



**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE**

901 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, South Milwaukee, WI 53172

Doug Perry  
Board President

Dear Resident,

Thank you for attending this year's Annual Meeting or if you could not make the meeting, thank you for reviewing this year's Annual Report. Your interest in our district is important to us, and we appreciate and need your support. We are looking forward to a 2021-22 school year that will be "more normal" than the last. We, as members of a duly elected Public Education Board, have been given the responsibility to meet the needs of all of our students so they can share in the world that they will inherit.

At this time last year, we were preparing to meet our students' needs within a virtual format. Even though this model was less than perfect, our students, their families, our educators and our community all stepped up to make the best out of a terrible situation in the middle of a global pandemic.

Our goal in the School District of South Milwaukee for this 2021-22 school year, is to teach our students in person, at our schools, five days a week using layered mitigation strategies. These mitigation strategies include having as many of our students and staff vaccinated, mandating all staff and students wear masks when indoors and not eating or drinking (this mandate will be reviewed periodically and will change when the risks have been reduced), offering effective ventilation systems within our schools, promoting social distancing as practical and promoting hand washing and personal hygiene for all.

By using this layered approach, we are confident that we will be able to keep our schools open in person to best meet our students' educational and social emotional needs.

The Board of Education for the School District of South Milwaukee, along with our business management team, has created a proposed budget in this meeting and document for our residents to consider. Creating this proposed budget was especially challenging since the Wisconsin State Legislature proposed a biennial budget that offered **NO INCREASE IN REVENUE** for school districts for the 2021-2023 school years. Unfortunately, the governor was forced to go along with the legislature's proposal and the biennial budget has been signed into law.

School districts have been directed by our legislators to use the "one-time" federal Covid-19 relief money (ESSER Funds), to fund our regular education programs. These ESSER Funds were designed to meet the needs of students in the School District of South Milwaukee, related to our Covid-19 mitigation strategies and were never designed to be used to fund our general education program.

When our district leadership team explained this fact to our State Assembly Legislator, they were told to "go to referendum" and ask our taxpayers to consider giving more of their hard

earned money for our students' increasing needs. Asking our taxpayers to give more when the state has a surplus of over \$5,000,000,000 is a sign that the Wisconsin State Legislature is completely out of touch with the needs of our students and that they are abdicating their responsibility to fund Public Schools adequately.

Even though we will be challenged by the ongoing pandemic and a lack of sufficient funding from the State, we will meet the needs of our students this school year. We will stay focused on our continuous improvement plan that has an emphasis on Data Literacy, Equity and Culture. We are committed to making certain that all students receive a high quality education in South Milwaukee.

Thank you for taking the time to attend this meeting and or view the presentation. We all need to care about our Public Schools since they are the mechanism that will give all of our students the opportunities that they will need to find success in their future lives.

Be well and do good for the students who attend the School District of South Milwaukee.

*Doug Perry*

Doug Perry  
President, School District of South Milwaukee Board of Education