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# THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NORTH FOND DU LAC

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Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015

## **RE: Joint Finance Committee Information**

Dear Joint Finance Committee Members,

Thank you for holding these hearings and listening to all our ideas. I know this is the Governor's budget and each of you have different hats and interests to represent. I know you support public education and in your caucuses realize how important public education is to the vitality of our great state. My name is Aaron Sadoff and I am the superintendent of the School District of North Fond du Lac, parent of 3 and proud 43 year citizen of the great state of Wisconsin.

I am writing to you to share some information and ask for your help. The Governor's 2015-2017 budget proposal contains some provisions that are of great concern to me in regard to the future of public education in North Fond du Lac and the State of Wisconsin.

Over the past four years the landscape of public education in Wisconsin has changed. In the past I have said and believed, "We can work through the next couple of years but the concern for the long term is real." I also held out hope that our economy would turn around and that we would see a leadership in Madison invest in public education. Our economy has improved, it is now up to each of you to decide if our government is willing to invest the necessary resources to continue to educate every child every day at a high quality level.

Education is a people business. Seventy-five percent of our budget pays for "people." We have invested in new and improved facilities, maintained aging buildings, invested in new programs, assessments and programs with the other twenty-five percent. To maintain our great schools we need great educators and staff. We are now in a situation in which we are competing for those employees, not only with other school districts, but with other career fields. Universities and colleges of teacher education have seen a significant reduction in applicants therefore reducing the pool of quality educators going into the field. Even the Governor's proposal to let those holding bachelor's degrees in other fields pass a proficiency test to teach in grades 6-12 is a testament to that shortage of quality educators. Our high school students may not see the impact of the latest budget proposal, my real concern lies with our younger students and families.

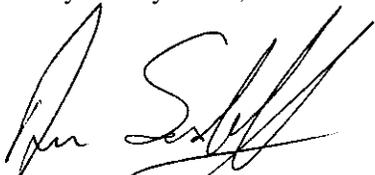
The field of education has taken a significant hit in the past four years. I ask each of you, "10 years ago would you have recommended that one of your children or family members become an educator?" I ask you now that same question in 2015, with the political and social climate that has been created toward public educators and education. This is the biggest problem our future faces, the dwindling amount of our best and brightest becoming educators. WE NEED TO TURN THAT AROUND and where resources are placed in our states budget will have an impact!

The proposal to cut \$150 per student will reduce our District's revenue by \$183,000. Three years ago we cut \$700,000 from our operating budget, primarily by reducing employee compensation. Each year we make many difficult choices about how to spend our available dollars, similar to any business, but the challenges are becoming increasingly difficult. With significant tax dollars being funneled to the entitlement private school subsidy program (vouchers), which are not accountable in the same manner as the School District of North Fond du Lac schools, there is a fundamental shift in the funding foundation of public schools that will negatively impact our schools and the students they serve permanently.

I am asking you to support and fully fund our responsibility to all our citizens. That responsibility since we have decided to be a republic is the free and general education to all our children at the public's expense. An outstanding education that prepares and inspires our students to conquer challenges not only helps students but has a tremendously positive, profound impact on home values, economic development and the very fabric of the exceptional quality of life in the state of Wisconsin.

Previously, State law provided us a yearly increase over \$250 per student. While this may not be possible, I ask each of you to consider our great public schools, our children, our economy, our state and our future – PLEASE restore the \$150 per pupil categorical aide and invest in our public schools by allowing \$100 per pupil revenue cap increase each year, so we can continue to invest and build our future, one child at a time, every day!!

Thank you very much,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adron Sadoff', written in a cursive style.

**Adron Sadoff - Superintendent**

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