The voters of Saint Paul on Tuesday approved the Saint Paul Public School District's 2012 *Strong Schools, Strong Communities*
excess property tax levy referendum. This property tax levy will replace a voter-approved property tax levy that expires at the end of 2012. The new property tax levy will provide $39 million each year for the next eight years for critical educational services provided by the largest school district in Minnesota.

The measure received more than a 60 percent majority.

"We are grateful to the voters of Saint Paul for this vote of support for our schools and our children," said Superintendent Valeria Silva. "We will be able to continue essential programs that we know prepare our students to succeed in school and in life."

The property tax levy will provide continued funding for the following services for the Saint Paul Public Schools 39,000 students:
• All day kindergarten for all children
• Pre-kindergarten and ECFE for many of youngest
• Student support and staffing in math and science classes
• Counseling to help our high school students get ready for college
• And many other programs that we can fund because the referendum helps us meet our Special Education and EL responsibilities.

In addition, Saint Paul Public Schools will now accelerate investment in instructional technology, teacher/staff professional development in personalized learning, and online resources related to personalized learning. This investment will allow the district to begin an important transition to the future of education.

Jean O'Connell, Chair of the Saint Paul Board of Education acknowledged that this was a challenging time to go to voters, and that the Board undertook this referendum only after deep reflection and exhaustive research.

"We knew we had no choice if we were to continue showing the gains in student achievement that we have experienced in recent years," she said.

"We were fortunate to have the support of many people and organizations in our work toward this success - teachers, parents, community volunteers, community leaders and hundreds of volunteers," said O'Connell. "We are grateful to each and every one."