

## School leader's op-ed laments funding cuts, federal law

By McLean Bennett Leader-Telegram staff | Posted: Tuesday, December 27, 2011 4:56 pm

The leader of Wisconsin's public schools critiqued both cuts to education funding and a federal law in a recent op-ed column.

In the column released Tuesday, state Superintendent Tony Evers lamented a dwindling number of opportunities for students to participate in arts programs, sports teams and other extracurricular offerings.

"Unfortunately," he wrote, "some of these opportunities are disappearing from our schools. That's partly because the federal No Child Left Behind law makes schools focus on a few basic subjects at the expense of everything else. It's also because of funding cuts - like the ones in Wisconsin's current budget."

The No Child Left Behind law requires public school students nationwide to meet certain benchmarks on tests - schools that don't keep up with the benchmarks could face sanctions in their federal funding. Evers has criticized the law, saying it imposes "broken" and "one-size-fits-all" standards on schools.

He's also been critical of cuts to public education in the 2011-13 state budget. In a statement earlier this year, Evers blamed those cuts for what he called "a tidal wave of (school workers') retirements, growing class sizes, and fewer course offerings."

"If I could have one wish for 2012," Evers wrote in Tuesday's column, "it would be that we all support and prioritize our public schools, so students don't lose the chance to experience learning opportunities that energize them."

To read Evers' full column, [click here](#).