 6362 hold harmless language to help address funding gaps for over 110 districts (WASA Workgroup )



## Additional Challenges...

- Cost of SEBB...
- Loss of SAM /Staff Mix...
- Regionalization Funding...
  - Ouch!
  - Impact on negotiations
  - Was it your intent to discourage educators from working in small and rural districts?

# Final Thoughts...



- The additional state funding is appreciated!
- We want to work with you on making needed fixes.
- Some specific recommendations are coming your way.
- **Don't give up on us!**



# Championing Our Small Schools

## *What has worked well?*

- ▶ Elbow Partner/Small Group Activity
  - Reflect on & then share **what has worked well** regarding the unique needs of our small districts being considered and valued? ...(policies, funding, advocacy, etc.)



# Championing Our Small Schools

## *What has NOT worked so well?*

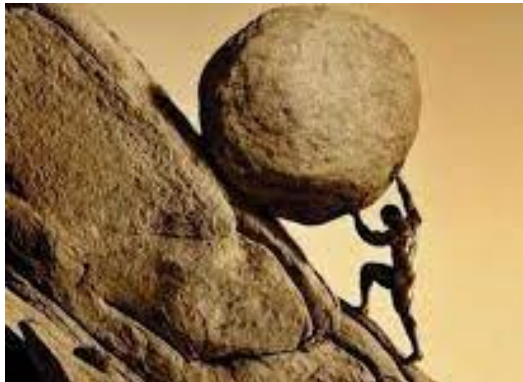
- ▶ Elbow Partner/Small Group Activity
  - Reflect & then share **what has NOT worked well** regarding the unique needs of our small districts being considered and valued? ...(policies, funding, advc



# Championing Our Small Schools

## *What Still Needs to be Done?*

- ▶ Elbow Partner/Small Group Activity
  - Reflect & then share **what still needs to be done** to ensure that unique needs of our small districts are considered & valued? (policies, funding, advocacy, etc.)





# It's All About Relationships



# Connecting Legislators with Students!



Davenport High Students  
Meeting with Senator Judy  
Warnock & Rep. Alex Ybarra a  
few months ago...



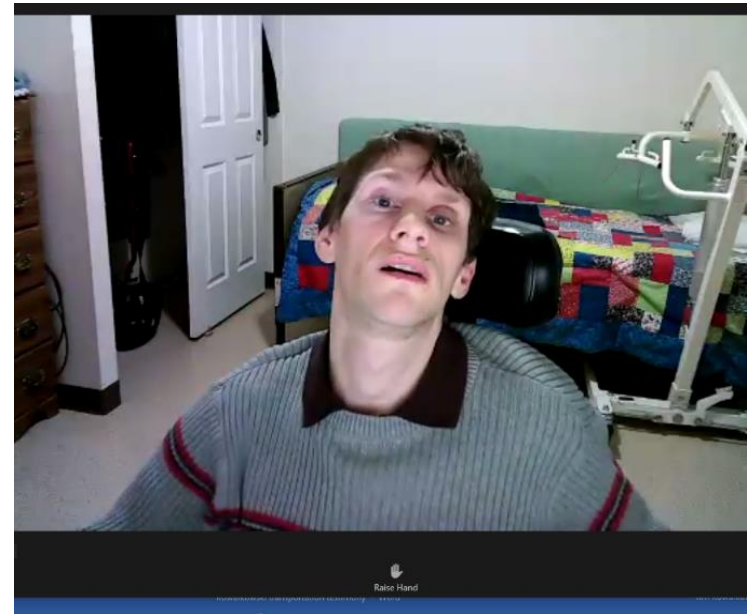
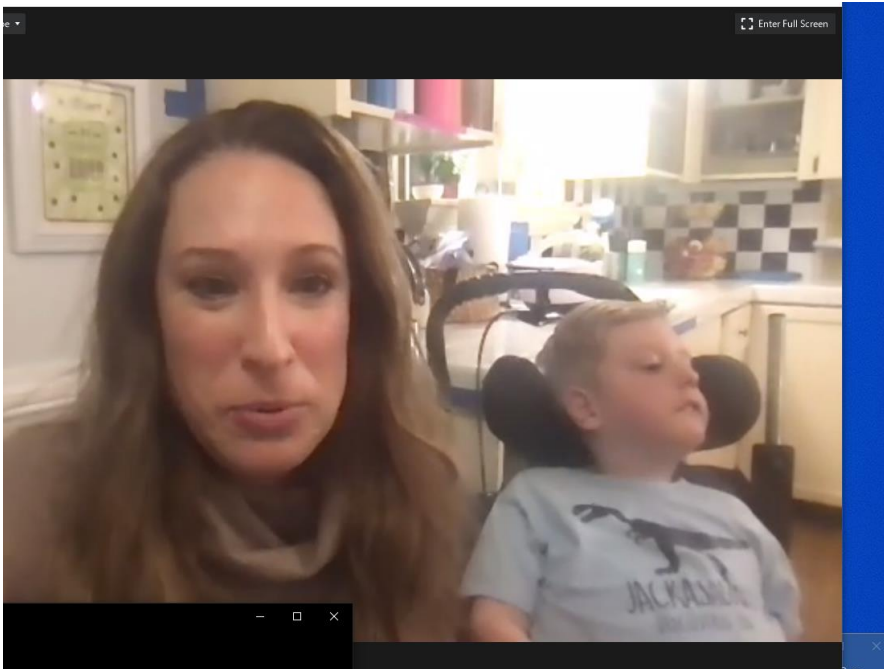
# Advocacy Tips

- ▶ Tell **your** story...
- ▶ Sprinkle in some facts/ details with **memorable** stories about your students, your staff, your district, and your community...

**It's All About Relationships**

# Advocacy Tips

- ▶ Tell **your** story...
- ▶ Sprinkle in some facts/ details with **memorable** stories about your students, your staff, your district, and your community...





# Advocacy Tips

One strategy:  
Provide legislators with  
facts



## About the Davenport School District

The Davenport School District is located in Lincoln County and is 38 miles west of Spokane. We serve approximately 544 students in three buildings: Davenport Elementary School (Grades K-5), Davenport Middle School (grades 6, 7, & 8) and Davenport High School (grades 9-12). We receive tremendous community support and we are very proud of our accomplishments!



### Our Students

K-12 Students Served: 545

Special Ed. 12.65%

### Our Offerings

- Comprehensive high school with College in the High School, AP, CTE, STEM, Music, Drama, & extensive co-curricular and extra-curricular programs
- All-day, every day Pre School Programs

### By the Numbers...

#### Our Staff

Number of Certificated Staff	42
Number of Support Staff:	
Instructional paras	17
Bus Drivers	8
Kitchen	3
Maint/Custodial	5
Secretaries	4
Business Manager	1
Principals	2
Transportation Director/Mechanic	1
Superintendent	1
Director of Plan Operations	1

#### Our District

Our Free/Reduced Rate is  
**54.5%**

#### Our Community

- Lincoln County Seat
- City Population: 1600

### Technology

Number of Windows computers 514

Number of Chromebooks: 565

Number of Mobile Labs:

- 2 iPad Mobile Labs
- 15 Chromebook Mobile Labs

### Davenport Graduation Rate: On-Time



### Enrichment Levy

2018 Levy: \$1,087,000

2019 Levy: \$445,000

Levy Passage Rate: 64.73%

Loss in Levy Funds: \$642,000

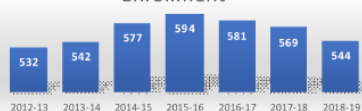
### Assessment Data

Area	State Avg.	Davenport
Grad Rate	80.9%	100%
Math	49.4%	68.2%
ELA	59.4%	72.8%

### Teacher Info—Experience

State Avg.	Davenport
12.9 years	16.2 years

### Enrollment



Another strategy:  
Tell a story that will be  
remembered, that will  
resonate with legislators  
and that is compelling...

➤ Our district serves many  
students with diverse  
talents  
to tell your  
“small business”  
grader  
Elementary



# Advocacy Tips

One strategy:

Provide legislators with  
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## About the Davenport School District

The Davenport School District is located in Lincoln County and is 38 miles long. We serve approximately 544 students in three buildings: Davenport Elementary (Grades K-5), Davenport Middle School (Grades 6-8), and Davenport High School (grades 9-12).

Most powerful: use a combination of details and memorable stories!

49.4%	68.2%	
ELA	59.4%	72.8%

## Teacher Info—Experience

State Avg.	Davenport
12.9 years	16.2 years

## Enrollment



Another strategy:

Tell a story that will be  
remembered

to tell your  
“small business”  
grades  
Elementary





# Advocacy Tips

- ▶ Reflect on this: What influences you the most when you are dealing with a challenging local issue?

Scenario #1: A parent call you with a concern. She **yells** at you, **blames you** for being a part of the problem and **demand**s you take immediate steps to fix this issue NOW!



# Advocacy Tips

## ► Reflect on this:

What influences you the most when you are dealing with a challenging local issue?

**Scenario #2:** A parent has a concern. She **takes the time to schedule** an appointment with you. Ahead of you meeting, she sends you a detailed email describing her concerns but also **points out some positives** about the school district that she is impressed with.

She also offers some possible suggestions to help address the problem. When you meet with her, she is **respectful** and has done her homework. She provides you with some time to address the concern and she **continues stay in touch**. **She provides consistent influence on you and describes the struggles her child is having and offers help and assistance to help resolve the issue.**



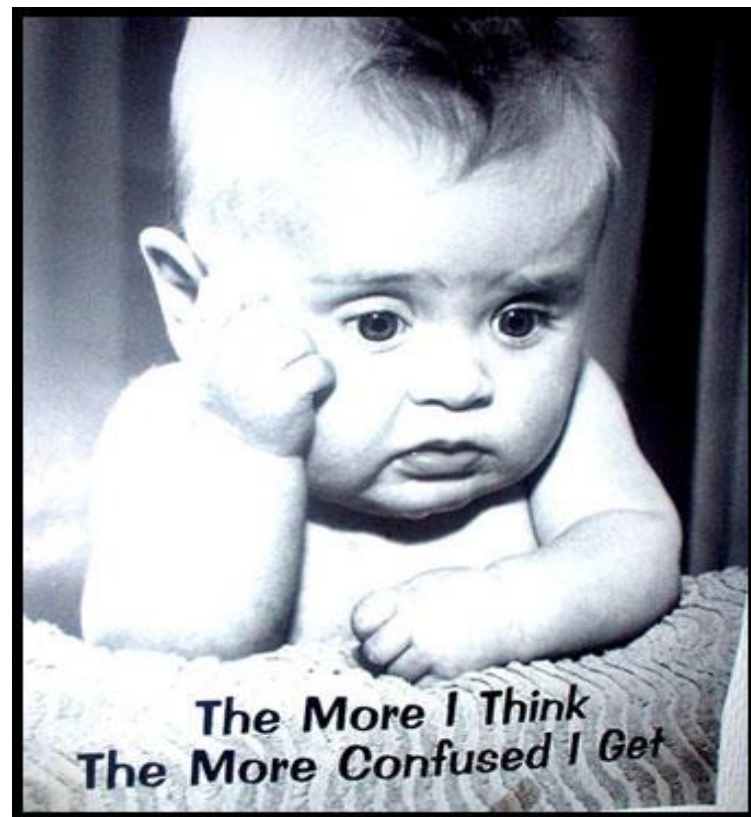
# Let's review!

- ▶ Tell **your** story...
- ▶ Sprinkle in some facts/ details with **memorable** stories about your students, your staff, your district, and your community...
- ▶ “Be like Ben”...quote...

**It's All About Relationships**

## Key Messages to Legislators:

- ❖ We are not asking for a ton of additional or new dollars...we are asking that you keep our school districts “whole”.
- ❖ If you don’t take appropriate action during this legislative session & let the “fully funded formulas” determine school funding, school districts are going to see significant losses in revenue.
- ❖ The current k-12 funding formulas need to be addressed...i.e. allocation for nurses, need for additional counselors, etc.

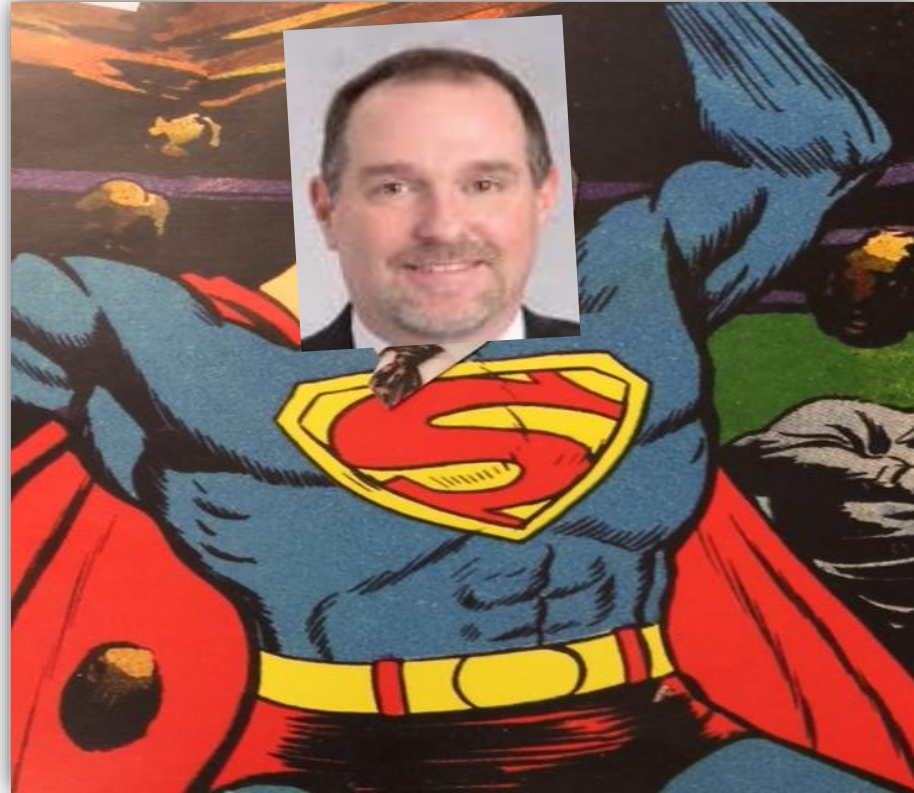


# Tell Your Story!

- Connect with your local state representatives and senator(s)
- Tell your story...how your district is being impacted...talk about your successes and your struggles
- Don't hesitate to offer remote testimony
- If we don't advocate for our small & rural districts, who will?



# Special Thanks to “The Man of Steel”!





Special Thanks to Tom Ahearne!  
The Fight Continues!  
**Courage:** This man has it!



# Go Zags!



