

News Release

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Our kids deserve better

MADISON — State Superintendent Tony Evers issued a statement on Joint Committee on Finance (JFC) middle of the night actions including expansion of the school voucher program statewide.

“Our children are caught in the crossfire of an ideologically driven expansion of school vouchers that is financially reckless and academically unproven. The Joint Committee on Finance passed a backroom deal that harms our kids. It does too little to improve funding for public education and does nothing to address well-documented financial and achievement problems in private and religious schools in Wisconsin’s voucher programs.

“The JFC is picking winners and losers. The small move to reinvest in public school kids comes at too great a cost. The history of the past 20 years shows that no limit on voucher enrollment or income eligibility ever stays in place for long. Within a few years, there will certainly be a voucher in every backpack, costing taxpayers over \$1 billion annually. On top of this, starting next year, wealthy families will benefit from a new private school tuition tax deduction costing \$30 million a year initially. These changes mean even more taxpayer money will be pulled out of Wisconsin’s public school classrooms, which are among the best in the country, and put into private and religious schools. The 870,000 kids in our public schools deserve better.

“This vote has created a separate, unaccountable statewide system of religious and private voucher schools funded with public dollars. This pre-dawn action has not had one second of public testimony, there have been no public hearings, and no public fiscal analysis has been done.

“My budget proposal, introduced last fall, fixed our broken school finance system, while investing in the kids of Wisconsin. Our students, all of our students, deserve better.”

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