

News Release

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Statement on Legislative Fiscal Bureau school funding memorandum

MADISON — State Superintendent Tony Evers issued a statement on the school funding memorandum recently released by the Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB). His statement follows.

“I appreciate the work of the LFB and its confirmation of school aid figures from my ‘Fair Funding for Our Future’ plan. This information shows that the ‘Fair Funding’ plan works best for more school districts, their students, and taxpayers than other alternatives, due to the important and necessary policy changes I am proposing to our existing formula. This is why we need to change our current system and not keep the status quo.

“Even in difficult economic times, we can protect schools and enact school finance reform while holding the line on property taxes. The ‘Fair Funding’ plan meets these goals by doing the following:

- Guarantees \$3,000 per student in state general aid to every district; the status quo keeps districts out of our formula.
- Incorporates into the formula an income based, ability-to-pay factor for local communities; the status quo does not.
- Specifically helps rural, declining enrollment, and negatively aided districts; the status quo would have these districts continue to be penalized, lose state aid, and struggle.
- Provides more stability and predictability for school districts; the status quo would result in large fluctuations in state resources and continue the yearly school budgeting uncertainty.
- Ends the school funding shell game with the school levy tax credit and provides transparency in property taxation; the status quo continues business as usual.
- Holds the line on property taxes for the next two years through additional investments and by maintaining revenue limits; the status quo will result in 8 percent to 9 percent school district property tax increases in each of the next two years without new resources.

“We can deliver meaningful solutions on school funding reform. I am pleased that Governor-elect Walker, other elected officials, editorial boards, and community leaders have engaged this proposal with earnestness and thoughtful commentary. It’s time to leave behind politics as usual. I look forward to continuing to work together with leaders from across the political spectrum to reform how we fund our schools.”

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NOTE: For more information about “Fair Funding for Our Future,” visit <http://fairfundingforourfuture.org>. This statement is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2010_150.pdf.