

## Guest Editorial

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### We need ‘Fair Funding for Our Future’

*A school funding reform editorial by State Superintendent Tony Evers*

Across Wisconsin, our broken system of funding our kids’ schools forces locally elected school boards to cut budgets, close schools, and lay off staff. This results in fewer educational opportunities for our students at a time when an educated workforce is vital to our economic recovery and long term prosperity. Yet, taxpayers feel burdened and citizens increasingly question whether they are getting adequate results for their substantial school tax dollars.

We need a public discussion about the way we fund our schools. That is why I have introduced “Fair Funding for Our Future.” This school funding framework is founded on four principles: a funding system that is 1) fair, 2) sustainable, 3) transparent, and 4) accountable for results. This proposed framework addresses pressing school finance issues without raising statewide net property taxes or making a massive increase in state spending. “Fair Funding for Our Future” incorporates ideas from Republicans, Democrats, education experts, and finance specialist to:

- provide a minimum amount of state aid for every student, no matter where they live,
- ensure state education dollars are spent educating children,
- account for student poverty, not just property values,
- expand supports for rural schools,
- provide predictable growth in state support for schools, and
- invest in innovation and programs that show results.

Anywhere you look across the state our current school funding system is broken. It is not serving our students well and it puts public support for public education in jeopardy. We need a bipartisan commitment to repair our school funding system so it is fair and sustainable. We need a school funding system that provides predictable investments in our children’s education, even in the most difficult of financial times, and in ways that are understandable to everyone. Through “Fair Funding for Our Future” we will build a brighter future for our children so they graduate ready for the workplace or further education.

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*Tony Evers is the elected state superintendent of public instruction.*

**NOTES:** A high-resolution photo of the state superintendent is available on the Department of Public Instruction “Media Contacts and Resources” webpage at <http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/vm-media.html>. Additional information about the “Fair Funding for Our Future” framework is available at <http://dpi.wi.gov/sprntdnt/fairfunding.html>. This editorial is available at [http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2010\\_84.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2010_84.pdf).