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Support Public Schools in the State Budget

- A recent Marquette University Law School poll showed a whopping 80 percent of Wisconsinites believe we should invest more money in public education.
- The state budget under development is a step forward from the huge cuts in previous years, providing basically an inflationary increase in per-pupil funding. There's also funding for a student mental health initiative and some help for rural districts to afford teachers and transportation is also included.
- These measures will be helpful, but there's so much more Wisconsin can do if lawmakers listen to the Wisconsin majority and say no to shifting even more public money to private voucher schools.
- Wisconsin has made it clear what we support: More funding for neighborhood public schools. Please support a budget that restores funding for public schools and reigns in exploding private voucher spending.

Stop the Break-Up of Racine Unified

- The Racine Unified break-apart plan passed by the Joint Finance Committee would devastate the District, increasing segregation and eviscerating student opportunities.
- The outcome would be disastrous, disrupting the tax base thereby weakening programs, athletics and extra-curricular activities. Soon, curriculum would suffer and, in time, infrastructure would disintegrate.
- The politically motivated maneuver is disingenuous, not at all designed to improve schools for all students. Instead, it creates another school district while at the same time Republicans are proposing incentives for other school districts to merge.
- Students deserve opportunities, not shattered schools. To improve Racine Unified schools for all students, say no to the Opportunity Schools Partnership Program and instead invest in community schools that are a proven path to student success.

Say No to Referendum Restrictions

- Oppose proposals that take local control away from elected school boards when it comes to doing what's right for students.
- Educators and residents know best what is needed in our local schools. These decisions are best made back home and not by the Legislature.
- Bills like this create unnecessary hoops for our community to go through to best meet the needs of our students.

Support Qualified Teachers for our Students

- Wisconsin students deserve qualified teachers, so please remove harmful items in the state budget proposal that will weaken standards for entering the profession.
- The budget creates a backdoor way to lower teaching standards by allowing initial teaching licenses to be granted to individuals certified by online licensing factories that refuse to meet minimum standards set by the Legislature and Department of Public Instruction.
- It's ridiculous to think an individual could earn teacher certification in less than one year, online, with no student teaching required.
- Wisconsin already has existing alternative pathways and also recognizes out-of-state licenses. This is not the way to solve the teaching shortage. Respect and support for Public School educators is the best way to build the profession.

Expanding vouchers puts students at risk

- Wisconsin voters overwhelmingly support their neighborhood public schools, yet the proposed Wisconsin state budget calls for **more state and local funding to be siphoned off for unaccountable private voucher schools.**
- Please remove the provision from the proposed budget that raises the income cap from 125 to 220 percent of the federal poverty level.
- Remove the expansion of special needs vouchers from the budget proposal, too. The last-minute additions that expand that program put our most vulnerable students at risk.
- Also, vote against other provisions that open the taxpayers' checkbooks to subsidize private school tuition -- even though we have no representation on voucher school boards.
- Public schools outperform vouchers, so why hand over state and local funding to unaccountable private schools?
- Our students and communities value their neighborhood public schools -- and so should our legislators.

Looking for more information or additional resources? Contact Communications@weac.org.