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I am writing in response to Governor McCallum's proposed budget regarding school expenditures.

Cutting out SAGE programs in our elementary schools, and increasing class sizes will not benefit our children in any way. Losing tutors and the extra help some of our children desperately need would be harmful in the long run. For our children to have the skills and knowledge to be able to pass standardized tests, they need the tutoring, teachers and materials other schools have.

Also, as a parent of a highly-gifted 8 yr. old, no monies are available for proper programming for this group of students at all. Each of our students deserves an education appropriate for them.

Remember, these children are our future!  
Money should be spent across the board, not in only one city.

Superior's Children deserve more!!

Charlene Ansell  
2121 E. 10th St  
Superior, WI 54880

**DATE:** March 27, 2001

**TO:** Joint Finance Committee

**FROM:** Kande Rosburg  
School-Age Parent Program  
School District of Superior

**REASON:** Impact of revenue caps

I have taught the School-Age Parent program in Superior since it's beginning. That beginning was seventeen years ago.

In that seventeen years the budget that I have had to work with to purchase textbooks, resources, food for labs, supplies, furniture, equipment, etc. has not changed. Look what inflation has done in seventeen years.

We want our students to be up on technology. They need to compete in a technological world. That costs money.

March 27, 2001

I am writing in response to Gov. McCallum's budget concerning education. I am outraged at the fact that our children's funding for education is based on whether or not they live in a high or low income community. I pay taxes and assume that my taxes are helping my children and their education. Since I live in Superior which is a low income community, my taxes are helping Milwaukee and their Choice program. I want the money to go to My Children. My 8 and 5 year old deserve a Superior education. They deserve a chance for scholarships. Stop raising monies for standardized test and decreasing monies for the materials and teachers needed for our children to learn and pass the tests.

Sincerely,  
Sharon K Olson

To: Joint Finance Committee  
From: Bill Sparks, Professor of Mathematics, UW-Eau Claire  
Co-Project Director, Wisconsin Academy  
Staff Development Initiative

Date: March 27, 2001

Re Support for Teacher Staff Development

My name is Bill Sparks and in addition to being a Professor of Mathematics at UW-Eau Claire for 31 years, I have been privileged to serve for over six years as Co-Project Director for The Wisconsin Academy Staff Development Initiative (WASDI). Under Federal funding first from the National Science Foundation and then from the U. S. Department of Education we have worked with teachers in Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education to help them help students reach increasingly higher standards. We have documentation of our success. We have been recognized by the National Governor's Educational Goals Panel as one of ten projects nationwide helping students achieve high academic standards. We have influenced teachers of over 1 million students in Wisconsin. We believe that Wisconsin students can lead and are leading the nation in preparing for the high tech workforce necessary in this 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We also recognize that society is asking teachers to teach constantly changing subject matter with new and increasing knowledge of how students learn. The teachers also desire a high degree of standards acquisition by all students, not just a select few. Hence, we are asking them to teach in ways they were never taught and they must be updated regularly. We have an infrastructure in place to provide this updating for all Wisconsin teachers. We will leave materials describing this infrastructure. It would be extremely costly to end WASDI and make something new in its place. We are asking that the state institutionalize this program that has been developed and implemented statewide with federal seed money. We feel the students and future workforce of Wisconsin deserve the best and most current education that can be provided. In return, more and more of these students will meet the high academic standards that the legislature required be met.

Sen. Shibilski has agreed to introduce an amendment supporting funding for WASDI. We ask that this be given your serious consideration and support. Thank You.

March 27, 2001

Jennifer L. Wolfe  
823 Belknap Street  
Superior, Wisconsin 54880

To The Joint Finance Committee:

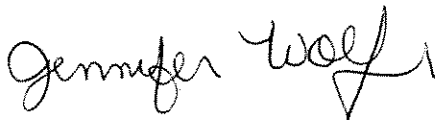
I strongly urge you to change the Wisconsin Budget as it is proposed. It will greatly affect the school and district that I work at in Superior. This budget will mean higher teacher-pupil ratios. It will also mean a reduction in many programs that we currently offer. There will be a loss in special education and summer school.

The end result with the current budget is that there will be a loss in excess of \$800,000 which means a loss for the children that I serve which is the deepest and most permanent loss of all.

Please reconsider this budget and help us to help the children in our district. We really need to maintain our current programs so that the children can receive all the benefits that they deserve.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Wolfe".

Jennifer Wolfe  
Second Grade Teacher  
Blaine Elementary School  
Superior, Wisconsin

Joint Finance Committee Testimony  
March 27, 2001  
Superior Senior High School

My Name is Thomas Strewler, I am a fifth grade teacher at Great Lakes Elementary School, here in Superior.

Mirrors produce an image. A true reflection, a reflection of what is in front of the mirror. But in the case of our schools being a reflection of our society, the image is horribly distorted and skewed. The image is so skewed that the public and our government have come to blame schools, and their teachers, for all the ills of the society, the school reflects. This image has lead to a serious dichotomy in our schools. A dichotomy of educational reform designed to improve learning, and a government not willing to support responsible, practical, child centered programs to improve learning.

As an educator I agree with the idea of educational reform to improve our schools and students learning. I am all for teachers working hard to meet each individuals needs as best as we can. The standards movement is a leading us in the direction of clear expectations for every student, parent, and educator. I am for meeting student's needs through reduced class size with SAGE, providing Free Appropriate Public Education through Special Education, and other programs and services that have direct impacts on student performance.

To expect schools to move to a greater level of accountability through academic standards, and testing to pass students at grades 4, 8,12. And then to undermine such efforts, through little increase in or reduction of funding of programs, only subverts what we all want. What is it that we all want, you say? Well, I always thought that we wanted,

- ◇ We wanted students who are as successful as they can possibly be.
- ◇ We wanted students who can be responsible citizens and leaders in our society.
- ◇ We wanted students who can compete in a world economy.
- ◇ We wanted students who can work in the information age.

Government wants to chip away at the financial foundation of our schools. If this happens we will have none of those things. Our schools will continue to fail, to be blamed for the ills the society, and our government will continue to try and fix it by passing of more laws.

Well its time, it is time to repair the image our schools give. Time to fund the programs that we know work. So we have the means, to meet the needs, to have students who are successful learners, are productive citizens, can compete in a world economy, and work in the information age. Retain funding for SAGE without limits based on free and reduced lunches, increase funding for Special Education beyond the minimal increase proposed, loosen revenue caps so districts can afford to make reforms. These are the responsible ways to meet the needs of our students, to meet the standards, and the testing. These are the only ways that our schools can move forward.

This is the only way to improve the image reflected back for all to see.

Thank you for your time.

Diane Meysman-Martin  
1615 North 56<sup>th</sup> Street  
Superior, WI 54880

March 27, 2001

Senator Robert Jauch  
PO Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707-7882

Representative Frank Boyle  
PO Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53707-8952

Dear Senator Jauch and Representative Boyle:

I write to you, as my legislators, about the proposed termination of the SAGE program at Bryant Elementary School. I fully oppose the revenue caps.

I am a lifelong resident of the Superior area. I live here with my husband Mike and son, Garrett, who attends Bryant Elementary School. We have a vested interest in our schools! Quality education is the foundation of children developing into successful adults. The overcrowding of classrooms has contributed to the demise of quality education. Now, the state wants to take away the initial steps taken to reduce the overcrowding of classrooms, and cut the SAGE programs and impose revenue caps.

As violence in the school system permeates the news, we must certainly look at ways to circumvent negative influences upon our children. Crowded classrooms mean overwhelmed teachers, and neglected children. The impact of the early years of school clearly contributes to the molding of the child. It has been demonstrated that smaller classrooms contribute to higher comprehension and grades in children. We cannot continue to chop away at the educational system at the expense of the future leaders of this great state – our children.

I expect strong commitment to the preservation and enhancement of the educational system from my state. I know you do too. Please reassure me that the revenue caps and educational programs will not endure the blade of the budget cuts. Our children's future depends on it.

Sincerely,

  
Diane Meysman-Martin

Cc: Governor Scott McCallum  
Jay Mitchell, Superintendent



UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN  
*Superior*

March 27, 2001

The Honorable Robert Jauch  
Senator, 25<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Wisconsin Legislature

And

Members of the Joint Finance Committee  
Wisconsin Legislature

Greetings:

I appreciate very much that the Committee has chosen to come to Superior to receive testimony concerning the proposed budget of Governor Scott McCallum. I also am grateful for the opportunity to present written testimony on the budget, particularly as it concerns libraries within the University of Wisconsin System.

Libraries within the University of Wisconsin System are particularly grateful for the \$7.3 million dollars provided for acquisitions and enhanced resource sharing in the first year of the 1999-2001 biennium. These funds certainly addressed a decade of neglect. Unfortunately, without additional funding in subsequent biennia the University of Wisconsin will soon face the same problems they encountered before this budget increase. To maximize the value of this funding and the investment in the quality of education it represents for UW System students there is a distinct need for continuing increases. Such funding will not only provide additional library resources for our students but also provide libraries a mechanism to address annual inflationary costs for both print and electronic information that UW System libraries purchase on a continuing basis, such as journals and database subscriptions.

As a member of the Council of University of Wisconsin Libraries I unanimously and enthusiastically endorsed the request of the United Council for \$4.7 million dollars to

complete the funding request of \$12 million dollars in the 1999-2001 biennium. I continue to support that request for at least two reasons: 1) it comes from the students and is a clear signal that they recognize the value of having adequate library collections to assure and enhance the quality of their education; and, 2) it would provide monies for the library at the University of Wisconsin-Superior that will enable it to keep purchasing additional resources for its students, many of which are just beginning to realize the importance of libraries and information to their academic and personal careers. Equally important, it would provide some hedge against the inflationary impact that libraries are experiencing. Without additional funding, particularly on an annual basis, to help offset inflation, I anticipate that the library at the University of Wisconsin-Superior will use up the gains it received from the \$7.3 million within five (5) years. This would be a sad situation for our students.

Wisconsin's future is in the hands of these students, a fact that Governor McCallum is apparently ignoring because he has failed to include UW System libraries in his proposed budget. There can be no greater investment for Wisconsin than to make sure that students in the UW System have libraries that provide them the best information available as they pursue their educational goals. I urge the Joint Finance Committee, and the Legislature, to include UW System libraries in the next budget by honoring the request of the Board of Regents and the United Council for at least \$4.7 million dollars in additional funding for libraries in the University of Wisconsin System. I am enclosing a copy of a resolution passed unanimously by the Council of University of Wisconsin Libraries, on May 5, 2000, during its meeting at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse.

Again, thank you for coming to Superior.

Sincerely,



Bob Carmack  
Director, JDH Library

COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN LIBRARIES  
RESOLUTION

WHEREAS libraries are integral to the quality of education provided by the University of Wisconsin and,

WHEREAS libraries within the University of Wisconsin System acknowledge, with great gratitude, the funding provided in the biennium 1999-2001 and,

WHEREAS the costs of information provided by libraries continues to escalate and,

WHEREAS the libraries within the University of Wisconsin System received only partial funding of the full request and,

WHEREAS the need for an annual increment to offset inflation and the rising costs of providing information was not included in the funding allocated to the University of Wisconsin System,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of University of Wisconsin Libraries (CUWL) wholeheartedly and enthusiastically support the request of the United Council to maintain current funding for UW System Libraries and to increase funding by \$4.7 million and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of University of Wisconsin Libraries (CUWL) request funding on an annual incremental basis in order to provide, and sustain, a level of purchasing power in the acquisition of information and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be sent to the President of the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents and the President of the University of Wisconsin System.

Unanimously adopted by CUWL at its meeting at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse, May 5, 2000.

March 27, 2001

2343 John Avenue  
Superior, WI. 54880

I would address my remarks to whom it may concern, except that the education of our children should and does concern everyone, whether everyone wants to accept the responsibility for this concern or not,

As a parent of a school aged child, I am greatly distressed by the cuts in the governor's budget, specifically in the area of educational funding. Coming from a district where revenue caps have seriously damaged our ability to provide the educational opportunities our children - and all children - deserve, I find it hard to believe that we are faced with the possibility of having further damage done to the level of education we provide our children.

The threat of having SAGE curtailed in our schools, summer school funding reduced, and further reductions in money that spell the eradication of, not only extra-curricular activities, but curricular classes that do not support huge class sizes frightens and dismays me. This district is not affluent by any stretch of the imagination and many of our families cannot afford to pay fees for various activities, which has been a suggested way around class and activity cuts.

I don't know how a state which has long prided itself on its championing of education for all its children can even contemplate the kind of budget which would put a stop to and/or reduce the implementation of SAGE in our elementary schools. Sage is an invaluable program whose worth can be testified to by parents and teachers, alike. And what study exists that claims lower class size, especially in the early years, is not a benefit to our children? The other cuts are also damaging, but I think the cut in SAGE funding is the unkindest cut of all.

On behalf of this generation of children, I ask you to reconsider thoughtfully the proposed budget before you. I understand that money is not a limitless commodity and that many citizens feel they are already overtaxed and heavily burdened. But, public education requires the support of us all. Isn't it cheaper to provide the funding to create educated, informed, and productive citizens now than to try to pay the great sums necessary to ameliorate the problems of the uneducated, unemployed, disenfranchised numbers later? Why should our children have to pay because our elected officials refuse to pay attention?

Sincerely,

*Patricia T. Lull*  
Patricia T. Lull

COOPER/WEISBERG SCHOOL

1807 MISSOURI AVENUE

SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN 54880

March 27, 2001

To the Joint Finance Committee:

We talk about having equal opportunity employment, and yet, we do not provide equal opportunity education for our children in the state of Wisconsin. The revenue caps need to be lifted as they are creating greater inequity between the school districts in our state.

As this century unfolds, we need to prepare our children for the unknown. They need to become well-rounded individuals who can make educated decisions and choices. Our educational program needs to provide a broad spectrum of study which includes the arts, as well as a strong foundation in the basics. The research shows that music and art strengthens the learning capacity in other areas.

In the early school years, children need more time and attention. The SAGE program allows teachers to meet those needs and give children a better start on their education.

What we need for today's children are more resources, not less. They are our future!

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Frazier



Kay Warner



To: Members of The Joint Finance Committee of the Wisconsin Legislature

From: Kelly Bergum

Parent of three young children in the Superior School District  
Northland Secondary School teacher

Re: Revenue Caps

March 27, 2001

I am writing to express my concern about the revenue caps as an educator and as a parent. As a teacher of at-risk high school students, I am made aware daily of the need for quality educational programming, resources that cost money, to help students realize their potential and learn necessary skills. Every day I see the importance of reduced class size, quality teaching, and necessary materials.

I am also the parent of three young children, two who currently attend Lake Superior Elementary School. Right now my children are benefiting from the Superior School System, as they are in SAGE programming. They have excellent teachers who are allowed the ability to work with them as individual learners. My kids' skills, learning, and love for learning have grown incredibly within the SAGE system.

I am increasingly concerned, however, about the future of their education- about the limited opportunities that will be available to them. I know right now that there is no 5th grade band at Lake Superior Elementary because of budget constraints. With all the research that proves how important music education is to a young learner's growth, this is unacceptable. I am also concerned about the inevitability of my children being in classes with large student to teacher ratios.

My children's education is so important to me that I will do what is necessary to make sure they receive quality education, education that is comparable to that of students in wealthier Wisconsin school districts. But my children's education, that of their classmates, and that of the students I work with every day should be important to everyone in Wisconsin. Everyone in Wisconsin should be alarmed that revenue caps will limit educational opportunities for Superior students because, ultimately, adequately educated or not, our students are our future.

Kelly Bergum

**PRINCIPALS:**

EDWARD J. HARRIS  
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

BRYAN YENTER  
MIDDLE SCHOOL

KATHY GJESFJELD  
ELEMENTARY

JEFFREY KOENIG  
TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR

# School District of Chetek

P.O. BOX 6  
CHETEK, WISCONSIN 54728

PHONE (715) 924-2226  
FAX (715) 924-2376 - ADMINISTRATION  
FAX (715) 924-2921 - HIGH SCHOOL  
FAX (715) 924-2279 - ELEMENTARY

AL BROWN, Superintendent

**BOARD OF EDUCATION:**

MARK SHERMAN, PRESIDENT  
BETH UNBEHAUN, VICE PRESIDENT  
GENIE JENNINGS, CLERK  
ALAN SIEPIERSKI, TREASURER

**DIRECTORS:**

OSCAR SKOUG  
WAYNE OLSON  
KEN JOST

**MEMO TO:** JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE  
STATE OF WISCONSIN  
**DATE:** March 27, 2001  
**FROM:** Al Brown, Superintendent  
Mark Sherman, School Board President  
Kenneth Jost, School Board Member  
**SUBJECT:** Joint Finance Testimony - Eau Claire 3/28/01 Budget Hearing

Thank you co-chairmen, Sen. Burke and Rep. Gard, for allowing our school district the opportunity to testify before the Joint Finance Committee. We are here today to give testimony on the effects of the state budget concerning K-12 education. There are many educational funding issues that could be addressed. But for the sake of efficiency we will focus on three major areas of educational funding. These areas of funding are:

1. Revenue limit flexibility
2. Special Education
3. SAGE

We represent a small district of approximately 1100 students. In the 8 years since revenue limits were put in place only \$147,000 new tax dollars were added to our operations budget. Last year due primarily to declining and open enrollments we had a shortfall of \$168,000, which was covered by expending fund balance. As you can see, this one-year shortfall more than wiped out our dollar gains since 1993. This has caused severe budget hardships including reduced staffing (3.0 FTE professional & 2.0 FTE other staff in 99-00), delayed capital improvements, increased fuel costs, and canceled field trips for students in this budget year.

Our forecasts indicate that we will completely deplete our budget reserve unless we take drastic measures. Our deficit projections for the next four years are (\$538,000), (\$646,000), (\$865,000) and (\$1,109,000). Accordingly, we are reducing professional staff positions by 8.5 FTE's for next year and project 6.5 FTE's further professional staff cuts to balance the budget in the next 3 years.

**REVENUE LIMIT FLEXIBILITY:** The per pupil inflation factor should be reinstated. In districts where enrollments are decreasing, not only is it difficult to maintain quality education but we can not even keep up with inflation. Operational costs are also increasing faster than the rate of inflation.

We are a traditionally low spending district and revenue limits and the QEO have locked us into a no win situation. We spend \$7,747 per student compared to the statewide average of \$8,377 per student. We support the "2% solution" proposed by the WASB because it gives our local school board some flexibility and allows us to raise some much needed revenue. The local electorate will hold our school board accountable. This change should not have an impact on equalization or any other state aids.

Summer school participation should be counted at full participation for revenue cap calculations. In order to expend, remediate, or enrich the curriculum, dollars presently are pulled from general operations. We are presently in the situation where we will have to limit general education offerings to maintain summer school.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION:** Historically special education aid has decreased as costs increased. This mandated program has placed additional burdens on school districts like ours. In the last three years our Special Ed aids increased \$3,775 while costs increased \$54,250.

Special Education costs need to be maintained at a sum-sufficient level of funding. The decreasing participation from the state and increasing costs and incidence rates creates a never-ending burden. Our current special education costs total \$739,423 and our special education aid totals \$204,838. The burden of rising special education costs is born by regular education. This creates a "we" versus "they" situation in our school district.

**SAGE:** SAGE and the federal class size reduction program have allowed our district to begin to make gains in reading scores, parent involvement, staff preparation and extending the school day. These beginnings will be compromised with current SAGE proposals. This has been the one state program that moved the test score forward and now it is proposed to be limited in scope.

Please leave the SAGE program as it is currently defined. We have made some tough decisions about cutting staff and with current law, our district will still be able to maintain the small class sizes SAGE requires. Anything else will put our goal of having 90% or more of our students reading at or above grade level by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in jeopardy.

Thank you for your attention. We have enclosed some additional facts about our school districts financial situation and we stand ready to answer any questions that you may ask of us.



## School District of Chetek

### District Financial Summary

Background Facts  
Annual Operating Budget  
Building Project

#### Background Facts:

- Historically Chetek is a low spending district - in an area (NW Wisconsin) of low spending districts.
  - Currently about 65% of our funding comes from state aid - about 35% of our funding comes through local property taxes.
  - State law limits the amount of revenue that can be raised through property taxes unless the limit is raised by referendum.
  - The school district is the largest employer in the area with salaries totaling \$4,837,297 and benefits totaling \$1,834,218.
  - Over the past 8 years 93% of our increases in tax revenues (\$1,895,108.73) have gone for salaries and benefits (\$1,752,660.76). Leaving \$142,447.97 for operational expenses.
- Student enrollment levels have decreased since 1993. These enrollments have changed from 1145 (9/93) to 1101 (9/2000). Four percent decrease in students.
- There is an anticipated decrease of students equaling 2% per year in the future. (20-24 students per year).

#### Annual Operating Budget

- District has always operated on an annual budget.
- In May 2000, the board was told that the district expected to carryover \$150,000 in unexpended funds (add to fund balance) to help pay for technology additions to the building project.
- In June, the projection changed to being \$100,000 short for the year (a \$250,000 swing in one month).
- The actual audited operating shortfall was \$163,000. This was due in part to an open enrollment revenue decline and a declining enrollment problem statewide and particularly in this area (Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance). This shortfall was covered by fund balance.
- This happened after school was out and well after most of the budgeting process had been completed, but Mr. Brown was directed to go back and develop a balanced budget for the current school year. The only board-supported direction that he was given was to balance the budget and not spend fund balance on recurring expenses.
- With new personnel (bookkeeper, Tammy Lenbom) the district now has capability to do financial projections. These indicate that if we continue as we have in the past, we will deplete our fund balance completely within the next 4 years.
- Finance committee has been established as a standing committee chaired by Genie with Wayne not running for re-election. This committee has

recommended: 1. The district be politically active to persuade the legislature to institute some change allowing higher taxes; 2. The district has a "balanced budget"; and 3. The district changes its policy about fund balance since we cannot levy for it.

- Mr. Brown has requested guidelines from the board regarding budget development.
- Many of these will fall to discussions/development by the finance committee and we would like banker help. Why? 1. Help provide financial legitimacy; 2. Budget concerns create staff job security concerns; 3. Drastic cuts will affect the entire local economy; and 4. We'd like to develop more than one sound fiscal scenario.
- QEO - if district offers 3.8% total package (salaries & benefits), then union cannot grieve district, strike, etc. At current staffing levels the district cannot afford the QEO. In addition, the actual and forecast deficits are as follows (deficits include maintenance, capital improvements, and technology expenditures):

1999-2000	(\$163,000)	Actual
2000-2001	(\$31,234)*	Current Projection
2001-2002	(\$520,934)	Projection
2002-2003	(\$690,832)	Projection
2003-2004	(\$911,472)	Projection
2004-2005	(\$1,157,067)	Projection

- Possible scenarios:
  1. Enough cuts/layoffs to leave enough money and balanced budget to cover: a. technology purchases required to continue with phase 1 of plan; b. any reading initiatives; c. make a QEO to those remaining; and d. cover cost increases in non-QEO expenses including maintenance and capital improvements.
  2. Combination of cuts/deficit spending to gain staff cooperation/good will. Might include: a. less than QEO offer; and b. shared decisions in cuts/staff reductions; etc.
  3. Combination of cuts/deficit spending/loans/fund raising. Might include: a. less than QEO offer; and b. shared decisions in cuts/staff reductions; c. multiple year budget; d. loans; e. targeted fund raising.

#### Building Project

- Up to this point has been within or below budget and on or ahead of schedule. A fact that no one has been able to enjoy because of operating budget issues.
- We've put more than \$600,000 in the technology infrastructure of our schools. This includes nearly all the interest we've earned from our building investments.
- We have before us about \$275,000 worth of "nice to haves" that were outside of the original project scope but would provide the finishing touches to the project.
- Given the operating budget projections, board is unlikely to approve spending fund balance on them.
- District should refinance under now more favorable interest rates - savings are returned to taxpayer - not district

March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2001

To whom it may concern,

My name is Jeneal R. Wiskerchen, and I am a Wisconsin DECA state officer. I currently represent more than 9,000 members across the state of Wisconsin. I can tell you DECA (An Association of Marketing Students) is nothing less than an excellent organization that prepares students for their future in a positive way.

More importantly, I represent our school, Superior Senior High School at various events such as leadership labs and competitions. I cannot stress enough the importance that competition plays in a student's life. I can only guarantee that the students who are accepted to compete will use the information they learn in their future at one point or another, probably more than once.

There are currently 10 DECA members from SSSHS traveling to Anaheim, CA to compete in a national competition. These students have worked long and hard and deserve this trip. The trip is costing near \$800 per person, and thankfully the school is paying for us. With talk of revenue caps, these opportunities may no longer exist for members. The opportunities laid in front of DECA members are unbelievable. Superior being so far away could easily be isolated from the rest of the state unless they are provided the opportunity to travel and meet with other members across the district and state. Without money this is impossible.

I speak from a strong personal point in saying that this is truthfully the best thing that has ever happened to me. I walked into my Marketing I class not knowing what Marketing or DECA was all about, and a year later I represent over 9,000 members. I know that my future will be in Marketing because I have created such a passion for it. Without organizations like these students are less prepared for the future. It is almost a necessity that will help students in so many ways. It will prepare them for the future, and put their time to use in a positive activity.

Adults spend so much time telling students that they need to get involved in things whether it be an after school activity, a sport, or a church choir. With revenue caps, some of these things will no longer be available to students. Please consider my point

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Jeneal R. Wiskerchen  
WDECA VP Chapter Development

2205 Hughitt Ave.  
Superior, WI 54880

**PREPARED TESTIMONY FOR  
JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN  
MARCH 27, 2001**

Prepared by David R Hildebrand, President  
Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC) is an 11-county district located in the northwestern quadrant of Wisconsin. With two campuses located at New Richmond and Rice Lake in the southern part of the district, and two campuses located up north at Ashland and Superior, we cover a territory that is larger than eight (8) states in the USA. One in nine citizens in the region received services from WITC during this past year.

State Aids

As you are aware, the Governor's budget does not include a base increase in state aids to support the job training efforts of the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS). For WITC, this proposal will translate into a reduction in state aid of at least 5% for each year of the biennium, due to our increasing property values.

In fact, WITC is receiving less state aid today than it did ten years ago. Today this decline in state support is alarming as we deal with a 20% increase in health insurance and the continued increase in fuel and utility costs.

The continued decline in state support this past ten years has meant that our taxpayers and our students have had to pick up the difference. Many of our taxpayers are land-rich and income-poor with an average per capita income that is 20% below the state average. Over 84% of our students are now receiving financial aid with 50% of these students receiving student loans —not grants.

I urge you to restore the 4.1%/4.1% increase in state aid to the WTCS that we originally requested.

Waiting Lists

WITC, like other districts, has waiting lists for several programs. The Associate Degree Nursing Program (A.D.N.) currently has over 100 students on waiting lists at the Rice Lake and New Richmond campuses. This comes at a time of unprecedented need for nurses in the medical community. WITC currently offers the A.D.N. program at each campus and would like to expand an additional section at Rice Lake and New Richmond. The lack of state support could threaten the start-up of these additional sections of the A.D.N. program.

Placement

WITC graduates continue to enjoy excellent placement. The six-month follow-up study of the 2000 graduation class indicates that 95% of the class is employed with the average starting salary up 4.5% to \$25,615.

Our graduates, furthermore, stay in Wisconsin – 64% work where they received their education – 13% out of district, but in the state. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of our graduates stay in Wisconsin. In short, they work here, they play here, they pay taxes here, and they vote for you, our legislators.

A five-year follow-up study of our 1994 graduates provided some impressive statistics. The study indicated that our graduates received an average salary increase of 9½% per year for each of the next five years and continued to stay in Wisconsin. No brain drain was evident.

In short, WITC has well served the people and businesses of this region.

#### Virtual Campus (e-Tech College) Initiative

We support the Governor's proposal to fund the Virtual Campus initiative at \$1.0 million annually. This initiative will allow all technical college districts to provide Internet-based programs and courses. Distance learning opportunities are vital in this region where the average population density is less than one-third the state average. The Virtual Campus will allow us to provide technical courses to the 46 school districts in our region if funding were made available. Only a portion of the Virtual Campus initiative was funded. The WTCS Board's budget request included \$3.6 million GPR over two years for us to work in cooperation with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to develop secondary-level technical and career courses to Wisconsin high schools. Over 75% of these funds were intended to cover direct instruction costs. Technical courses were to be developed in career clusters in such areas as bioscience, information technology, and manufacturing.

Technical education is in a decline at the secondary level in our region due to declining enrollments and the resultant cost control cutbacks. The restoration of the funding would allow WITC to fill the technical education void that is being created at the secondary level.

#### Summary

Northern Wisconsin, like the entire state, is experiencing a critical shortage of highly skilled labor. WITC is in a major position to meet the needs of our local labor force. Every year we graduate over 1,000 students with the majority of them staying in Wisconsin. Annually, over 30,000 individuals attend our courses and programs. WITC needs increased state support to adequately fulfill our vital role.

Date: March 27, 2001

To: Joint Finance Committee

From: Todd Culligan, Student District Ambassador  
Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College

Re: Testimony

My name is Todd Culligan, and I am a first year Nursing student from Ashland. My wife and I have 5 beautiful children ages 9, 8, 6, 5, and 4. I would like to share with you a brief background on how I came to be a student at W.I.T.C. in Ashland. Approximately three years ago, my employment in Ashland ended with the closing of the Fort James paper mill. I found myself for the first time, a dislocated worker with no clue where to turn. After trying one low paying job after another, one of my union representatives suggested that I go back to school. I knew that I could not afford the cost or the time involved in a four-year college, so I headed up to the W.I.T.C. campus in Ashland to discuss my options with one of the counselors. I remember feeling so old and out of place just pulling into that parking lot for the first time. I was actually scared. I felt like a failure. Thank God that from the beginning the staff sensed my uneasiness and were able to make me feel comfortable. During those first crucial meetings, the staff helped to give me hope and confidence that everything was going to work out. They helped me to see that I wasn't a failure. On the contrary, I was in a situation that they were very used to dealing with. The staff was able to help me find the right career path as well as the financial aid necessary to make it all happen.

The Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College Ashland campus is helping me to get back on top of life again. Through the different classes and clinicals that I am taking, I am being transformed from an underemployed, dislocated worker to a registered nurse capable of working in any medical facility in the nation. They are empowering me to become employed again not just in a job, but in a career that will last me a lifetime. The Ashland campus through the Associated Degree Nursing program has given me a second chance at life at a time when I needed it most.

The key element that allowed me to go back to school was the affordability. Obviously having five children and no solid income, I needed all the help that I could get. Without the low cost of classes and financial aid available to me, I fear that I would still be locked into one, or even two of those low paying, dead end jobs today, barely keeping afloat financially. A four-year college was certainly not an option for me. Not only would I be unable to afford the cost involved, but I would miss out on a substantial portion of my children's lives, and that just was not an option that I was willing to entertain. I knew that I needed a solid

education in as little time as possible. That is exactly what the Wisconsin Technical College System provides.

An education is a very powerful tool, a tool that the Wisconsin Technical College System is trying to put into as many hands as they are able to. A lack of increase in support from the state would hinder that effort and that would be a true shame. A shame for all of those individuals and families alike that would end up missing out on a better chance at life because the cost of school is just too high. By increasing the support of the Wisconsin Technical College System, you are allowing them to keep the cost as affordable as possible to ensure equal opportunities for those in need, such as myself.

I would like to thank you for allowing me to share my story with you all today, but more importantly, my family and I would like to thank the Wisconsin Technical College System for giving me a second chance in life with a great education and unlimited possibilities for the future.

**Date:** March 27, 2001

**To:** State of Wisconsin, Joint Committee on Finance Public Hearing

**From:** Mr. Michael Bark

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College-Instructor

Wisconsin Association for Career & Technical Education-President Local #22

Work address: 2100 Beaser Ave  
Ashland, WI 54806

Home address: Rt 1 Box 90A1  
Washburn, WI 54891

**Re:** Testimony for Superior Hearing

As a property owner, taxpayer, parent and much too soon-to-be senior citizen. I am here today to endorse one of the leading hire education systems in USA and through out the world. The school system of which I am referring to, is the WI Technical College System, with its exceptional placement rates, highly qualified staff, state of the art technology and innovative teaching methods. However, without your financial support this scenario may change significantly!

I endorse that an investment in "technical education is an investment in our states economic future." Last week, WI Public Radio put this position into perspective, where it was announced that the WI Technical College System is well recognized for its relationship with business and industry and ability to provide relevant training for our states employment needs. It was also identified that 75% of all jobs do not require a 4-year degree.

I am proud to say that I am currently the Wisconsin Association for Career and Technical Education President for the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College District. Representing individuals from the WI Technical College System, CESA & NWCEP offices, high schools, Universities, and private industry.

For the next 2 minutes I would like to emphasize that I am speaking to each of you, as not just one individual or a taxpayer, but as a representative of thousands of people whom are students, employers, educators and community leaders.



Having a world digitally connected and business transactions conducted at light speed, the WTCS is facing numerous instructional related challenges. Also, with the downward movement of the stock market, the distinct possibility of a recession may be looming on the not-to-distant future. Combining this with Wisconsin Department of Labor Statistics data that identifies that our state is currently in, and will continue to be experiencing a labor shortage, strongly emphasizes the need for a versatile and quality workforce.

With effective strategic planning and looking for ways to insure a prosperous State economy, these trends can be addressed. "An investment in technical education is an investment in a quality workforce and the long term potential for a prosperous economy." To offset these trends, we need your support!!! In your decision-making, please consider that:

1. For the past 10 years, there has been no increased support for technical education in this region. Actually, the WI Indianhead Technical College is receiving less state aid today, than it did 10 years ago.

*Our recommendation is that a 4.1% increase each year is necessary in General Fund Revenue for technical education, just to avoid major reductions in services and staffing.*

2. Budget Approval, the success of the technical college system is based on maintaining its control locally.

*We propose that the state boards authority and responsibility stay as is, so that there is no loss of local control or responsiveness to district needs.*

3. The Governor's proposal to support the TOP Grant Program and the virtual campus (e-tech college) is commendable.

*It is critical that current funding is preserved. This activity should be funded from the GPR revenue and not soft money.*

4. State Control. It has been proposed that all program approval be exclusively maintained on the state level. If this were adopted, in Ashland we would lose our Marine Repair Program, the Corrections program in Superior and the inability to respond to increasing training needs through our New Richmond and Rice Lake regions.

*Please insure that local control is maintained as is, with district boards.*

Thank you, for the opportunity to present these points with each of you and all whom are present here today. I sincerely hope that you will give careful and specific consideration to maintaining a budget which is necessary to keep the "WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM" at the current level of quality, in order for our students & businesses to remain competitive in a world marketplace.

March 27, 2001

Joint Finance Committee Hearing  
Superior, Wisconsin

Senator Brian Burke and Committee:

I would like to thank the distinguished panel for their time and willingness to listen to the citizens today. Hopefully the information and testimony provided will be instrumental as the Joint Finance Committee is challenged to make key decisions that will affect the communities in Wisconsin and the future of our educational system. Decisions should concern what kind of education and services best meet the needs of all our children.

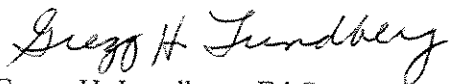
We need schools that are healthy, energy smart, environmentally sensitive, accommodating to the needs of all learners, using up-to-date technology - that complement and enhance academic excellence. Learning is a lifelong process, and resources are limited.

Increased expenditures and costs in health insurance, fuel, natural gas (and other utilities), and contracted services not related to teaching and learning are depleting budgets. The revenue increases are not sufficient to meet expenditures without the threat of cutting services or programs. The vendors we purchase goods, services, and supplies are not limited or capped and therefore we are expected to continue to maintain and do more with less. The same applies to unfunded mandates.

We are fortunate to have an excellent staff and school board that work together to promote our mission in providing opportunities for our children that result in positive, productive, and contributing members to society. When you feel you have a stake in your school/community, you're willing to work harder, make sacrifices, and protect and build up your highly personal investment. Education is an investment in our children and our future.

We support the General School Aid proposal relating to the two-thirds funding to include debt service and construction. We further would support eliminating categorical aids and include those associated costs with the two-thirds funding or provide full state funding for special needs students.

Sincerely,



Gregg H. Lundberg, Ed.S.  
District Administrator  
School District of Maple  
PO Box 188  
Maple, WI 54854

Joint Finance Committee Meeting  
Superior, Wisconsin  
March 27, 2001

My name is Louis Muench of Cumberland, Wisconsin. I am the president & manager of Louie's Finer Meats, a small processing meat plant in Cumberland. We have a retail store and do custom processing of wild game and domestic meats. I am also President of the Wisconsin Association of Meat Processors, a trade association representing small to medium meat processing facilities and their suppliers around the State of Wisconsin. As you are all aware Wisconsin has a fine reputation in this country and the world for its meats, particularly its processed meats & sausage.

I would like you to lend support to a new meat lab at the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

A new meat lab is critical to our industry, particularly at this point in time. The current facility is 70 years old and outdated. We need a modern direction for meat research and support for our industry in our state. We have to keep on top of new technology & challenges. In order to attract the top notch meat scientists & students, and to create the atmosphere necessary to enhance and maintain the State of Wisconsin's excellent reputation for meat production & processing, we need a modern facility now. The lack of this facility will affect our livelihood, our employees, consumers, our states animal agriculture economy, food security, and our standing in these areas on a regional & national basis. This facility is imperative for consumer, industry, and inspections education. Our future farmers, FFA, 4-H, students and future tradesman all would certainly benefit. Our work on interstate shipping of meats and its related roadblocks could be streamlined.

The services we presently receive from the current meat lab are excellent. We rely heavily on the UW now for many things. Processing workshops, inspection reviews, food safety, product development, our state conventions seminars & demonstrations, are all monitored, developed, and set up with the current meat lab & extensions guidance and supervision. It is a necessary resource for us as processors, let alone the entire agriculture community and The Wisconsin Department of Ag. & Consumer Protection. The UW's help with the preparation for & documentation & verification of the new HACCP regulations continues to be of extreme importance. Many of us currently use the UW on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis for help, suggestions, or problem solving. It is our only real form of a government subsidy. We, in turn are "tapped" by the UW for ideas or data--it is a great relationship. With a new lab, the research potential for us, research of whose magnitude would be impossible for us, let alone our state and nation, gives me great hope for the future of my profession and our industry. By the way, our industry is so committed to this project that we are building funding and commitments to funding to help staff a state of the art facility. WAMP has already dedicated \$100,000.

At this critical time in our industry--with many threats to our industry and to our consumers & patrons--be it E coli, foot & mouth disease, or mad cow disease, --it is crucial to give full consideration to funding of this facility. The meat industry is not an easy career--lots of hours, heavy & hard work. We deal with a perishable product, we are heavily regulated & scrutinized, and there is plenty of competition. Consumers want an economical, healthy, nourishing, diversified, convenient, and safe product. With your assistance and consideration & support of new meat lab, it will make our jobs easier. It is vital to our continued success and for revitalization of our industry and agriculture.

Thank-you for this opportunity, and please contact me with any questions or comments.

Louis E. Muench  
P.O. Box 971  
Cumberland, Wisconsin 54829  
Bus. (715)822-4728 Res., (715)822-2006

3-27-01

To the Joint Finance Committee ~

In response to Governor McCallum's proposed budget plan, I would like to share my opinion.

As the mother of three children under the age of 7, the budget and current revenue caps will directly affect my family. Two of my children have had the excellent benefit of the S.A.G.E program. I believe my 3 1/2 year old deserves the same chance. It is crucial for a child to be eager, happy, and confident in learning, and that comes from the early grades. If they are

uncomfortable or unhappy, or confused, the one-on-one time with a teacher can make the difference between a child who understands and one who does not. Why would we take away S.A.G.E. when it plays such an important part in our children's early education?

Please reconsider your plan. Our district cares about our children. Show them you do too. After all, isn't it all of our jobs to protect their rights? Our children are our future.

Thank you-  
Angela Honness  
Superior, WI

Diane Meysman-Martin  
1615 North 56<sup>th</sup> Street  
Superior, WI 54880

March 27, 2001

Senator Robert Jauch  
PO Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707-7882

Representative Frank Boyle  
PO Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53707-8952

Dear Senator Jauch and Representative Boyle:

I write to you, as my legislators, about the proposed termination of the SAGE program at Bryant Elementary School. I fully oppose the revenue caps.

I am a lifelong resident of the Superior area. I live here with my husband Mike and son, Garrett, who attends Bryant Elementary School. We have a vested interest in our schools! Quality education is the foundation of children developing into successful adults. The overcrowding of classrooms has contributed to the demise of quality education. Now, the state wants to take away the initial steps taken to reduce the overcrowding of classrooms, and cut the SAGE programs and impose revenue caps.

As violence in the school system permeates the news, we must certainly look at ways to circumvent negative influences upon our children. Crowded classrooms mean overwhelmed teachers, and neglected children. The impact of the early years of school clearly contributes to the molding of the child. It has been demonstrated that smaller classrooms contribute to higher comprehension and grades in children. We cannot continue to chop away at the educational system at the expense of the future leaders of this great state – our children.

I expect strong commitment to the preservation and enhancement of the educational system from my state. I know you do too. Please reassure me that the revenue caps and educational programs will not endure the blade of the budget cuts. Our children's future depends on it.

Sincerely,

  
Diane Meysman-Martin

Cc: Governor Scott McCallum  
Jay Mitchell, Superintendent

3-27-01

To Whom It May Concern:

Governor McCallum's proposed budget is frightening. My position in the school district of Superior is currently a principal. I see children on a daily basis that are extremely needy. This is with all the support they receive in a classroom with one teacher to fifteen students. The thought of doubling this class size would mean many children will not have their needs met. In the long run, those who would suffer are, in fact, society as a whole!



# School District of Superior

Board of Education Building

3025 Tower Avenue  
Superior, Wisconsin 54880  
(715) 394-8700  
FAX (715) 394-8708

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SUPERIOR  
Superior, Wisconsin 54880

March 27, 2001

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Joint Finance Committee  
FROM: Maureen Johnson, Director of Student Services  
RE: **COMMENTS REGARD THE GOVERNORS PROPOSED BUDGET**

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Thank you chairperson(s) <sup>Wend Smith</sup> (and <sup>Bruce Martin</sup>) for the opportunity to speak before you today. I am Maureen Johnson, Director of Student Services for the School District of Superior. I am here to speak about the School District's special education story, as it would be affected by the governor's budget proposal.

The governor's budget proposes that the special education aid should be increased more than \$25 million over the biennium. Statewide, this amount will not keep us close to our current reimbursement rate. For Superior, the 2.5% reduction which equates to about \$33,000 in lost funding. ~~Taken in isolation, \$33,000 does not sound like much.~~ <sup>When considered in light of the</sup> whole Superior funding scenario, which is one of declining enrollments, an increasing special education census, decreased SAGE funding, and an increasing number of high cost special education students. The reimbursement rate would mean more of the general fund monies would have to be allocated to the special education program.

For those who might argue, that the special education census is a locally controlled number. These persons need to understand Superior's special circumstances. Our special education census is increasing because we are a district in close proximity to six Minnesota school districts and three Wisconsin districts. Since December 1999, we have increased by 32 students in special education. Many of these students are high need and high cost students. ~~We experience a high influx of students from other districts.~~ Historically, we have been able to maintain our census count at about the state average. With the current declining enrollment trend for the district, this may not be true in the future.

- OVER -



When a district experiences declining enrollment, high student mobility and has increased numbers of students with high needs, it creates a situation where districts must meet the state and federal mandates for ensuring that students with disabilities have free and appropriate education. When special education is underfunded, as proposed in the governor's budget, special education is funded by reducing services to students in other programs. This is certainly not a funding model which supports learning for all model of education for Superior's children.

Second, I'd like to address the Governor's budget as it defines a high cost <sup>student</sup> as \$50,000 and it would reimburse 50 percent of those costs. These costs would come from a reallocation of the current handicapped aid appropriation. For Superior this is an unrealistic funding descriptor. We have many high need children who require one-on-one special education assistants, related services, and/or placements in therapeutic day treatment settings. Most of these students have service costs which average between \$30,000 and \$35,000 a school year. A better funding formula for high needs students with disabilities would be to define high cost students as those at three times the state average (approximately \$30,000) and requiring that ninety percent of those costs be reimbursed in addition to handicapped aid reimbursements.

At third point I'd like to discuss, is the proposed change in the manner handicapped aid is calculated based on census and poverty. This method of calculating aid funding separates the funding calculators from the well defined student needs. For students in Superior, if the State uses the same procedures that are currently used to allocate the federal entitlement monies, the census figures are eighteen months old and the School District of Superior would be asked to fund the services of approximately 30 students not included in the state funding calculator. Many of these students have very specialized needs and are high cost students for the district.

A final point I'd like to discuss is the inclusion of many special education policy issues in the governor's budget. These topics need to be discussed but they should not be part of the funding package. Specifically, I am referring to the rule making authority, report on range of severity, IEP student placement, transition services, special education evaluations, and special education federal aid are policy and rule considerations that should be reviewed and debated by the appropriate education committees, outside of the budget process.

In closing, I again want to thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today. Please remember that school districts, like Superior, that are declining enrollment and increased special education service agents, need an increase in special education funding, instead of the slight reduction that is in the governor's proposed budget.

**Louis J. Thompson**  
**707 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street**  
**Superior, Wi 54880**

Date: March 27, 2001

To: Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance

From: Louis J. Thompson, School Board Member  
School District of Superior

Subject: Proposed 2001-2003 State Budget

The proposed state budget is critical to the future of our state and particularly to northern Wisconsin.

I'm a former teacher and school administrator for 38 years in Amery and Superior. Upon retirement in 1987, I was elected to the Board of Education in Superior and am presently serving in my fifth 3 year term. I'm also a Board of Control member in CESA #12 centered in Ashland. In addition, I have just completed six years as a member of the Board of Directors for Region One on the Wisconsin Association of School Boards.

Superior has historically been a conservative, low spending district. We rank at about 400 of 427 districts in Wisconsin and spend at least \$1000.00 less than the per pupil average for Wisconsin. We are locked into this low spending average with the present spending controls and our school budget would be \$5 million to \$6 million more if we spent the state average.

The proposed budget is critical to the future of education for our youth in Superior. Vital program areas are now being eliminated and classes are too large in the middle and high school levels.

SAGE has been great for us in the early grades.

With the global economy that our youth will graduate into, we must provide a basic fundamental education if we are to remain at a high rank for our graduates.

Public education is in serious trouble and could fail if we do not eliminate the present cost controls as they exist with the QEO and other negative features.

I'm a veteran of World War II in Europe, and have been in education since 1951 as a teacher, administrator, and board member. I also have four grandchildren in our elementary schools in Superior.

Please help us maintain our educational high ranking in Wisconsin.

Thank you sincerely for coming to Superior.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Louis J. Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "L".

Louis J. Thompson  
School District of Superior  
Board of Education Member and  
Board Clerk in 2000-2001.  
Board President from 1990-1996

**DATE:** March 27, 2001

**TO:** Joint Finance Committee

**FROM:** Kandee Rosburg  
School-Age Parent Program  
School District of Superior

**REASON:** Impact of revenue caps

I have taught the School-Age Parent program in Superior since it's beginning. That beginning was seventeen years ago.

In that seventeen years the budget that I have had to work with to purchase textbooks, resources, food for labs, supplies, furniture, equipment, etc. has not changed. Look what inflation has done in seventeen years.

We want our students to be up on technology. They need to compete in a technological world. That costs money.

DATE: March 27, 2001

TO: Joint Finance Committee

FROM: Kandee Rosburg  
Parent

REASON: Impact of revenue caps

I'm a parent of a Middle School and a High School student in the School District of Superior. I have been involved with the school system for twenty-two years. I'm expressing my concerns in relationship to my own children.

My daughter came home this fall from Central Middle School complaining about the size of her classes. There are more than thirty students. I found it interesting that she even noticed this. She also said that her teachers at times couldn't give her individual help during class because there just wasn't time. Her options for electives also have been cut. In seventh grade her brother had a Family and Consumer Education class. She couldn't have it, because it wasn't even offered. In eighth grade her brother had a semester of art. She did get art, but less time. Middle school should be a time to explore and try different things. That isn't happening in Superior because of cutting staff.

My son at the Superior Senior High School is in an English class with thirty-five students. He was being harassed by one or two students in that class. We talked to the experienced teacher. She wanted to know who they were, because with that size of class it is hard to keep tabs on everything going on. It was also a class with behavior problems. Class size again in the problem here. We all know that students function better in smaller classes where the teacher can have more one on one contact. When it came time to register for classes, again selection has been limited over the years.

Computer use and the technology that goes with it. Our students in Superior aren't getting the training and time using it, because we lack labs, technicians, and trained instructors.

Why is it okay to spend around \$6000 per student in Superior, yet in other parts of the state they are spending \$10,000 to \$12,000 per student? Our students need an equal opportunity to compete within our state, nation, and the world. They are our future.

March 27, 2001

Dear Joint Finance Committee,

The full funding of the SAGE Program in grades K-3 statewide is very important. SAGE is a must for servicing children, especially children at risk. I am currently a Reading Specialist at Cooper Elementary. We are in the 5th year of the SAGE Program. As a Reading Specialist, I have noticed a major increase in the Reading/Writing/and language skills of the students enrolled in the SAGE Program. Since I have taught in the building for many years, I can compare the students progress before SAGE and after SAGE. It has really made a difference in the education of our K-3 children.

Revenue Caps are very inequitable statewide therefore they need to be lifted. Unfunded mandates that come from the state are having a negative impact on Public Education. Please change the funding and lift the Revenue Caps.

Thank you,

Katharine A. Empe  
Reading Specialist / President of SFT  
Cooper Elementary School  
1807 Missouri Avenue  
Superior, Wisconsin 54880

3/27/01

To the Joint Committee on Finance

Please pass the word on to the  
now Governor. The Honorable

I am very concerned about the current  
state budget as presented. The freedom we  
have in the U.S. does depend on a great  
Public educational system. Last October  
people of Wisconsin presented their concerns  
for our children and the future of Wisconsin  
at many Institute for Wisconsin Future  
hearings in the state. Apparently some  
were heard, other were completely closed.  
The revenue caps on the public school  
districts remain unchanged. The university  
system is threatened, Public Library Funds  
our Health Human Services Dept and our  
env. Perhaps the prison system is where  
the Governor wishes to place all priorities  
for education. I believe that we should  
do what we can do with "preventive medicine"  
Low classroom pupil/teacher ratio. Catch  
the keep girls in Kindergarten that need  
that extra help. NOVA. Keep community  
open all over the state so parents, citizens  
of all walks of life and the youth will  
know that we each care about one another  
For those too young to hear us, we must  
fight for their future. Music is not a fill  
Remember the song rocking the cradle? a  
mother's soft hum and whistles on the fishing  
trip? Think, I think, act gradually. please.

Peter V. Korosh

3/27/01

I am writing in response to Governor McCallum's proposed budget regarding school expenditures.

Cutting out SAGE programs in our elementary schools, and increasing class sizes will not benefit our children in any way. Losing tutors and the extra help some of our children desperately need would be harmful in the long run. For our children to have the skills and knowledge to be able to pass Standardized tests, they need the tutoring, teachers and materials other schools have.

Also, as a parent of a highly-gifted 8 yr. old, no monies are available for proper programming for this group of students at all. Each of our students deserves an education appropriate for them.

Remember, these children are our future!  
Money should be spent across the board, not in only one city.

Superior's Children deserve more!!

Charlene Ansell  
2121 E. 10th St  
Superior, WI 54880



March 27, 2001

Members of the Joint Finance Committee;

I realize being as removed as we are up here in the great north woods from the hubbub of the Madison/Milwaukee areas our needs are maybe not expressed as loudly and clearly as they should be, so we appreciate this opportunity to be heard and are confident our needs and concerns will be recognized as sincere. As a new teacher (10-'00) and a parent of a 1st and 5th grader I have great concerns regarding the proposed Wisconsin Budget. Many of our classrooms are using texts/materials that are outdated-20 to 30 years old. How can we expect our students to be prepared and to better themselves with such poor materials? Computers, which should now be a standard in every classroom are not available - for teachers, to allow them to be more efficient in classroom preparation - and for students, computers and Internet access should be as common as a set of encyclopedias was for us. Not so in the Superior public school district where many classrooms have little to no computer access or the assistive technology is so out of date as to make it almost worthless. As a special education teacher I am very concerned the proposed cuts will even further limit the programs / resources / opportunities we are able to offer these students. Students who are trying hard to keep up with the general course work, who hope to graduate with their classmates may see the classes they need not offered in summer school due to funding cuts.

As a parent, my son who participated in the SAGE program in 1st grade this year, has flourished with the 15:1 ration designed by the program. With the proposed budget next year he will move to a class of 25-30:1. How can my child or any other child - at an age where it has been shown over and over the limited class size is so helpful in benefiting the life long abilities/skills of the child, survive in such an environment where the teacher is able to give them only half the attention they received last year? It seems impossible to not "lose" many children when the teacher to student ratio is so high. I want every opportunity for my son, and every other child, to be allowed/encouraged to be the very best they can be in order to give back to the community. I don't believe the budget cuts will allow that to happen. My 5th grade daughter has been an A student since she began school. She is so eager to learn, absorbing all the knowledge she can get her hands on. We have incredible teachers who have done incredible things with little resources and I applaud them but just think what those same teachers and children, like my son and daughter, could achieve with a little more help - at least as much financial help as the other areas of the state receive. Our children, as I'm sure you feel about your children, deserve the opportunities to aspire to be the best they can. Please don't limit them - for in the long run we will end up paying more and the loss will be our children.

Sincerely



Deborah Noble-Olson

March 27, 2001

I am writing in response to Gov. McCallum's budget concerning education. I am outraged at the fact that our children's funding for education is based on whether or not they live in a high or low income community. I pay taxes and assume that my taxes are helping my children and their education. Since I live in Superior which is a low income community, my taxes are helping Milwaukee and their Choice program. I want the money to go to My Children. My 8 and 5 year old deserve a Superior education. They deserve a chance for scholarships. Stop raising monies for standardized test and decreasing monies for the materials and teachers needed for our children to learn and pass the tests.

Sincerely,  
Sharon K Olson

3-27-01

I am writing to voice my opinion on Governor McCullum's proposed budget for education. I am finding it very difficult to accept that my children need to pass a test in 8th & 12th grades to advance in their education, yet the governor keeps taking things away from them that help them learn (money for books, high class sizes, money for technology & teachers). It seems like a double standard! How can they learn and pass tests without the tools they need to learn!

I help pay for schools by paying taxes, yet I have no say in what my money goes to.

Our Children deserve more!

Carla Denham  
209 East Fifth St.  
Superior WI 54880

To: Joint Finance Committee  
From: Bill Sparks, Professor of Mathematics, UW-Eau Claire  
Co-Project Director, Wisconsin Academy  
Staff Development Initiative

Date: March 27, 2001

Re Support for Teacher Staff Development

My name is Bill Sparks and in addition to being a Professor of Mathematics at UW-Eau Claire for 31 years, I have been privileged to serve for over six years as Co-Project Director for The Wisconsin Academy Staff Development Initiative (WASDI). Under Federal funding first from the National Science Foundation and then from the U. S. Department of Education we have worked with teachers in Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education to help them help students reach increasingly higher standards. We have documentation of our success. We have been recognized by the National Governor's Educational Goals Panel as one of ten projects nationwide helping students achieve high academic standards. We have influenced teachers of over 1 million students in Wisconsin. We believe that Wisconsin students can lead and are leading the nation in preparing for the high tech workforce necessary in this 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We also recognize that society is asking teachers to teach constantly changing subject matter with new and increasing knowledge of how students learn. The teachers also desire a high degree of standards acquisition by all students, not just a select few. Hence, we are asking them to teach in ways they were never taught and they must be updated regularly. We have an infrastructure in place to provide this updating for all Wisconsin teachers. We will leave materials describing this infrastructure. It would be extremely costly to end WASDI and make something new in its place. We are asking that the state institutionalize this program that has been developed and implemented statewide with federal seed money. We feel the students and future workforce of Wisconsin deserve the best and most current education that can be provided. In return, more and more of these students will meet the high academic standards that the legislature required be met.

Sen. Shibilski has agreed to introduce an amendment supporting funding for WASDI. We ask that this be given your serious consideration and support. Thank You.

March 27, 2001

Jennifer L. Wolfe  
823 Belknap Street  
Superior, Wisconsin 54880

To The Joint Finance Committee:

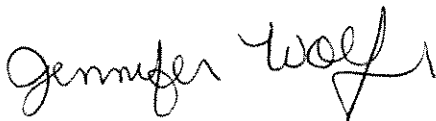
I strongly urge you to change the Wisconsin Budget as it is proposed. It will greatly affect the school and district that I work at in Superior. This budget will mean higher teacher-pupil ratios. It will also mean a reduction in many programs that we currently offer. There will be a loss in special education and summer school.

The end result with the current budget is that there will be a loss in excess of \$800,000 which means a loss for the children that I serve which is the deepest and most permanent loss of all.

Please reconsider this budget and help us to help the children in our district. We really need to maintain our current programs so that the children can receive all the benefits that they deserve.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Wolfe". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Jennifer Wolfe  
Second Grade Teacher  
Blaine Elementary School  
Superior, Wisconsin

March 27, 2001

To the Joint Finance Committee

Honorable Senator Burke,

I am writing to express my feelings about Governor McCallum's proposal to cut SAGE funding and the revenue caps for education.

It would be devastating to the families of northern Wisconsin. We are already struggling with budget shortfalls. We need to preserve the quality of education for our children and grandchildren.

Our schools need to preserve their high quality and standards for education in northern Wisconsin. Please vote to keep SAGE in the budget and remove the revenue caps in education.

Sincerely,

Jack Sweeney  
1601 East 6th St.,  
Superior, WI 54880

March 27, 2001

To the Joint Finance Committee:

Honorable Senator Burke,

I am writing about Governor McCallum's proposal to cut the budget for SAGE and revenue caps for education.

Cooper School in Superior (I teach first grade there) and other SAGE schools will directly feel the impact. We are in our fifth year of SAGE at Cooper, and we see the positive effects it has had on our students' learning. How devastating it would be to see the program dropped. There is no logical reason to remove a program that is working and showing good results. Our test scores have continually risen since the implementation of SAGE. Long range we see a decreasing need for special education services for our children. Their needs are being met with the lowered class size.

My vote is for continued funding for SAGE and the removal of the revenue caps for education. We are a very needy county and feel the pinch greatly. Our children are our future, and they need nothing less than the best education.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Sweeney  
Cooper School-First grade teacher  
1807 Missouri Ave.  
Superior, WI 54880

Joint Finance Committee Testimony  
March 27, 2001  
Superior Senior High School

My Name is Thomas Strewler, I am a fifth grade teacher at Great Lakes Elementary School, here in Superior.

Mirrors produce an image. A true reflection, a reflection of what is in front of the mirror. But in the case of our schools being a reflection of our society, the image is horribly distorted and skewed. The image is so skewed that the public and our government have come to blame schools, and their teachers, for all the ills of the society, the school reflects. This image has lead to a serious dichotomy in our schools. A dichotomy of educational reform designed to improve learning, and a government not willing to support responsible, practical, child centered programs to improve learning.

As an educator I agree with the idea of educational reform to improve our schools and students learning. I am all for teachers working hard to meet each individuals needs as best as we can. The standards movement is a leading us in the direction of clear expectations for every student, parent, and educator. I am for meeting student's needs through reduced class size with SAGE, providing Free Appropriate Public Education through Special Education, and other programs and services that have direct impacts on student performance.

To expect schools to move to a greater level of accountability through academic standards, and testing to pass students at grades 4, 8,12. And then to undermine such efforts, through little increase in or reduction of funding of programs, only subverts what we all want. What is it that we all want, you say? Well, I always thought that we wanted,



- ◇ We wanted students who are as successful as they can possibly be.
- ◇ We wanted students who can be responsible citizens and leaders in our society.
- ◇ We wanted students who can compete in a world economy.
- ◇ We wanted students who can work in the information age.

Government wants to chip away at the financial foundation of our schools. If this happens we will have none of those things. Our schools will continue to fail, to be blamed for the ills the society, and our government will continue to try and fix it by passing of more laws.

Well its time, it is time to repair the image our schools give. Time to fund the programs that we know work. So we have the means, to meet the needs, to have students who are successful learners, are productive citizens, can compete in a world economy, and work in the information age. Retain funding for SAGE without limits based on free and reduced lunches, increase funding for Special Education beyond the minimal increase proposed, loosen revenue caps so districts can afford to make reforms. These are the responsible ways to meet the needs of our students, to meet the standards, and the testing. These are the only ways that our schools can move forward.

This is the only way to improve the image reflected back for all to see.

Thank you for your time.

To: Members of The Joint Finance Committee of the Wisconsin Legislature

From: Kelly Bergum

Parent of three young children in the Superior School District

Northland Secondary School teacher

Re: Revenue Caps

March 27, 2001

I am writing to express my concern about the revenue caps as an educator and as a parent. As a teacher of at-risk high school students, I am made aware daily of the need for quality educational programming, resources that cost money, to help students realize their potential and learn necessary skills. Every day I see the importance of reduced class size, quality teaching, and necessary materials.

I am also the parent of three young children, two who currently attend Lake Superior Elementary School. Right now my children are benefiting from the Superior School System, as they are in SAGE programming. They have excellent teachers who are allowed the ability to work with them as individual learners. My kids' skills, learning, and love for learning have grown incredibly within the SAGE system.

I am increasingly concerned, however, about the future of their education- about the limited opportunities that will be available to them. I know right now that there is no 5th grade band at Lake Superior Elementary because of budget constraints. With all the research that proves how important music education is to a young learner's growth, this is unacceptable. I am also concerned about the inevitability of my children being in classes with large student to teacher ratios.

My children's education is so important to me that I will do what is necessary to make sure they receive quality education, education that is comparable to that of students in wealthier Wisconsin school districts. But my children's education, that of their classmates, and that of the students I work with every day should be important to everyone in Wisconsin. Everyone in Wisconsin should be alarmed that revenue caps will limit educational opportunities for Superior students because, ultimately, adequately educated or not, our students are our future.

Kelly Bergum