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Save Our Schools

New school funding proposal makes education a top priority

MADISON – Democratic legislators from north and central Wisconsin joined together today with State Superintendent Tony Evers and regional school officials to support the “Save Our Schools” proposal for the current state budget.

This plan would make public education funding a priority in the state budget, lower property taxes, restore \$20 million in funding to worker training through technical colleges, pay down state debt and implement State Superintendent of Education Tony Evers’ Fair Funding proposal. The Save Our Schools proposal would benefit public education throughout the state. Democrats are asking the Joint Finance Committee to consider it as an amendment to the upcoming state biennial budget.

“Our values are reflected in what we prioritize in the budget,” Representative Molepske said. “Education is fundamentally critical to our state’s economic success. If Wisconsin is going to remain competitive in a global economy, we must continue to fund effective public education.”

The plan would be funded through two mechanisms: by redirecting \$40 million that Governor Walker dedicated to expanding private school vouchers and by taking advantage of a newly-projected state revenue increase of \$636 million. Save Our Schools would allocate \$200 million to repay the Injured Patients’ Compensation Fund and reduce debt restructuring by \$100 million, alleviating pressure on Wisconsin’s structural deficit. The plan would also create a minimum aid of \$3,000 per pupil and transfer the first dollar credit and school levy credit to equalization aid.

These provisions, along with other small tweaks to the funding formula, would allow more than 85% of state districts to see increased funding above what they would receive under Gov. Walker’s plan. No district would receive less.

“Governor Walker’s proposals give more money to private schools while gutting funding for public schools and technical colleges. This is a foolhardy approach to education and it will hurt our communities, our young people, and our future.

The Save Our Schools proposal would reduce property taxes by lessening education costs imposed on local communities,” said Rep. Molepske. “It is our hope that a plan that benefits students, the Wisconsin economy and taxpayers will receive bipartisan support.”

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