

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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143 local education agencies receive high-cost special education aid

MADISON — School districts across the state received high-cost special education aid payments earlier this month to reimburse a portion of the costs associated with the education of children whose educational needs exceed \$30,000 per student.

The aid paid to 138 school districts, two cooperative educational service agencies (CESAs), and three county children with disabilities education boards (CCDEBs) totaled \$5,732,590 and covered just 46.2 percent of eligible costs for 1,052 students. Local education agency (LEA) requests for reimbursement, based on costs from the prior school year, amounted to \$13,780,975. Aid is calculated on 90 percent of eligible claims for direct services to individual students not covered by other state and federal special education funding. The aid is paid each year on the third Monday in June.

High-cost special education aid this year is made up of \$3.5 million in state funding and \$2.2 million in federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) discretionary funds that State Superintendent Tony Evers allocated to this purpose. In his 2015-17 state budget, the governor denied the department's request to fully fund high-cost special education aid and to reimburse 100 percent of costs. The Joint Committee on Finance adopted a motion to increase aid by \$5 million in the second year of the biennium. This will be the first increase in state support for high-cost special education aid since 2006-07.

“The budget being considered by the Legislature will provide some well overdue support to the high-cost special education aid program,” Evers said. “The free appropriate public education every child is entitled to receive can put a strain on local district budgets, especially when a child has extraordinary educational needs. As general aid and per student revenue caps fail to keep pace with inflationary costs such as electricity, transportation, and heat in the winter, the tension between regular education and special education student needs increases in a way that no educator or parent wants. It's simply not fair to our kids to keep short-changing their education.”

Even with a proposed increase to high-cost special education aid, according to an Education Commission of the States (ECS) analysis, Wisconsin lags other states that pay special education costs through a reimbursement

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funding mechanism. The ECS analysis shows a range of reimbursement rates from 100 percent in Wyoming to Wisconsin's low of 26.8 percent, with an average among the states using the reimbursement funding mechanism of about 53 percent. Wisconsin's categorical special education aid has been frozen at \$368.9 million since the 2008-09 school year, and no increase is proposed for the 2015-17 budget. Students with disabilities make up about 13.5 percent of the state's public school enrollment.

"I want to commend Wisconsin educators for their efforts on behalf of our students with disabilities," Evers said. "Although costs of educating students with disabilities continue to go up, the work of our teachers and aides to implement effective instruction and intervention practices has made a difference for our kids and reduced the numbers of students identified and requiring special education services."

The separate funding stream for high-cost special education aid started in the 2003-04 fiscal year with the allocation of \$2 million in federal IDEA discretionary funds. In the 2006-07 fiscal year, state funds were budgeted to provide aid for high-cost special education students, raising the level of overall reimbursement to 73.7 percent of eligible costs. High-cost special education aid has continued to be supplemented with IDEA discretionary dollars, with reimbursement rates on a downward trend since 2007.

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NOTE: A list of High-Cost Special Education Aid payments to local education agencies follows. This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2015_67.pdf.

High-Cost Special Education Aid

Payments for Costs Incurred in the 2013-14 School Year – Prorated at 46.2% of Eligible Costs

A-C

- Alma School District, \$637
- Antigo Unified School District, \$10,047
- * Appleton Area School District, \$127,895
- Arcadia School District, \$13,303
- Ashwaubenon School District, \$26,873
- Auburndale School District, \$13,251
- Baraboo School District, \$4,190
- Barron Area School District, \$101,918
- Beaver Dam Unified School District, \$8,675
- Beecher-Dunbar-Pembine School District, \$6,068
- Beloit School District, \$189,896
- Big Foot UHS District, \$4,641
- Birchwood School District, \$15,269
- Black Hawk School District, \$24,652
- * Brown County CDEB, \$44,553
- Burlington Area School District, \$31,114
- Cameron School District, \$35,913
- Cedarburg School District, \$8,306
- * Central/Westosha UHS District, \$35,582
- Clintonville School District, \$11,519
- Cochrane-Fountain City School District, \$17,845
- Coleman School District, \$20,091
- Columbus School District, \$34,123
- Cooperative Educational Service Agency 6, \$22,367
- * Cooperative Educational Service Agency 10, \$76,221

D-G

- D C Everest Area School District, \$37,689
- De Soto Area School District, \$29,374
- * Deerfield Community School District, \$13,256
- Dodgeville School District, \$46,534
- * Elmbrook School District, \$139,212
- Evansville Community School District, \$49,957
- Fall Creek School District, \$4,384
- Fall River School District, \$817
- Florence County School District, \$3,178

- Fond du Lac School District, \$97,773
- Fox Point J2 School District, \$3,608
- Franklin Public School District, \$4,703
- Friess Lake School District, \$5,875
- Galesville-Ettrick-Trempealeau School District, \$14,020
- Genoa City J2 School District, \$19,575
- Germantown School District, \$56,005
- Glendale-River Hills School District, \$11,286
- Glenwood City School District, \$6,782
- Green Bay Area Public School District, \$301,233
- * Greenfield School District, \$19,258

H-M

- Hamilton School District, \$12,842
- Hartford UHS District, \$10,057
- Highland School District, \$2,895
- Hillsboro School District, \$10,338
- Holmen School District, \$16,833
- Howard-Suamico School District, \$7,425
- Hudson School District, \$49,393
- Janesville School District, \$32,599
- Kenosha School District, \$271,766
- Kettle Moraine School District, \$120,670
- Kewaskum School District, \$54,088
- Kohler School District, \$13,872
- Lac du Flambeau #1 School District, \$33,288
- Lake Country School District, \$2,316
- Lake Geneva J1 School District, \$28,372
- Lancaster Community School District, \$9,288
- Lomira School District, \$27,748
- Luxemburg-Casco School District, \$41,862
- * Madison Metropolitan School District, \$797,827
- Manitowoc School District, \$6,641
- * Marathon County CDEB, \$4,052
- Marshfield Unified School District, \$21,355
- Mauston School District, \$5,052
- Mayville School District, \$16,272

High-Cost Special Education Aid

- * McFarland School District, \$27,354
- * Menasha Joint School District, \$38,924
- Menomonie Area School District, \$6,229
- Mequon-Thiensville School District, \$61,602
- Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District, \$46,242
- Milton School District, \$5,198
- Milwaukee Public Schools, \$70,191
- Minocqua J1 School District, \$27,305
- Mosinee School District, \$12,628
- * Mukwonago School District, \$55,187

N-S

- Necedah Area School District, \$12,209
- New Glarus School District, \$15,570
- New Richmond School District, \$19,717
- Nicolet UHS District, \$118,366
- North Lakeland School District, \$2,831
- Northland Pines School District, \$5,764
- Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District, \$44,985
- Oconomowoc Area School District, \$28,377
- Oconto Falls Public School District, \$4,367
- Onalaska School District, \$22,817
- Oregon School District, \$15,183
- * Osceola School District, \$40,145
- Oshkosh Area School District, \$41,303
- Pardeeville Area School District, \$21,067
- Port Washington-Saukville School District, \$30,599
- * Portage Community School District, \$94,998
- Prairie Farm Public School District, \$10,402
- Prescott School District, \$4,635
- Pulaski Community School District, \$1,963
- Racine Unified School District, \$282,225
- Randall J1 School District, \$2,439
- Rib Lake School District, \$7,411
- Richland School District, \$15,345
- Ripon Area School District, \$11,909
- River Falls School District, \$6,543
- Riverdale School District, \$5,093
- Rosholt School District, \$968

- Saint Croix Central School District, \$10,211
- Salem School District, \$35,156
- Shawano School District, \$11,265
- Sheboygan Area School District, \$39,409
- Sheboygan Falls School District, \$18,726
- Shell Lake School District, \$13,766
- Siren School District, \$21,095
- Slinger School District, \$9,284
- Somerset School District, \$22,654
- South Milwaukee School District, \$49,947
- Stevens Point Area Public School District, \$90,355
- Sun Prairie Area School District, \$65,488
- Superior School District, \$227

T-Y

- * Three Lakes School District, \$11,449
- Tomah Area School District, \$16,633
- Trevor-Wilmot Consolidated School District, \$4,035
- Tri-County Area School District, \$10,877
- Twin Lakes #4 School District, \$5,492
- * Union Grove J1 School District, \$61,241
- Union Grove UHS District, \$25,052
- * Unity School District, \$5,997
- * Verona Area School District, \$93,847
- * Walworth County CDEB, \$170,912
- Waterloo School District, \$9,863
- Waukesha School District, \$29,324
- Wausau School District, \$8,687
- * Wauwatosa School District, \$38,832
- West Allis-West Milwaukee School District, \$38,941
- West Bend School District, \$25,165
- West De Pere School District, \$31,783
- * Wheatland J1 School District, \$27,899
- Whitewater Unified School District, \$24,862
- Whitnall School District, \$52,725
- * Wilmot UHS District, \$38,322
- Winneconne Community School District, \$5,987
- Wisconsin Rapids School District, \$33,943
- Yorkville J2 School District, \$8,729

* Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with an asterisk submitted claims for at least one student on behalf of another LEA.