

News Release

Education Information Services ■ 125 South Webster Street ■ P.O. Box 7841 ■ Madison, WI 53707-7841 ■ (608) 266-3559

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Tom McCarthy, DPI Communications Officer, (608) 266-3559

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General state aid certified to school districts

MADISON — As required by state statute on Oct. 15 of each year, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction is providing the certified amount each school district will receive from the general state aid appropriation, which is \$4.476 billion for the 2015-16 school year.

The amount of general state aid available for school districts was unchanged from last year. Overall, 44 percent of the state's public school districts (186 of 424) will receive more general state aid this school year than they did in 2014-15.

Certified general aid amounts may differ from July 1 aid estimates because they are based on audited school district data from the previous school year. The audited numbers include membership, property value, and eligible expenditures. School membership, which is not the same as enrollment, decreased by more than 2,500 full-time equivalent (FTE) students and totaled 854,419 FTE. Overall statewide property valuations increased for the first time in six years and range across school districts from \$8.2 million per pupil to \$172,100 per pupil, a ratio of 49:1 between the most and least property wealthy districts in the state.

The \$4.476 billion in general state aid does not include funding allocated to school districts for categorical aid for various programs or per pupil categorical aid. Categorical aid for programs such as special education, transportation, and bilingual-bicultural aid will total \$751.7 million for 2015-16 and is paid on different schedules than general state aid. The appropriation for per pupil categorical aid is \$127 million. School districts will receive \$150 per FTE pupil, the same as last year. That categorical aid will be paid in July 2016.

The actual amount of general aid that the state's 424 public school districts receive from the \$4.476 billion allocation is reduced for a number of factors. Specifically, Milwaukee Public Schools will have its aid reduced by \$56.5 million to pay for the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP). Because of changes in how the MPCP program is funded, the aid deduction is lower than last year's \$61.1 million. Nearly all districts share an aid reduction of \$71.9 million for the 24 independent charter schools in Milwaukee, Racine, and Waukesha, up from last year's \$68.6 million deduction. Additionally, a new general aid reduction will be applied to the June 2016 payment

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for school districts that have eligible students attending a private school under the Wisconsin and Racine Parental Choice programs. Information on enrollments in those choice programs and the impact that will have on individual districts' general aid payments will be released when they are available and complete as required by statute, Wis. Stat. sec.118.60(11)(d).

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NOTES: Tables that show the 2015-16 General Aid Certification for the state's 424 public school districts can be found online at http://sfs.dpi.wi.gov/sfs_genaid_current. This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2015_100.pdf.