



## **- 2023 Legislative Priorities -**

### **PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING**

**We urge the State to fully fund its share of the realistic costs of the Standards of Quality (SOQ) without making policy changes that reduce funding or shift funding responsibility to localities.**

- Localities need an adequately-defined SOQ that closes the gap between what school divisions are providing and what the State currently funds in the SOQ.
- We support adequate pipeline programs for teachers, especially in critical shortage areas.
- Localities and school divisions should have flexibility in the use of state funds provided for school employee compensation.
- We support funding and policies for hiring school bus drivers and mental health professionals.

### **BUDGETS AND FUNDING**

**We urge the governor and legislature to enhance state aid to localities and public schools, to not impose mandates on or shift costs to localities, and to enhance local revenue options.**

- Adequate state investment for local service delivery is crucial.
- We oppose unfunded state and federal mandates and the cost shifting that occurs when the State or the federal government fails to fund requirements or reduces or eliminates funding for programs.
- We support additional and strengthened revenue options for localities in order to diversify the local revenue stream; the state should not restrict local revenue sources or confiscate or redirect local general fund dollars to the state treasury.
- Any tax reform efforts should examine financing and delivery of state services at the local level and how revenue is generated relative to our economic competitiveness.

### **BROADBAND**

**We urge and support state and federal efforts and financial incentives that assist localities and their communities in deploying universal, affordable access to broadband technology in unserved areas.**

- We support additional dollars for localities and the private sector to help extend service to areas unserved by any broadband provider.
- Cooperative efforts among private broadband, internet and wireless companies, and electric cooperatives to ensure access to service at an affordable cost are key to success.
- We support state and federal efforts to address concerns such as easement usage associated with broadband deployment and to maintain local land use and permitting authorities.