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April 4, 2001

My name is Kay McLain; as a parent, I am concerned about the way in which revenue caps are affecting the quality of the education in the School District of Florence County. I have two small children; one who will be entering the school district next year. Because of revenue caps, districts are required to make budgetary cuts that ultimately affect the quality of each student's education.

Revenue Caps have made the following changes for the students in our school district:

- Decreased classroom or subject area budgets by 25% for the 2001-20002
 - Budgets have stayed stagnant for many years despite increased text, supply, and technological costs.
- Decreased course offerings
 - We no longer have Elementary Art, Elementary Guidance, two Middle School teaching positions, High School Auto Shop, and Small Engine Repair
- Eliminated Athletic Director position as of the 2001-2002 school year
- Decreased many educational field trips unless completely (bus, substitute teacher, etc.) funded by fundraising
- Decreased maintenance
- Changed the way Pre-Kindergarten (Four-Year-Old) is structured
 - Four-year-old students go to school for two full days as opposed to four half days so the district can receive more funding and save money in bussing. However, studies show that four-year-old students learn better and have greater retention when attending half-day school.
- Increased student fees for workbooks, supplemental activities, and user fees
- Increased student fees for participation in extracurricular assignments
- Increased teacher/staff workload
 - Currently, one high school teacher teaches eight classes in an eight-hour day. He does this so that students have more variety in coursework.
 - Currently, elementary teachers are trying to do additional teaching to integrate art (a necessary course for brain development) into their classes.
 - In the 2000-2001 school year, four teachers will receive a salary decrease of approximately \$1,300 each, yet will be asked to teach the same number of classes.

In all of these cases, the district has sited Revenue Caps as the reason for the cuts. My children will have teachers and support staff that are overloaded and overwhelmed with the responsibility of educating children without appropriate resources.

Now, let's move away from education and look at these issues from a business perspective. What type of *service* is produced when employees are overworked, underpaid, given few choices, and work in a poor physical and emotional environment? In this situation, my children will be receiving this *service*. Please don't allow a *disservice* to occur.

Thank you for taking the time to address the issue of revenue caps; this is an encouraging step in helping to solve the problem. We have a common goal: providing quality, progressive education for all students.

April 4, 2001

Dear Joint Finance Committee:

We moved back to Florence for the small town atmosphere in which to raise our children. We also moved back to the school where I was a successful student, an athlete, and most of all someone who was cared about by a community of people. Now, I want those same opportunities to be available for my children. I had to convince them that moving away from their friends, the city and all its educational offerings and the lifestyle of country living was a move worthwhile.

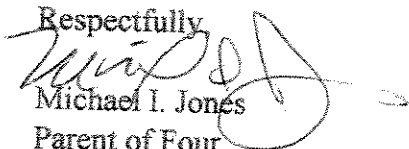
Now, our conversations are not optimistic about the future educational needs and desires for our children. Now, we talk about what we as parents can do to accommodate the school's decision to cut elementary art. Now, we wonder what will be next on the cut list to keep the school solvent: phy. ed? typing? theater? band? music? These are the traditional areas our society has grown accustomed to trimming first. Few, if any at all, realize that schools like UW Madison, Nortre Dame and Northwestern University give scholarships to band students, the vocally talented or the actor and actresses my children wish to become.

With all the information available on brain research and how children acquire knowledge, it saddens me deeply to know how the education of our children resides in the dollar amount our legislators believe they are saving their constituents. As those decisions are made for us 255 miles away, the local communities are left in confusion and heartache over budget cuts foisted upon us. Children up to the age of nine can still demonstrate the ability to generate new neuropathways in the brain. How do you think those pathways are stimulated? The aforementioned classes develop fine and gross motor skills which greatly correlates to the advancement of reading and math skills. What cuts can possible replace the talents of our children? Sadly, most people will not make the connection until ACT and SAT scores drop in Wisconsin. And then, will our legislators propose how to fix what they decided to bankrupt?

Voters will realize who was responsible for making Wisconsin an educational wasteland. Wisconsin will be known for its academic achievements in the past tense largely due to the fact Wisconsin legislators wanted to flex their muscles at Wisconsin schools. Well, they missed and the ricochet rapidly approaches my children and the children in local communities all over the state.

The school I wanted to move back to is slated to run out of funds in 2002-2003. Our children will not experience the high school that gave me the direction and courage to take on life's challenges. If you did not graduate from a school like this, then I am sorry, but do not punish those schools that worked . . . were working . . . and will work again. Therefore, I urge you to show true courage legislators and do what you must to avert the crises Wisconsin Public Education faces!

Respectfully


Michael I. Jones

Parent of Four

P.S. And if you can not find a way to keep us from cutting a great school, then could you appear before my children Brittany (12), Jacob (10), Zachary (7) and Caleb (2) and personally explain to them why their educational futures were swapped for the control costs needed to curb outlandish educational spending.

To: State of Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee

Dear Sirs:

My name is Todd Worpel and I'm from Florence, WI. I have two children in the Florence School District, and, because of revenue caps, their education is suffering. We no longer have an elementary art teacher, middle school Spanish teacher or high school auto tech teacher, and things will only get worse if the cap limits are not changed.

We have teachers in our school system who have been here for more than 25 years and their paychecks are going down, not up with the cost of living. It is unclear to me why school districts and their employees are the only people in the public sector of Wisconsin who have these types of caps. Why are schools being singled out?

If money is a problem, the state needs to come up with some additional source of revenue for Wisconsin public schools. Having the burden fall on the property owner is not only lopsided but not working. It is my suggestion that Wisconsin add a 1.5% sales tax on everything except food. Michigan did this a few years ago and it saved their schools from collapsing. We need to do something soon or ours will certainly fail. Please do not let that happen!

Sincerely,



Todd F. Worpel
HC3 Box 174
Florence, WI 54121

Testimony for the Joint Finance Committee
April 5, 2001 @ Peshtigo

Gentlemen and Ladies of the Joint Finance Committee:

Thank you for coming to Peshtigo in an effort to listen to all of the people of Wisconsin. We appreciate not having to drive far to express our needs.

I am speaking on behalf of the CESA 8 Board of Control. CESA 8 contains twenty-six school districts that are among the most creative in meeting the needs of students at all levels. They have used new technology like distance learning and shared services agreements to save money while continuing to provide a high level of educational opportunity to the students in their districts. Many of them are even cooperating on the athletic fields. Old rivalries are forgotten so students can continue to receive quality educational programming and still be members of a sports team.

Why have these measures been taken? Because many of the districts in CESA 8 are facing declining enrollments, increasingly punitive state aid take-backs and the concerns of valuation rich but income poor citizens. It must be working because recently, the Wisconsin Taxpayer Alliance identified five of our districts in the top twenty-five districts at exceeding expectations based on test scores.

We are here to tell you that our school districts need help or they will lose the ability to provide quality programs. They will cut whole programs like those in the trades, foreign language, college prep classes and eliminate many of those things that you as students looked on as important, like sports, after-school activities and school sponsored activities. Some may even need to consider more draconian actions like reducing the length of the school year and worse.

Now that I have outlined the problem, here are some proposed solutions:

Increase the amount of special education aid coming to local schools. If you would boost the level of funding for special education from the present 32% to 50%, the districts in my CESA would receive an additional \$2,800,000 in aid. This would stop them having to spend other funds to cover the high and increasing cost of special education from local funds.

Eliminate the money flowing from these poor northern districts to the Milwaukee Choice Program. Taking money from one poor area and sending it to another is really not fair to either. This would save our districts more than \$800,000.

Stop applying tertiary aid deductions in districts where the average family income is less 80% of the state average. This deduction is supposed to use money from property rich districts to supplement the aid to property poor districts. However, many of the property rich districts in CESA 8 have limited local income. As a CESA, our citizens earn less

than 70% of the state average and some of our districts are among the lowest in earned income in the state.

Though some of our schools are able to cover their operating costs today, they along with their fiscally strapped neighbors are facing some other difficult issues. We need your help to support developing programs to replace the hundreds teachers that will be retiring in the next five to ten years. CESA 8 has no four-year higher education program within our borders. Though some of our closer college partners want to help, they indicate they also face limited resources in training and putting out adequate numbers of new teachers. You can help us with that. Our schools have grave difficulties replacing teachers that are leaving; especially in science and math, the trades and in special education. We think attending to teacher salaries and new teacher support programs will help us in CESA 8 find and hold on to the new people that would be added to the candidate pool. Perhaps loan forgiveness programs like the National Defense Education Act can attract and train another generation of teachers.

In addition, I would like to hear the anti-educator rhetoric stop. I am a teacher, my wife is a teacher and many of my best friends are teachers. They work hard and are worthy of the same respect given to others who serve the needs of our communities.

Finally, our districts have depended on CESA 8 to help them meet their needs in special education, technology training, staff development, curriculum, assessment and many other areas. In the Governor's Budget there is little to allow CESA 8 to continue to help the schools cooperate in serving their students. The Department of Public Instruction had some added funds in place to help schools in this area meet the growing deficiencies and planned to send those funds to CESAs. If you can find these dollars in a tight state budget, we at CESA 8 promise you will get a lot of bang for the buck.

Thank you for listening. I am Bob Kellogg, the Administrator of CESA 8 and I would be happy to respond to your questions.

DRAFT

March 26, 2001
Representative John Gard
Room 315 North, State Capitol
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI. 53708

Representative Gard,

I am writing you regarding the Green Bay Learning Experience. The Student Government Association in conjunction with faculty and staff at UW-Green Bay over the last two years has worked on a multi-scoped initiative aimed at providing students with the best educational experience possible. The initiative has many aspects including plans for more consistent advising, putting more students into the community through internship programs, and a lessening of the student to faculty ratio on campus which is currently the highest in the state at 23:1. We have done this in an attempt to bring our campus up to scale in the University of Wisconsin System, as well as try to provide students with the most for their education dollar. The ultimate goal of the initiative is to create more diverse school choice in the University of Wisconsin System. The initiative focuses on high impact student learning, and will provide a type of education not found at a comprehensive university.

In the past the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay has requested money for more specific programs such as the Learning Partnership Initiative which called for a total of \$1.5 million from the state and received it. The Learning Experience Initiative impacts almost all aspects of campus, and will provide an excellent opportunity for cooperative partnership by linking student tuition support with state support. With this commitment from the state we will be able to make the Learning Experience a reality.

I know that in the past you have been a large supporter of the University of Wisconsin System as well as many of its programs and initiatives. Thank you for your time on this issue. I am both excited and encouraged by the commitment the students of UW-Green Bay have made to not only our learning experiences, but also to those of future students. Hopefully together we will be able to provide students with a unique and special learning experience on our campus. Thank you again for your consideration of our initiative, and hopefully you will be able to include it in the biennial budget for 2001-2003.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacklyn M Foth
RHAA Secretary

Jacklyn Foth
3130 Walterway
Green Bay, WI 54311

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Stephanie Swartz

*3340 Walter Way
Green Bay, WI 54311*

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Room 315 North, State Capitol
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI. 53708

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Respectfully Submitted,

Lindsay M. Rego
2219 Walter Way
Green Bay, WI 54311-7070

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Room 315 North, State Capitol
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI. 53708

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Respectfully Submitted,

Regina A. Rouse
2501 Jenny Ln. Apt. 8
Green Bay, WI 54302

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Room 315 North, State Capitol
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI. 53708

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Respectfully Submitted,

Audrey Z. Stuber
2823 Walter Way
Green Bay WI 54531

Impact of Revenue Caps

**Submitted by
Frederic A. Stieg, Superintendent
Howard-Suamico School District**

**Joint Committee on Finance
Public Hearing
April 5, 2001**

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
BASIC FACTS 1999-2000

EQUALIZATION AID

The 1995-97 Wisconsin State Budget initiated changes in the general equalization aid formula from a two to three-tiered cost sharing calculation. The first or primary shared cost per member ceiling of \$1,000 is available to all school districts regardless of taxable property wealth available per student. The second or secondary shared cost per member ceiling of \$6,430 is available to all Districts whose secondary costs per member do not exceed this number. The third or tertiary shared cost per member is shared without a cost ceiling; however, those Districts whose guaranteed valuation is more than 100% of the statewide average equalized valuation per member may realize negative tertiary aid which reduces secondary tier aid.

The following equalization aid information indicates that the Howard-Suamico School District:

- ⇒ Spends \$609 less than the State average shared cost per member
- ⇒ Receives \$241 per member more than the State average in equalization aid
- ⇒ Has \$41,625 less than the State average in equalized property value supporting each student
- ⇒ Has a tax rate \$.40 below the State average

HOWARD-SUAMICO

	Shared		State Aid		Equalized	Membership	EV/	Levy
	School Cost	Cost/Member		Aid/Member	Value		Member	Rate
Primary	3,979,000	1000	3,468,208	872	1,021,584,892	3,979	256,744	
Secondary	21,685,970	5,430	14,358,899	3,609	1,021,584,892	3,979	256,744	
Tertiary	89,029	22	7,650	2	1,021,584,892	3,979	256,744	
Eq. Aid. Adj			(59,964)					
Total	25,673,999	6,452	17,774,792	4,483	1,021,584,892	3,979	256,744	10.31

STATE AVERAGE

	Shared		State Aid		Equalized	Membership	EV/	Levy
	School Cost	Cost/Member		Aid/Member	Value		Member	Rate
Primary	868,127,100	1000		860			298,369	
Secondary	4,701,693,655	5416		3,428			298,369	
Tertiary	560,074,391	645		(184)			298,369	
Total	6,129,895,146	7,061		4,242			298,369	10.71

Comparison	(609)	241	(41,625)	(.40)
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COMPARATIVE COST PER MEMBER

The Department of Public Instruction compares school costs for 426 school districts. The cost comparison measures are:

- ◆ **Current Educational Cost:** Overall instruction and related support services excluding transportation, facility acquisition and debt service expenditures.
- ◆ **Total Educational Cost:** Current educational cost plus transportation, facility acquisition and debt service expenditures.
- ◆ **Total District Cost:** Total educational cost plus food and community service costs.

	Current Educational Cost	Transpor- tation	Facility Acquisition	Total Educational Cost	Food/ Community	Total District Cost
Howard-Suamico	\$5,927	\$245	\$736	\$6,908	\$203	\$7,111
State Average	\$7,087	\$370	\$664	\$8,121	\$274	\$8,395
Difference	(\$1,160)			(\$1,213)		(\$1,284)
Rank	403			406		406

The above comparison cost data indicates that the Howard-Suamico School District's:

- ⇒ Current educational cost per member is \$1,160 below the state average, and 402 school districts spend more.
- ⇒ Total educational cost per member is \$1,213 below the state average, and 405 school districts spend more.
- ⇒ Total district cost per member is \$1,284 below the state average, and 405 school districts spend more.

WISCONSIN TAXPAYERS ALLIANCE

SchoolFacts⁹⁹

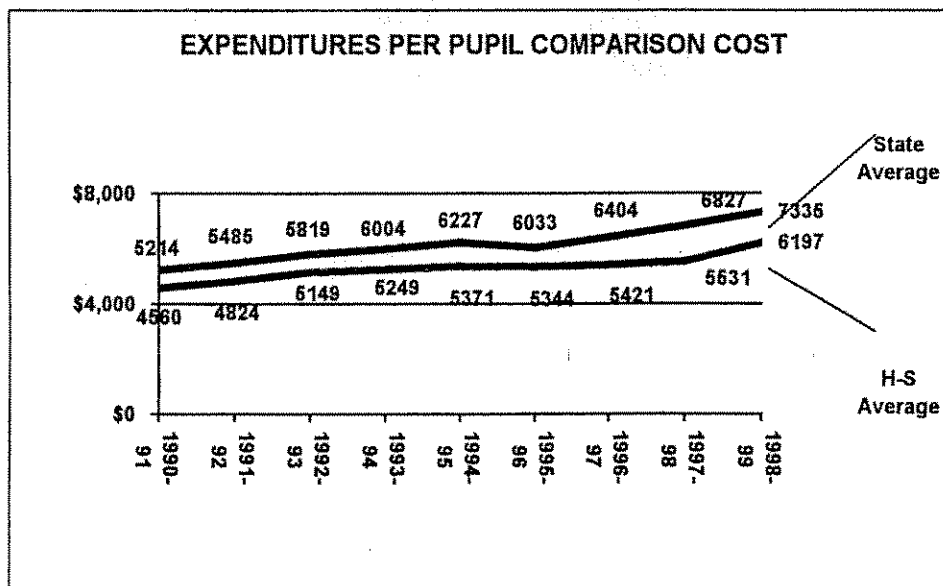
The Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance compares expenditures per pupil for each of Wisconsin's school districts. The following facts were included in their report:

- Of 369 K-12 districts, Howard-Suamico's comparative expenditures per pupil ranks in the bottom 10%--more than 90% of Wisconsin School Districts spend more per pupil.
- Howard-Suamico's expenditures are 16% below the state average cost per pupil
- Per pupil expenditures which include the total cost for instruction, pupil services, staff services, administration and insurance less pupil transportation, debt service, miscellaneous and non-program transaction costs for our district as compared to the state average is as follows:

STATE AVERAGE COMPARISON COST	HOWARD-SUAMICO COMPARISON COST	DIFFERENCE
\$7,335	\$6,197	(\$1,138)

Howard-Suamico would have to increase spending by \$4,422,268 to equal the state's average comparison cost.

A graph indicating expenditures per pupil since 1990-91 is shown below. As you can see, Howard-Suamico has consistently spent less than the State average per pupil. In 1990-91, we spent \$654 less than the State average. In 1998-99 the District spent \$1,138 less per pupil.



Best of Class 1999

A report highlighting 46 high-performing
Wisconsin public school districts

*Based on data collected by the
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction,
Office for Educational Accountability*



Presented by
Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce
November, 1999

REVENUE LIMIT EXPLANATION AND CALCULATION

In 1993 Wisconsin Statute 121.90 placed a limit on the revenue a school district is entitled to receive from general state aid and local levies. There are five basic steps in calculating the revenue limit:

Step 1

Determine the previous year's base by adding equalization aid, tax levy, and computer aid in lieu of taxes.

Formula: $\text{Equalization Aid} + \text{Tax Levy} + \text{Computer Aid} = \text{Revenue Base}$

Howard-Suamico: $\$17,659,079 + \$7,778,777 + \$23,033 = \$25,460,889$

Step 2

Determine revenue base per member amount by dividing revenue base by an average of the district's most recent three September membership totals, excluding the current year for which the limit is being calculated. Beginning in 1998, districts added 20% of their summer school membership to the fall count before computing the three-year average. Beginning in 2000, districts may add 40% of their summer school membership.

Formula: $\text{Revenue Base} \div \text{Average of 1997, 1998, and 1999 September memberships} = \text{Revenue Base per Member}$

Howard-Suamico: $\$25,460,889 \div 3,894 = \$6,538.49$

Step 3

Determine a new three-year membership average.

Formula: $\text{Sept. 1998} + \text{Sept. 1999} + \text{Sept. 2000} \div 3 = \text{3 Yr. Membership Avg.}$

Howard-Suamico: $3906 + 3968 + 4213 \div 3 = 4029$

Step 4

Determine the Maximum Allowable Revenue Per Member by adding the allowable per member increase, as determined by the State Legislature, to the revenue base per member.

Formula: $\text{Allowable Per Member Increase} + \text{Revenue Base/Member} = \text{Maximum Allowable Revenue Per Member}$

Howard-Suamico: $\$220.29 + \$6,538.49 = \$6,758.78$

Revenue Limits - Public School Districts 1997-98 Through 1999-2000
Revenue Limit Authority Per Member Including Exemptions
(Does Not Necessarily Reflect Revenue Limit Authority Used)

Name of District		1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000 Est.
Howard-Suamico Area Schools				
ASHWAUBENON	182	\$ 6,744.19	\$ 6,953.07	\$ 7,165.50
WEST DEPERE	6328	\$ 6,689.90	\$ 6,898.78	\$ 7,111.21
WRIGHTSTOWN COMMUNITY	6734	\$ 6,570.20	\$ 6,779.08	\$ 6,991.51
PULASKI COMMUNITY	4613	\$ 6,343.25	\$ 6,554.66	\$ 6,782.10
GREEN BAY AREA	2289	\$ 6,342.35	\$ 6,554.67	\$ 6,770.33
BRILLION	658	\$ 6,277.22	\$ 6,486.10	\$ 6,698.53
ALGOMA	70	\$ 6,229.87	\$ 6,499.41	\$ 6,687.23
HOWARD-SUAMICO	2604	\$ 6,110.16	\$ 6,320.46	\$ 6,540.17
SEYMOUR COMMUNITY	5138	\$ 6,067.17	\$ 6,292.79	\$ 6,533.15
DEPERE	1414	\$ 6,040.55	\$ 6,224.88	\$ 6,437.31
DENMARK	1407	\$ 5,847.69	\$ 6,056.57	\$ 6,261.37
Milwaukee Area Schools				
NICOLET UHS	2177	\$ 12,213.01	\$ 12,421.89	\$ 12,635.33
FOX POINT J2	1890	\$ 10,348.75	\$ 10,557.63	\$ 10,856.67
GLENDALE-RIVER HILLS	2184	\$ 9,300.64	\$ 9,633.36	\$ 9,974.59
SHOREWOOD	5355	\$ 9,077.66	\$ 9,285.29	\$ 9,502.68
WHITEFISH BAY	6419	\$ 8,782.52	\$ 8,991.40	\$ 9,196.32
BROWN DEER	721	\$ 8,705.48	\$ 8,908.76	\$ 9,132.97
FRANKLIN PUBLIC	1900	\$ 8,481.82	\$ 8,690.70	\$ 8,953.01
GREENDALE	2296	\$ 8,266.92	\$ 8,507.81	\$ 8,737.83
CUDAHY	1253	\$ 7,790.26	\$ 7,999.14	\$ 8,217.63
WAUWATOSA	6244	\$ 7,577.37	\$ 7,789.94	\$ 8,030.63
GREENFIELD	2303	\$ 7,462.62	\$ 7,670.82	\$ 7,883.25
SAINT FRANCIS	5026	\$ 7,342.75	\$ 7,608.08	\$ 7,796.46
WEST ALLIS	6300	\$ 7,255.00	\$ 7,498.81	\$ 7,739.24
OAK CREEK-FRANKLIN	4018	\$ 6,720.37	\$ 6,930.70	\$ 7,143.13

TABLE 12
COMPARISON OF PROJECTION MODELS
 School District of Howard-Suamico

A. Enrollment by Grade Level: Observed and Projected

GRADE	OBSERVED		PROJECTED							
	1995	2000	Baseline 2005	Baseline 2010	Last 5 Years 2005	Last 5 Years 2010	Last 2 Years 2005	Last 2 Years 2010	Last Year 2005	Last Year 2010
K-12	3,526	4,203	4,690	4,859	4,787	5,077	4,613	4,741	4,863	5,230
K-4	1,317	1,536	1,587	1,610	1,680	1,679	1,609	1,608	1,721	1,701
5-6	559	700	687	728	707	769	672	707	731	818
7-8	544	603	772	765	777	830	740	757	800	868
9-12	1,106	1,364	1,643	1,757	1,623	1,800	1,592	1,668	1,611	1,844

B. Percent Change in Enrollment: Observed and Projected

GRADE	OBSERVED		PROJECTED										
	1995-2000	2000-2010	Baseline 2000-2005	Baseline 2005-2010	Last 5 Years 2000-2010	Last 5 Years 2000-2005	Last 5 Years 2005-2010	Last 2 Years 2000-2010	Last 2 Years 2000-2005	Last 2 Years 2005-2010	2000-2010	Last Year 2000-2005	Last Year 2005-2010
K-12	19.20%	15.62%	11.58%	3.61%	20.80%	13.89%	6.06%	12.79%	9.75%	2.77%	24.44%	15.70%	7.55%
K-4	16.63	4.79	3.34	1.40	9.29	9.38	-0.08	4.70	4.75	-0.05	10.71	12.04	-1.19
5-6	25.22	3.97	-1.79	5.86	9.91	0.99	8.82	1.06	-4.05	5.33	16.81	4.48	11.80
7-8	10.85	26.92	28.09	-0.91	37.57	28.81	6.80	25.50	22.69	2.29	43.99	32.63	8.57
9-12	23.33	28.79	20.43	6.94	31.93	19.00	10.87	22.30	16.75	4.75	35.16	18.09	14.45

C. Average Annual Percent Change in Enrollment: Observed and Projected

GRADE	OBSERVED		PROJECTED							
	1995-2000	2000-2010	Baseline 2000-2005	Baseline 2005-2010	Last 5 Years 2000-2010	Last 5 Years 2000-2005	Last 5 Years 2005-2010	2000-2010	Last Year 2000-2005	Last Year 2005-2010
K-12	3.84%	1.56%	2.32%	0.72%	2.08%	2.78%	1.21%	1.28%	1.95%	0.55%
K-4	3.33	0.48	0.67	0.28	0.93	1.88	-0.02	0.47	0.95	-0.01
5-6	5.04	0.40	-0.36	1.17	0.99	0.20	1.76	0.11	-0.81	1.07
7-8	2.17	2.69	5.62	-0.18	3.76	5.76	1.36	2.55	4.54	0.46
9-12	4.67	2.88	4.09	1.39	3.19	3.80	2.17	2.23	3.35	0.95

BASE REVENUE, MEMBERS & CARRYOVER FOR USE IN EXCEL WORKSHEET.

LINE 1: 1999-00 BASE REVENUE (ROUNDED) 25,460,889
 N1 AMNT MAY NOT EXCEED LN9 OF FINAL 99-00 REV LIMIT WORKSHEET

99-00 GENERAL AID AMNT CERTIFIED 10-15-99 +	17,659,079.00
99-00 AID FOR EXEMPT COMPUTERS, SRC 691	23,033.00
99-00 CERTIFIED FUND 10 SRC 211 LEVY	7,719,304.00
99-00 CERTIFIED FUND 38 SRC 210 LEVY	59,473.00
99-00 CERTIFIED FUND 41 SRC 210 LEVY	0.00
99-00 CERTIFIED FUND 80 SRC 210 LEVY	0.00
99-00 AID WITHHELD FOR LEVY ABOVE LIMIT	0.00
99-00 LEVY FOR NON-RECURRING 99-00 EXEMPTIONS:	0.00
NON-RECURRING REFERENDUM TO EXCEED LIMIT	0.00
DECLINING ENROLLMENT EXEMPTION USED	0.00

SUMMER & SEPTEMBER FULL-TIME-EQUIVALENT (FTE) MEMBERSHIP
 (CH 220 RESIDENT INTER FTE COUNTS ONLY 75% IN 2000)

LINE 2: BASE YR FTE AVG (97 + 98 + 99) / 3 =	3,894	
SUMMER FTE 1997	1998	1999
20% SUMMER N/A	88	83
SEPT FTE 3,807	3,888	3,953
TOTAL FTE	3,906	3,970

LINE 6: CURR YR FTE AVG (98 + 99 + 00) / 3 = 4,042

SUMMER FTE 1998	1999	2000
20% 20% 40% SUMMER	88	83
SEPT FTE 3,888	3,953	4,208
TOTAL FTE 3,906	3,970	4,249

LINE 10B: 00-01 DECLINING ENROLLMENT EXEMPTION = 0

(2 - 6, IF > 0) AVERAGE FTE LOSS	0
X .75 (ROUNDED) =	0
X MAXIMUM REVENUE PER MEMBER =	6,758.78 (LINE 5)
NON-RECURRING EXEMPTION AMOUNT =	0

LINE 17: 00-01 AID FOR EXEMPT COMPUTER PROPERTY = 0

2000 LEVY CERTIFIED ON DEPT OF REV PC-401	0
2000 TIF-OUT TAX APPOINTMENT VALUE	1,221,856,354
(LEVY / VALUE) ACTUAL 2000-01 LEVY RATE =	0.00000000
2000 EXEMPT COMPUTER PROPERTY VALUE	2,411,700
(RATE X COMPUTER VALUE) DPI COMPUTER AID CALC	0

1. 1999-00 BASE REVENUE (DETAIL ON LEFT) 25,460,889
2. BASE YEARS MEMBERSHIP AVERAGE (DETAIL ON LEFT) 3,894
3. 1999-00 BASE REVENUE PER MEMBER (1 DIV BY 2) 6,538.49
- 4A. 2000-01 PER MEMBER INCREASE ALLOWED 220.29
- B. LOW REVENUE INCRS: 6500 - (3 + 4A) (NOT < 0) 0.00
5. 2000-01 MAXIMUM REVENUE PER MEMBER (3 + 4A + 4B) 6,758.78
6. CURRENT YEAR MEMBERSHIP AVERAGE (DETAIL ON LEFT) 4,042
7. 2000-01 INITIAL REVENUE LIMIT (5 X 6) (ROUND) 27,318,989
8. TOTAL 00-01 RECURRING EXEMPTIONS (A+B+C+D+E) 526,371
- 8A. UNUSED, RECURRING 99-00 AUTHORITY = 6,533
- 8B. PRIOR YR CARRYOVER (75% OF UNUSED) 4,900
- 8B. NET TRANSFER OF SERVICE 521,471
- 8C. TRANSFER OF TERRITORY 0
- 8D. FED IMPACT AID LOSS, 98-9 TO 99-00 0
- 8E. REFERENDUM: EXCEED LIMIT-RECURRING 0
9. REV LIMIT PLUS RECURRING EXEMPTIONS (7 + 8) 27,845,360
10. TOTAL 00-01 NON-RECURRING EXEMPTIONS (A+B+C) 0
- 10A. REFERENDUM: EXCEED LIMIT, NON-REC 0
- 10B. 00-01 DECLINING ENROLLMENT 0
- 10C. OTHER NON-RECURRING EXEMPTION 0
11. 2000-01 LIMIT WITH ALL EXEMPTIONS (9 + 10) 27,845,360
12. OCT 15 CERTIFICATION OF 2000-01 GENERAL AID 19,175,770
13. ALLOWABLE 2000-01 LIMITED REVENUE (11 - 12) 8,669,590
- (MAXIMUM OF LEVY 10, 38, 41, 80 + COMPUTER AID)
14. LIMITED LEVY, 00-01 BUDGET TAX TABLE (A+B+C+D) 0
- 14A. FUND 10 (211) GEN OPER 0
- 14B. FUND 38 NON-REFER DEBT 0
- 14C. FUND 41 CAPITAL EXPANS 0
- 14D. FUND 80 COMMUN SERVICE 0
15. OTHER 00-01 LEVIES PER BUDGET TAX TABLE (A+B+C) 0
- 15A. NON-36, REF APPROV DEBT 0
- 15B. CHARGEBACK LEVY SRC 212 0
- 15C. OTHER: MLWK & KENOSHA 0
16. TOTAL LEVY PER 2000-01 BUDGET RPT (14 + 15) 0
17. COMPUTER AID PAID IN MAY 2001, (D.O.R. DATA) 0
18. ACTUAL 2000-01 LIMITED REVENUE (14 + 17) 0
19. DIFFERENCE: ALLOWABLE LESS ACTUAL (13 - 18) 0

3.39% increase

ESTIMATE IS PROVIDED BY DPI.
 DISTRICT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CALCULATION.

Storm grinds city to halt



A bus driver of Milwaukee waits for a bus at N. 68th St. and W. Blue Mound Road during the area's first major snowstorm of the season. The official total at Mitchell International Airport was 11.8 inches at 7 p.m., the heaviest snowfall since January 1999.

DALE GULDMAN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Snowplows scramble to clear nearly foot of snow

Line staff
ating an armada of
and salt trucks
clear area roads in
is morning's rush
10 mph winds and
peratures making
y difficult.

eds of snowplows
; the worst storm to
e since 15.4 inches
a New Year's Eve
the first days of

storm forced most
cancel classes,
rents to scramble to
-care emergencies
he postponement of
all matchup between
sity of Wisconsin
the University of
Milwaukee at the
in Madison.

gnath, Milwaukee
ctor of highway op
d his division would
cks on the roads
Monday night in an
provide clear pave-
-ring commuters.

kesha County High-
er Steve Gelas said
y's 56 snowplows
e same. "The roads
y good shape right
," said Monday after-

rong winds expected
ere likely to cause
ing in some areas,



Ken Ellsworth fixes a flat tire on his truck along I-94 in Racine County while cold winds whip snow around, making driving hazardous. Racine County sheriff's deputies Jon Eckblad and Sgt. John Gordon saw the disabled vehicle and waited with their emergency lights on until the work was done.

BARRY PORTER / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

11.8 inches by 7 p.m.

The storm that pummeled much of the Midwest on Monday began dropping snow in southeastern Wisconsin about 3 a.m. The snow continued to fall throughout the day, and 11.8 inches had landed at Mitchell International Airport by 7 p.m., the most in a single storm since early 1999.

Paul Zandt, a staff meteorologist at WTMJ-TV (Channel 4),

said some areas along the Wisconsin-Illinois border would see a foot of snow before the storm moved to the east. The center of the storm passed through central Illinois and Indiana about midday Monday, he said.

Following it is cold air. Shovelers today will have to dress warm, with wind chills of 20 below to 30 below predicted for this morning.

Monday's wallop, with powerful wind and small, icy snow-

flakes, created a classic Milwaukee scene: cars creeping along streets at single-digit speeds and pedestrians trudging over snowbanks while clutching their scarves. Most assumed the nor-

Please see SNOW, 21A

■ Tim Cuprisin: TV forecasters' early warnings pay off this time..... 63
■ Saluting snow: Snowplow makers hail wintery weather..... 1D

Voucher program struck down

Ruling in Cleveland case could finally send issue to U.S. Supreme Court

By ALAN J. BORSUK
of the Journal Sentinel staff

A showdown in the U.S. Supreme Court over programs that use public money to pay the costs of students to attend religious schools moved one large step closer Monday when a federal appeals court in Cincinnati ruled that the school choice program in Cleveland was unconstitutional.

The ultimate importance of Monday's decision is likely to lie not so much in who won but in the forward motion it gave the legal struggle that has gone on for years over whether such programs violate the constitutional principle of separation of church and state.

The U.S. Supreme Court has taken a pass on several opportunities to tackle the issue, including its 1998 decision not to review the decision of the Wisconsin Supreme Court that ruled that Milwaukee's private school choice program is constitutional.

"This is the test case that everyone's been waiting for."

Clint Bolick of the Institute for Justice, which supports vouchers

But this time, representatives of both sides of the issue said they anticipated that the Supreme Court would take the case, most likely during its 2001-'02 term.

"This is the test case that everyone's been waiting for," said Clint Bolick of the Institute for Justice, a Washington organization that argued in support of the voucher program.

Elliot Minberg, legal director of the People for the American Way Foundation, which represents opponents of the Cleveland program, said, "If any voucher case is going to get to the Supreme Court in the near future, this one certainly has the best odds."

In Monday's decision, a three-judge panel of the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled 2-1 that the Cleveland program unconstitutional used tax money to support religious schools.

"To approve this program would approve the actual diversion of government aid to religious institutions in endorsement of religious education, something 'in tension' with the precedents of

Please see VOUCHER, 19A

\$4,745 per student ... \$4,793 without voucher/choice
 (\$48 loss in aids due to choice program)
 \$5,326 - \$4,745 = \$581 LESS than choice!!

School voucher program struck down

VOUCHER, From 1A

the Supreme Court," wrote the two prevailing judges, Eric Clay and Eugene Siler Jr.

Recipients cannot truly apply the aid to any school of their choice, including public schools, because no suburban Cleveland public schools have enrolled in the program, Clay wrote.

The dissenting judge, James Ryan, said program supporters presented evidence that aid is allocated on the basis of neutral, secular criteria.

"In striking down this statute today, the majority perpetuates the long history of lower federal court hostility to educational choice," Ryan wrote.

The ruling is not expected to stop the Cleveland program, at least not for the rest of this school year, while legal action continues.

Under the Cleveland program, almost 4,000 students attend private schools, most of them religious, using publicly funded vouchers worth \$2,250 each.

That contrasts with Milwaukee's program, which included 9,638 students as of the official count in September and involved vouchers worth up to \$5,326 per student. About two-thirds of the Milwaukee students attend religious schools.

The only other publicly funded voucher program in the country is in Florida, but it involves fewer than 100 students and relatively small amounts of money. It, too, is the subject of continuing legal challenges.

The decision on the Cleveland case comes a month after school voucher proposals were overwhelmingly defeated in referendum voting in California and Michigan. But voucher backers have vowed to carry on.

Much court action

The Cleveland program has been the subject of extensive

court action, both in federal and state courts. The Ohio Supreme Court at one point invalidated the program because of the way it was passed by the Ohio legislature but held in its opinion that the program was constitutional in terms of the church-state separation issue. The program was subsequently approved again by the Ohio legislature.

Several federal court decisions have gone against the constitutionality of the program, but, in its only action on the case so far, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered that the program be allowed to continue while the case proceeds in the legal system.

Matthew Berry, a staff attorney for the pro-voucher Institute for Justice, said that Supreme Court order is one of the reasons the court is likely to accept the Ohio case. A second, he said, was the difference of opinion between the Ohio Supreme Court and the federal courts on the church-state question, which means major courts have reached opposite conclusions on a major constitutional point.

But, as Minberg said, the course of the presidential election case before the Supreme Court on Monday showed that predicting what the high court will do is a risky business.

The U.S. Supreme Court has offered no explanation of its reasons, but it has made it clear in the last several years that it wasn't ready to tackle the school voucher issue. In addition to refusing the Milwaukee case, it turned down the opportunity, in 1999 to take a case from Maine involving public payment for religious schools. That decision had the effect of upholding a system that prohibited support of religious schools — the opposite impact of the court's action regarding Milwaukee.

Based on other decisions, it is clear the court has taken a more permissive attitude toward use of public money and resources in

private schools, including religious schools, but it is not clear what the court would do with a case directly focused on the religious school voucher question.

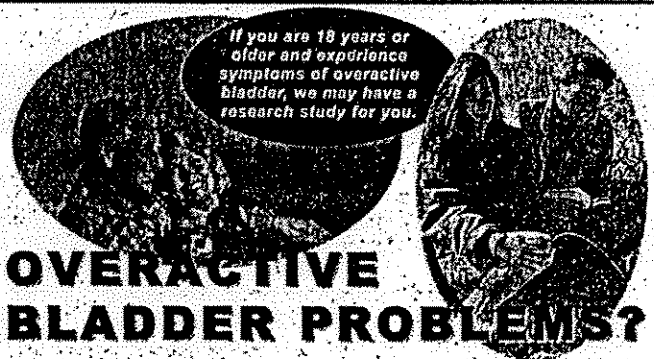
The expected breakdown of the court, if it took such a case, is very similar to its breakdown in the handling of the presidential election case, with at least three, and probably four, of the justices who are regarded as more liberal opposing such programs and four more conservative justices supporting them. Under this scenario, the justice who would be likely to hold the deciding vote in a 5-4 decision is Sandra Day O'Connor.

But that is presuming that the lineup of justices is the same when a voucher case is tackled as it is now — another reason why the outcome of the presidential

election is significant. During the election campaign, supporters and foes of voucher programs each argued that the choice between George W. Bush and Al Gore could end up dictating the Supreme Court's vote on vouchers.

On both sides of the issue, people involved in the Milwaukee choice program assume that a direct U.S. Supreme Court decision is one of the few things that could seal either the future or the doom of private school choice here. Despite the 1998 decision by the court not to accept the Wisconsin appeal, few regard the program as being on truly solid legal ground without such a Supreme Court ruling.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.




If you are 18 years or older and experience symptoms of overactive bladder, we may have a research study for you.

OVERACTIVE BLADDER PROBLEMS?

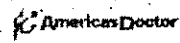
Symptoms must include frequent urination, sudden urges to go to the bathroom and wetting accidents.

If you qualify and enroll, you will receive all study-related care at no charge, including doctor visits and laboratory services. Financial compensation is also provided.

For more information, please call us today. (800) 288-0031



2350 W. Villard Avenue
Suite 207
Milwaukee, WI 53209



School District of Howard-Suamico

Frederic A. Stieg
Superintendent
920-434-4018
fredstie@hssd.k12.wi.us

Dr. Gayle P. Frame
Assistant Superintendent -
Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment
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John R. Keller
Assistant Superintendent -
Business Services
920-434-4000
johnkell@hssd.k12.wi.us

March 12, 2001

Representative John Ryba
P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI. 53708

Dear Representative Ryba:

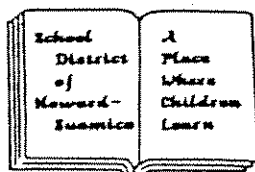
As you begin the difficult task of creating and approving a State budget, it is incumbent upon me to share with you some thoughts and ideas that may assist in this process.

First, as a taxpayer and school administrator, I very much appreciate the State's commitment to fund public education. The two-thirds funding has been beneficial to the taxpayers and children of our state. In our ever-growing school district, we would not have been able to build the necessary facilities to educate our youth without the State's assistance through the two-thirds funding process.

Attached to this letter is a copy of the Revenue Limit Estimate provided to us by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. As you know, the DPI sends the estimate to every school district in October of each year. This spreadsheet provides valuable information regarding the method that revenue caps are calculated and the ultimate impact of this process. I know that you often hear about the impact of declining enrollment upon school districts because many school districts are experiencing a decrease in student enrollments. However, as you go through the budget process, you are asked to remember that school districts with increasing enrollments must not be forgotten or perceived not to have problems with the revenue cap formula.

For example, please note on the spreadsheet (line 6 on the left) that our actual enrollment on the third Friday of September was 4,249 students. However, due to the formula's averaging process, we can only count 4,042 students for the determination of revenue caps. We have 207 students enrolled that we must educate but for whom we are allocated no revenue. Our cost per pupil is \$6758.78, which is below the state average. If that amount is multiplied by 207 students, we have a loss of over \$1.3 million to fund students that ARE CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN OUR SCHOOLS! Also, please note that the allowable cost per student increased by only 3.3 percent from the previous year. When the QEO law requires us to start at a 3.8 percent salary and benefit package for the teachers, we have less money available to meet other operational costs.

The spreadsheet could be analyzed in more depth, but I know that you understand the formula and the problems it creates for school districts. Thus, I would like to offer some suggestions as to how we can improve upon the present process while still maintaining control over spending for the state:



Representative John Ryba

March 12, 2001

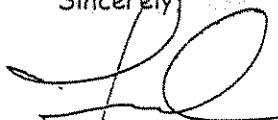
Page 2

- 1) Allow a revenue cap increase of 1 percent to 2 percent without the requirement of a referendum vote--however, those dollars are not aidable by the state.
- 2) Return to the old statutory language that would require the school board to give public notice of issuing long-term bonds for various purposes and that the electorate may submit a petition if they wish to hold a referendum election to approve the long-term bonds. The same type of language could be used for revenue cap increases, and as stated in item #1, these dollars would not be reimbursable under the State Aide formula.
- 3) Allow the school district to use the highest enrollment figures, as calculated on the third Friday of September, over a five-year period.

It is suggested that the first two options address the State's concern relative to increasing the two-thirds funding and place the matter with the local school board. The third option affords both growing and declining school districts some flexibility to deal with enrollment issues.

It is my belief that options are available to address concerns of school districts regarding revenue caps without placing an undue burden upon the State's funding of public education. I would welcome your thoughts on these suggestions. Your consideration regarding this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely



Frederic A. Stieg
Superintendent

FAS/sme

Attachment

\\DO1\VOL2\DATA\DO\FRD-SE\letter to legislators.doc

Testimony to Joint Finance Committee Hearing
Mary Quinnette Cuene, President
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College Faculty Association
Thursday, April 5, 2001

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you about the Governor's proposed budget for the Wisconsin Technical College System.

I am speaking today on behalf of the faculty of Northeast Wisconsin Technical College and WEAC, which represents approximately 3,000 faculty and staff in the WTCS. We believe that every Wisconsin citizen deserves a great technical college.

As legislators, you know the breadth of what the technical colleges do. You have asked us, as a system, to do many things. I am here today to tell you that the technical colleges are doing them:

Occupational training in hundreds of occupations, contracted services to business and industry, Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, Advanced Certificate Training to workers who already have diplomas or Associate degrees, working with At Risk high school students, Youth Options, working with the UW system on transferability issues, meeting with businesses to adapt and update programs, developing new programs including Internet and distance education courses, working with the widest mix of students and the widest age range of students and the widest ability level of students of all the educational systems. We have been asked, and we have delivered.

The staff in the technical colleges are doing all of these things – and doing them well. This system definitely is Wisconsin's gem. However, the state is going to lose this gem if you don't provide it with the resources it needs to fulfill its many missions. Because world-wide economy and business needs are constantly changing, our mission requires a constant updating of equipment and curriculum.

The WTCS needs the 4.1% increase in general state aid that the agency proposed. Funding the WTCS is an investment in our workforce, in business, in the economy, in our future. The entire budget as proposed by the agency can be funded for less than \$36 million over the biennium. This \$36 million is one of the best investments the state could make. An investment in the WTCS will, undoubtedly, produce a return. That return may be in the form of more productive employees or broader economic opportunities or higher incomes; whatever the form, the return will benefit our economy.

For the past ten years, the state has decreased its level of funding of the technical colleges. Property taxes have become a main revenue source; and, mill rates, especially in some districts, have steadily increased. You can no longer do that because it has reached a crisis level. The state must step in and contribute to this vitally important cause.

In addition, as a WEAC local, we join with other WEAC members in:

Opposing the use of WATF funds to pay for any executive items in the budget.

Urging that you remove the non-fiscal policy items from the budget. The WTCS mission is already expansive; the colleges need to be able to focus on their existing mission.

Removing the alternative certification proposal for WTCS staff. The WTCS certification system works well. It allows the system to bring in "non-teachers" already, and then provides for development in teaching and classroom management techniques and skills. We strongly opposes changes to the existing certification of WTCS instructors.

Thank you.

Mary Quinnette Cuene, President
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College Faculty Association
2740 West Mason Street
Green Bay, Wisconsin 53703

Joint Finance Committee Testimony

From John Knickerbocker

4/5/01

Joint Finance Committee Members, Thank you for taking the time to come to Northeast Wisconsin to hear how we feel about the proposed State budget.

My name is John Knickerbocker. I live in Shawano and am an employee of Cooperative Educational Service Agency 8 headquartered in Gillett. We serve 26 school districts in Northeast Wisconsin. I am the Local Vocational Education Coordinator, Educational Equity Coordinator, Service-Learning Coordinator, and Citizenship Initiative Coordinator. I am also the President-Elect of the Wisconsin Association for Leadership in Education and Work (WALEW) as well as a father of a current high school student.

To preface my remarks I need to give you some background information. First, if you are not already aware, when I refer to career and technical education, I am referring to programming sometimes still referred to as vocational education. Second, here are a few facts about our schools, the labor market, and our current system of education:

- According to Wisconsin educational statistics, it is estimated nearly 50% of high school graduates will go on to a four-year university, but only half of those will get a bachelor's degree even given ten years to finish. The rest will drop out, some due to lack of a specific career goal, some due to not being able to meet school expectations, and there are other assorted reasons.
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts that through 2005, one-third of the people who get a four-year degree **will not** be able to find college-level employment.
- Of the 147 million jobs projected to be in existence by the year 2005, nearly 80% will require at least some post-high school education, but **only 21% of jobs will require a 4-year degree.**
- There is a shortage of technicians in a wide variety of fields in Wisconsin today.
- Currently, most K-12 school districts in our region are facing declining revenues and increased costs.
- It has been projected that nearly half of the career and technical instructors in K-12 education will be retiring in the next five years, and there are not enough new teachers to replace them.
- Estimates on the ratio of students to guidance counselors in Wisconsin schools ranges between 200 to 240 students per counselor. Given roughly 180 days of school, and all the extra duties most of them face, this does not leave enough time for quality career education and counseling.

Given these facts, and weighing in Wisconsin's economic future, it would seem reasonable and wise to invest additional state dollars to:

- Drop revenue caps to allow school districts that can, to increase funding of needed programs
- Target funding to upgrade equipment/facilities, and improve programming for secondary career and technical education
- Target funding to reduce guidance workloads to allow better quality career

- education and counseling at local levels
- Provide funding for the recruitment and training of more career and technical education instructors to meet the projected demands

Benefits of these efforts would include:

- Improved career guidance through smaller student-counselor ratios will help assure placement of students in appropriate post-secondary education programs, thus saving wasted time, and money including tax supported student loans and grants
- Providing Wisconsin employers with more well-trained employees to meet the demand for skilled workers, thus a better state economy
- Improved secondary career and technical programming will provide skilled workers sooner to meet immediate and future employment demands. Both this and the above would also have the effect of increasing income tax revenues.
- By helping assure young people are well trained, and enter the most appropriate career for them, they will also benefit by finding greater satisfaction in their work, thus greater productivity.

I thank you for taking this testimony, and trust you will consider these recommendations carefully.

*John Knickerbocker
418 W. Eagle St.
Shawano, WI 54166*



John Knickerbocker
Local Vocational Education Coordinator

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SURING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

KRISTINE H. MARTIN, Ph.D., Superintendent

SURING, WISCONSIN 54174

Telephone 920-842-2178

Fax 920-842-4570

TO: Joint Finance Committee Members
FROM: Kristine H. Martin, Ph.D. *KHM*
DATE: April 5, 2001
RE: State Budget Support of Public Education

The Suring Public School District is

1. geographically large (280 square miles),
2. experiencing declining enrollment,
3. below the state average income level and above the state average equalized value,
4. proud of its student, staff, and school district community member.

From 1998-99 through 2001-02 the Suring Public School District has

1. 75 fewer students, approximately 10%,
2. reduced its budget \$518,000.00, approximately 10%,
3. reduced 5.75 staff positions, approximately 10%,
4. not filled any of the prioritized new positions requested at a cost of \$447,800. An elementary counselor remains the top priority.

In 2001-2002 the Suring Public School District anticipates \$290,000 in increased expenses and a negative revenue limit.

On behalf of the Suring Public School District I request that the members of the Joint Finance Committee through the 2001-2003 state budget continue to provide school districts the funding they need to maintain their level of programs and services or ideally provide the funding needed to enhance and expand their level of programs and services.

The Joint Finance Committee may consider the following to

1. Continue full funding of SAGE, K-3, in schools with 35% or more free and reduced lunch.
2. In districts with declining enrollment of 3% or more
 - a. provide full funding for special education students whose program is \$15,000.00 or more per year,
 - b. provide a pro-rated extension of the one year declining enrollment exemption for a second and third year,
 - c. provide that transportation costs are limited to 4% of the revenue limit. (Our district is 8% due to large size)
3. Provide an income factor in the equalization formula to address districts throughout the state with below state average income and above the state average equalized value.

The future of our children and public education in Wisconsin lies in your hands.

Thank you.

SURING PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

REVENUE LIMITS, OPERATING EXPENSES,
& FUND EQUITY PROJECTION CURRENT PROGRAM

Revenue Limits, Operating Expenses, and Fund Equity Projections

	Actual			Budgeted	Projected		
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-2002	2002-03	2003-04
Enrollment	728	694	686	655	624	583	533
Three Year Average	687	689	685	662	639	606	567
Three Year Average +/-	+22	+2	-4	-23	-23	-33	-39
Revenue Limit	\$4,594,615	\$4,784,515	\$4,923,720	\$5,022,160	\$5,013,660	\$4,964,948	\$4,824,846
\$ +/-	+\$284,125	+\$189,900	+\$139,205	+\$98,440	(\$9,000)	(\$48,712)	(\$140,102)
% +/-	+6.59 %	+4.13 %	+2.92 %	+2.0 %	(.01 %)	(1.0 %)	(2.9 %)
Estimated Budget Increases					\$290,000	\$271,200	\$295,562
Estimated one year Declining enrollment exemption			\$21,470	\$125,407	\$129,538	\$196,710	\$234,766
Annual Shortfall				(\$48,170)	(\$367,170)	(\$376,082)	(\$497,834)
Cumulative Shortfall					(\$367,170)	(\$743,252)	(\$1,241,086)

Relationship Between the Revenue Limit and QEO

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	Projected 2001-02
Revenue Limit			6.59%	4.13%	2.92%	2.0%	-.01%
QEO			3.8%	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%	3.8% + lane movement

Special Education Costs and State Aid

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	Projected 2001-02
Spec. ed. cost	\$468,008	\$515,558	\$589,680	\$658,949	\$695,557	\$802,479	\$834,578
+/- cost		+\$47,550	+\$74,122	+\$69,269	+\$36,608	+\$106,530	+\$32,099
+/-%		+10.16%	+14.38%	+11.75	5.56%	+15.32%	+4.00%
Spec. ed. reimb	\$304,867	\$366,147	\$308,481	\$207,397	\$214,568	\$234,050	\$256,793
State Aid		+\$61,280	(\$57,666)	(\$101,089)	+\$7,171	+\$19,482	+\$22,743
+/-%		+20.10%	(15.75%)	(32.77%)	3.46%	9.08%	9.7%

Special ed. cost 1995-96 to 2001-02 78% increase in special education costs

Special ed. state aid 1995-96 to 201-02 -16% decrease in special education state aids

From 1995-96 to 2000-01 the percentage of students enrolled in special education has remained stable.

Health Insurance Monthly Premium Annual Increase

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Monthly Prem	\$510	\$530	\$543	\$568	\$616	\$686	\$809
Annual Increase	4%	4%	2%	4%	8%	11.3%	18%

1995-96 to 2001-02=59% inc. in family health premium

Heating Costs

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Heating Costs				\$22,329	\$24,000	\$30,000	\$60,000
% increase					7.5%	25%	50%

SURING PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Summary of Enrollment, Budget, and Staffing

Change in Student Enrollment from the Prior Year

	K-5	6-8	9-12	Total	Enrollment
1998-99	-13	-19	-2	-34	694
1999-00	0	-15	+7	-8	686
2000-01	-30	+2	-5	-33	655
Total change over three (3) years	-43	- 32	0	75	

Change in Budget – Reductions

1998-99 and 1999-2000	\$320,000.00
from 2000-01 and 2001-02	<u>192,170.00</u>
Total Reductions	\$512,170.00

Change in Staffing – Reductions

1.0 elementary	1.0 aide
.5 SAGE	1.25 food service
1.0 grade 7	
<u>1.0</u> Title I study skills	
3.5 certified positions	<u>2.25</u> non-certified positions

Other Reductions

\$85,000	new/replacement equipment
10,000	sites (maintenance)
20,000	late transportation
20,000	software
4,000	interest expense
7,000	substitutes
30,000	supplies, materials, textbooks, athletics, student & staff travel
35,400	repayment of TRITON loan

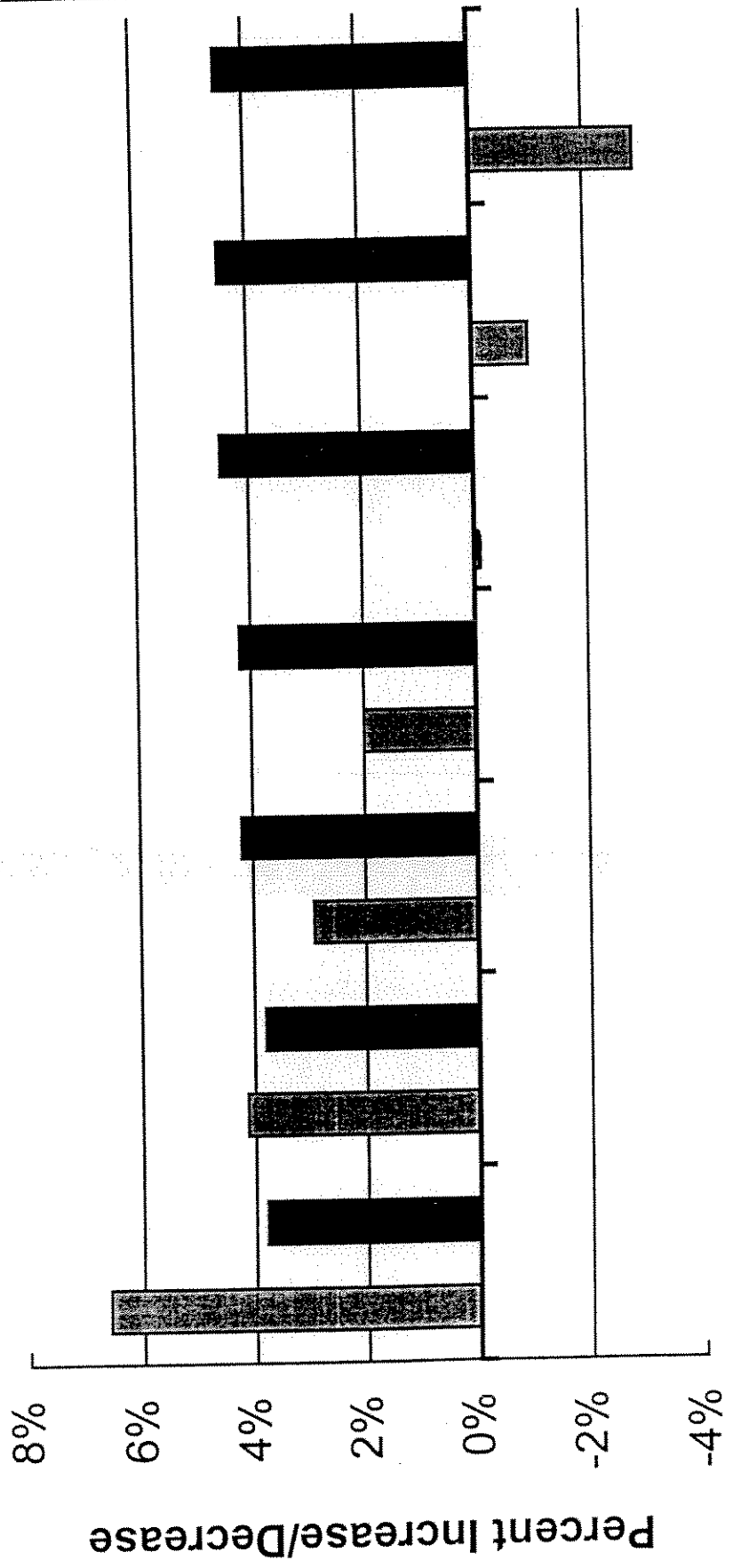
From 1997-98 to 2000-2001:

Enrollment (75 students) has decreased or 10%
 Budget (\$518,000.00) has been reduced or 10%
 Staff reduced (3.0 certified) and 2.25 (non-certified) or 10%.

	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04
Revenue Limit	+\$98,440 (2.0%)	-\$9,000 (-0.1%)	-\$48,712 (-1.0%)	-\$140,102 (-2.9%)
Estimated Budget				
Increases	\$270,000	\$290,000	\$271,200	\$295,000
SAGE +/-	+8,000	-\$20,000	-\$8,000	-\$17,000
One Year Declining Enrollment Exemption	\$21,470	\$125,407	\$129,538	\$196,710
Uses of Fund Equity				
Annual	(48,170)	(367,170)	(376,082)	(497,834)
Cumulative		(367,170)	(743,252)	(1,241,086)

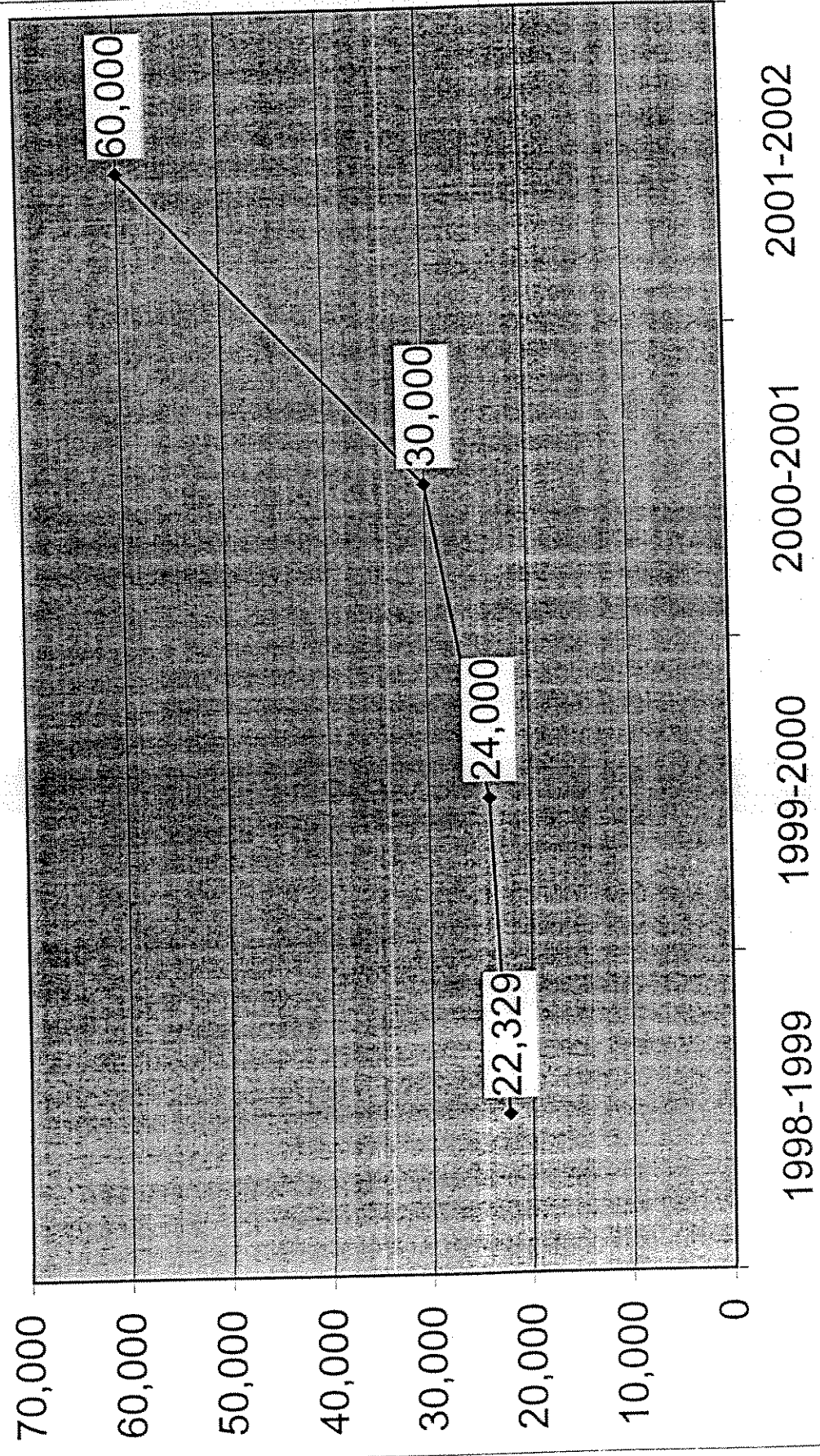
Revenue Limits and QEO

1997-98 1998-99 1999-00 2000-01 2001-02 2002-03 2003-04

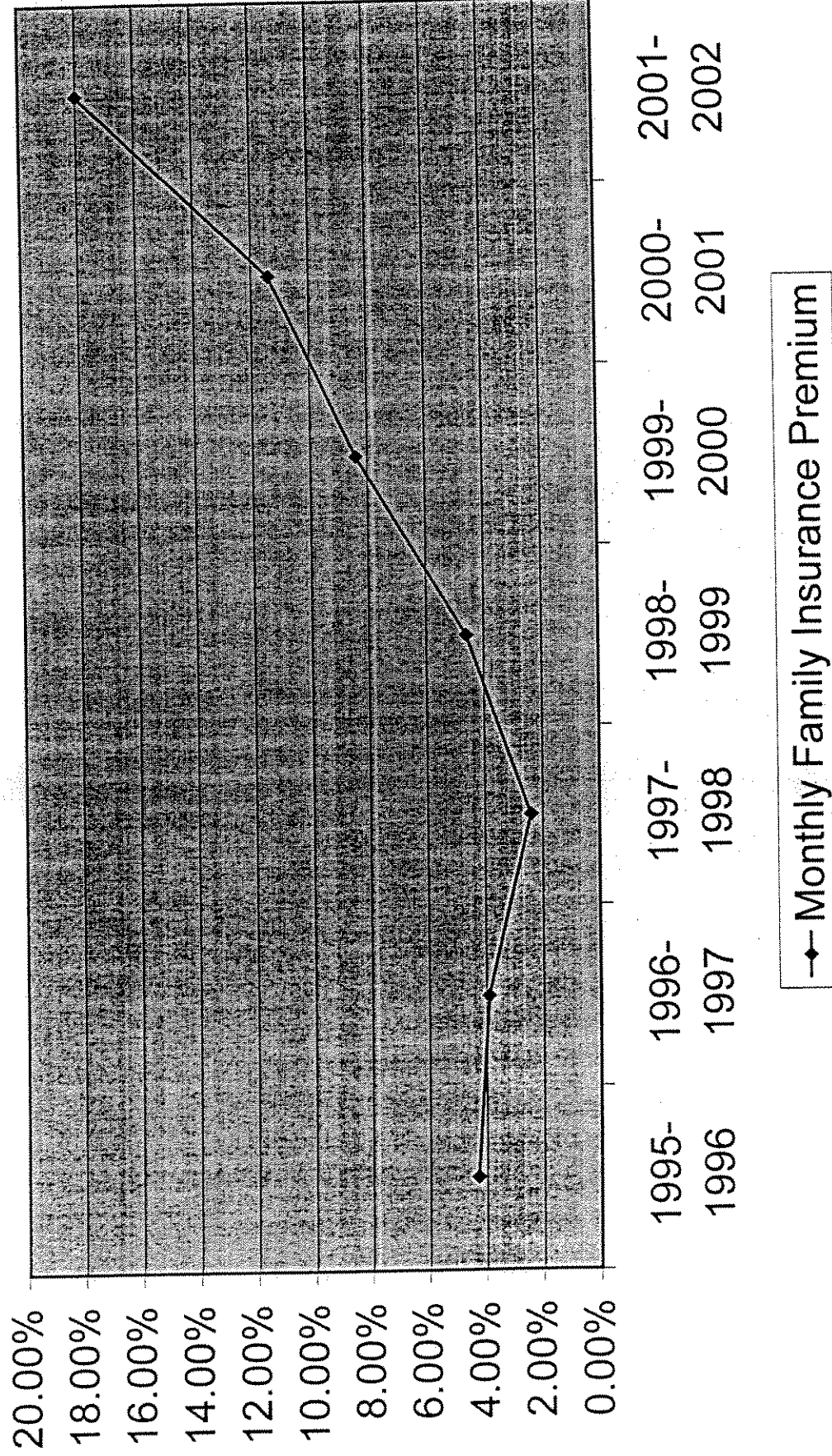


Revenue Limit % Increase/Decrease
 QEO

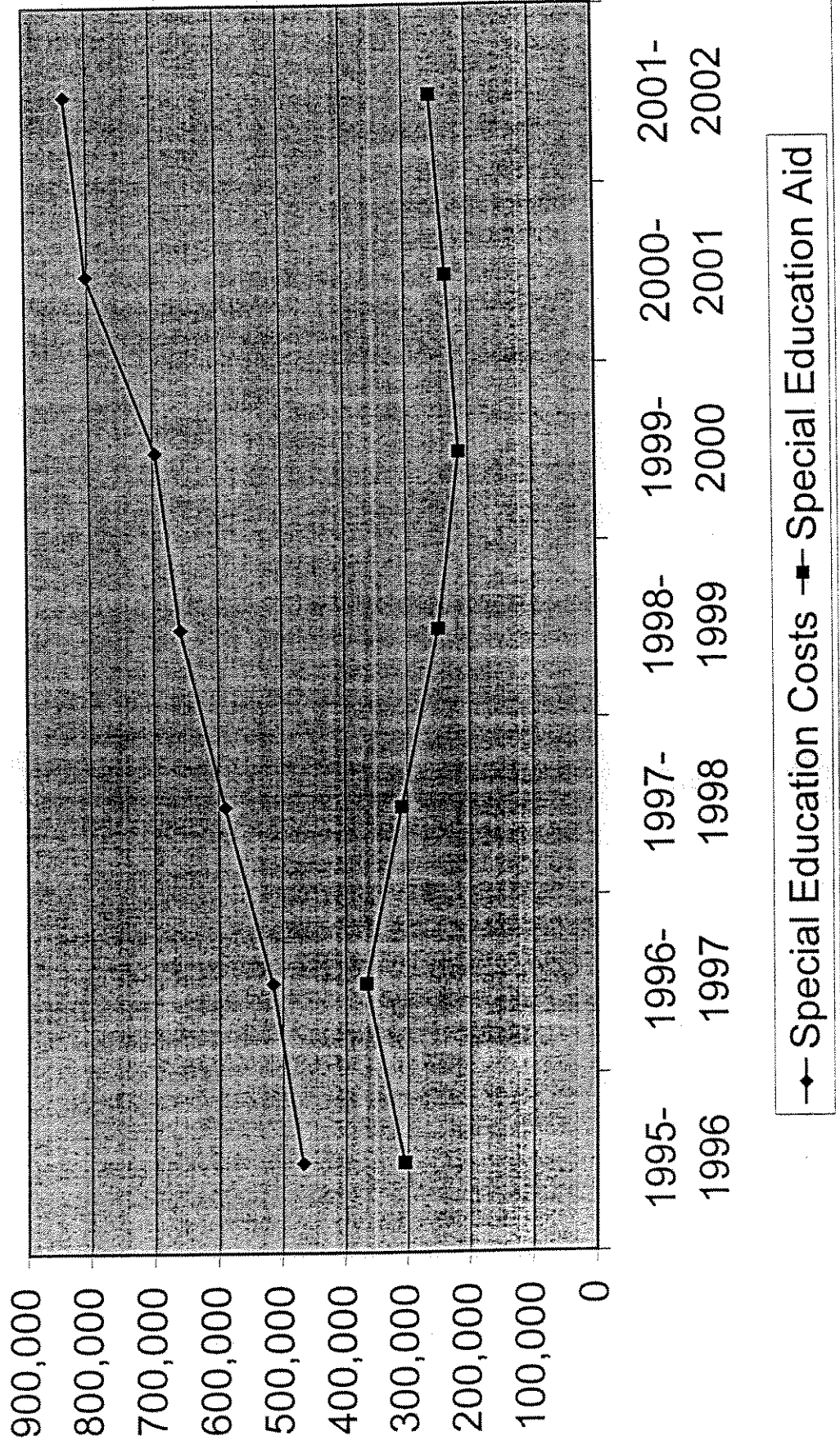
Heating Costs



Insurance Premium Increases



Special Education Costs



Suring Public School District Equalization Aid Summary

Aid Formula Components

	Actual '97-'98	Actual '98-'99	Actual '99-'00	October '00 Estimate '00-'01
DISTRICT Valuation (Tid-Out)	\$199,356,960	\$226,107,671	\$251,901,083	\$287,293,166
DISTRICT Members	677	706	683	665
DISTRICT Valuation per Member	\$294,471	\$320,266	\$368,816	\$432,020
STATE Primary Aid Valuation Guarantee	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
STATE Secondary Aid Valuation Guarantee	\$625,199	\$676,977	\$765,441	\$874,011
STATE Tertiary Aid Valuation Guarantee	\$247,530	\$263,246	\$280,880	\$303,298
Primary Aid %	85.28%	83.99%	81.56%	78.40%
Secondary Aid %	52.90%	52.69%	51.82%	50.57%
Tertiary Aid %	-18.96%	-21.66%	-31.31%	-42.44%

Aid Computations

STATE Aidable Primary Cost Ceiling	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
STATE Aidable Secondary Cost Ceiling	\$6,102	\$6,285	\$6,430	\$6,593
DISTRICT Shared Costs per Member	\$6,862	\$6,778	\$7,133	\$7,416
Additional Costs Below Maximum Ceiling per Member	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Additional Costs Below Maximum Ceiling	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
PRIMARY Aid Per Member	\$852.76	\$839.87	\$815.59	\$783.99
SECONDARY Aid Per Member	\$2,698.94	\$2,784.76	\$2,813.64	\$2,798.06
TERTIARY Aid Per Member	(\$144.22)	(\$106.88)	(\$220.24)	(\$374.62)
TOTAL Aid Per Member	\$3,407.49	\$3,517.75	\$3,408.99	\$3,207.44
TOTAL AID	\$2,306,868	\$2,483,529	\$2,328,339	\$2,132,945
TOTAL Aid As a % of Shared Costs	49.65%	51.90%	47.79%	43.25%
Aid Adjustment			\$202	\$1,140
Milwaukee Parent Choice			(\$14,414)	(\$15,670)
Milwaukee Charter Program			(\$745)	(\$5,450)
NET AID			\$2,313,383	\$2,112,965

① My Name is Jeff Meissner - I am speaking against Revenue Caps and current funding formulas determined by enrollments.

② I have 25 years experience as a teacher in Wisconsin. In 2 generations of my family and my wife's family, we have 160 years experience working ~~as~~ as educators. ~~In our state~~ - please listen to us!

③ I wish to praise state funding for school facility improvements. In Marinette, we recently greatly improved our schools structurally - yet, how ironic that revenue caps & enrollment based funding threatens the very existence of the programs in the new facilities.

④ Chin drop story ^{Recently,} Ch. 2 sportscaster was reporting on Miller Park - he was asked ~~what~~ what the reporter at the Park said & he just dropped his chin and said nothing. ~~That's~~ (everyone laughed)

But, How can we be proud & excited about Miller Park + Packer Stadium, while our schools are suffering so much under Revenue Caps ~~and~~ and enrollment based funding. We should be ~~ashamed~~ ashamed of our society's priorities. Wouldn't it be wonderful if our students came to school each day & their chins dropped due to extraordinary facilities and extraordinary educational programming?

Sincerely, Jeff Meissner
N1636 Shore Dr.

Phon # 715-732-0647

To whom it may concern,

I am a fifth grader from Niagara Elementary. I hope you'll listen to me when I say this. I think that all kids should have the right to get a higher education. "Take off the caps for the kids that care." Please do it not just for me, but do it for all of us.

From,
Jennifer

To whom it may concern

I go to school at Niagara Elementry. Even though I won't be here when everyone else is in high school because my dads in the Army and we move alot. The point is are education is in jeperdy here because you don't think that our education is important. Who is going to be taking care of the future. But if you take away our education how are we suppose to know what to do when we're President of the United States or how to take care of you when your sick! I hope that you will reconsider what you are about to do.

Sincerely,

Melissa

5th grade
Niagara Elementry

Highlights

February, 2001 Volume 1

Hats off to the Northland Pines Student Council



Students from the Northland Pines District were joined by students from Stevens Pointe, Superior, Merrill, Milwaukee, and other school districts at the Capitol January 24th to rally against the revenue caps. All of these students came from districts where administration and students have taken a lead in showing their concern for the future of their schools.

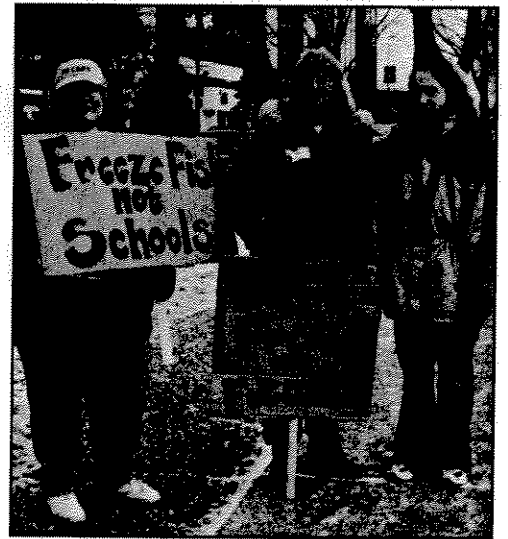
Northland Pines students and students from several other districts around the state set up visual displays in the Capitol rotunda to show the devastation of revenue caps on their districts. One part of the Northland Pines displays was a flyer which is included in this newsletter.

What a lesson in citizenship. The students witnessed, first hand, picketing around the Capitol square and a rally at noon on the Capitol steps. This was followed by a five hour hearing to receive the evidence presented by administrators, parents, and school employees from around the state.

The picketing, a vital demonstration necessary to raise the awareness and get attention, was lead by NTU members from Tomahawk, Rhinelander, and Phillips, along with MTI teachers, and members from CARE (Committee for Alternative Revenues in Education). Joining them on the picket line were Marty Reynolds (87 Assembly District Representative), the former WEAC Director of Collective Bargaining, Bob West, and staff.

A rally at noon featured Randy Kunsch, Phillips CARE organizer, and several speakers from Milwaukee, Racine, parents, former State Superintendent Bert Grover, and the presidents from WEAC and WFT.

In addressing the crowd, Randy Kunsch stated, "If our state can find ways to fund Miller



Park, Lambeau Field, and our highway system adequately, I am sure we can find a fair and equitable way to fund our schools." He went on to ask, "Is it just a coincidence that the only property taxes to be lowered under revenue controls have been those of business and industry?" If revenue caps are such a good thing, Randy asked if the Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce would ask their members to put future increases in their services and products to a vote by the public.

"We've got to get militant and angry," former State Superintendent of Public Instruction Bert Grover told the group. "Raise hell for children, rather than corn."



Arbitrator Vernon Awards for District - The Rib Lake educational support personnel received their first contract this past week as Arbitrator Gil Vernon ruled in favor of the district on the remaining issues. Among the items sent to arbitration were several issues concerning bus drivers, fair share, and the salary schedule. While both offers contain the same top rate on the salary schedule, the union had a six-step salary schedule and the employer had a seven-step salary schedule with a lower starting wage.

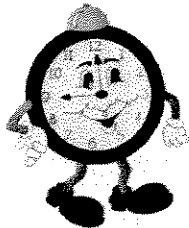
This contract covers the 1999-2002 school years. Major changes were achieved regarding access to benefits and the contribution level that were not there prior to organizing.

Congratulations Rib Lake ESP on your first collective bargaining agreement!!

LUHS Secretaries and Aides Organize - By an overwhelming margin, the LUHS secretaries and aides are the latest unit to organize and affiliate with the Northern Educational Support Team (NEST). This is an effort by the secretaries and aides to stem the tide of rollbacks that they have been dealing with in the absence of a collective bargaining agreement. At the present time, they are putting together a bargaining team and package. They will be prepared to enter negotiations with the employer within the month.

Congratulations LUHS Secretaries and Aides on a successful election!!

Northwest Staff Recommend WEAC Bargaining Goals - Contrary to seepage out of Knob Hill the Northwest Staff, at a recent statewide staff meeting approved recommending WEAC Bargaining Goals to their UniServ councils. These councils, in turn, are to recommend the goals to their local affiliates.

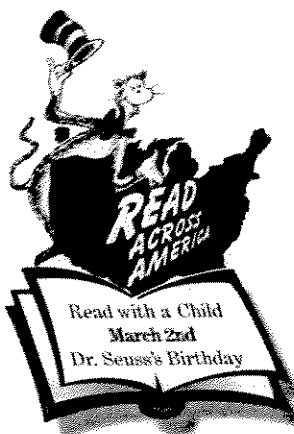


DATED MATERIAL - The following is dated information necessary for those members interested in being delegates to the WEAC RA or NEA RA. Please pay particular attention to the dates.

NTU Delegates for the WEAC RA - The WEAC RA will be held in Green Bay, April 27-29, 2001, at the Green Bay Regency. NTU delegates will be housed at the Days Inn-City Centre, 406 N Washington St at Main, (920 435 4484). NTU will pay lodging (based on double occupancy), meals, and mileage. If you are interested in being a delegate, please contact your local president by March 16. (NEST members, please call the NTU-Central office)

April 10 NEA Delegate Deadline - The NEA RA will be held in Los Angeles, California, from July 2- 7, 2001. If you are interested in attending as a delegate, please call your NTU office as soon as possible. Delegate report forms must be into the WEAC office by April 10.

Any member in good standing with their local, NTU, WEAC and NEA are eligible for delegate status.



Read Across America Bookmarks and Stickers

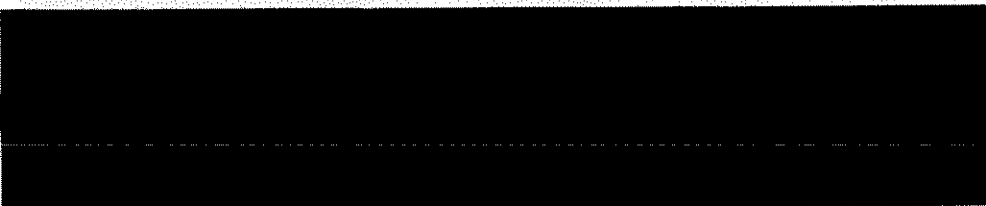
NEA's Read Across America celebration is planned for March 2, 2001. WEAC is in the process of printing the free bookmarks and stickers. They will be mailed out to those who ordered them as soon as they arrive in our office.

Does your administration complain positions are hard to fill?

Before you spend a second feeling sorry for them, ask them what kind of recruitment package they offer to employees.

1. Do they offer the new employee \$1,000 in cash at the end of a one week pre-school orientation period?
“We know you are just out of college and are probably strapped for money. We want to help you a bit before your regular pay checks start and give you a chance to get your feet on the ground in the school and community.”
2. Do they offer the new employee the help of a mentor for the first year?
3. Do they assure the new employee they won't be required to be involved in extra curricular activities the first year?
4. Do they assure the new employee that the mentor will be available for them and that the mentor, also, will not have any extra curricular activities?
5. Do they assure the new employee of the confidentiality that will exist between them and the mentor?
6. Do they assure the new employee that the union contract provides for a lighter load the first year?
7. Do they assure the new employee that the union contract provides for smaller classes the first year?
8. Do they assure the new employee that the union contract provides adequate prep time within the student day?
9. Do they explain to the new employee the “Professional Development Package” that contains:
 - a) prepaid tuition of six or more credits per year, forgiven upon satisfactory completion;
 - b) a training account of \$1,000 per year that can be used for attendance at conferences or conventions;
 - c) petty expense account of \$500 reimbursable with receipts;
 - d) that all professional development will advance them on the traditional salary schedule.
10. Do they explain to the new employee that they have developed with the union a new schedule for members going under the new licensing structure of \$35,000 for beginning teachers, \$50,000 for regular licensed teachers, and \$65,000 for Master teachers and that all rates will be increased annually by the cost of living?
11. Do they share the benefits guaranteed under the collective bargaining agreement with the new employee, such as:
 - fully paid Health Insurance
 - fully paid Dental Insurance
 - fully paid Long Term Care
 - fully paid Life Insurance (\$50,000)
 - fully paid Long Term Disability
 - qualified Retirement package (WRS)
12. Do they share that the union contract provides for two or more personal days, no questions asked?
13. Do they share that in addition to personal days, the contract provides liberal sick leave provisions with up to 10 days per year for family care not covered by the Family Medical Leave Act?
14. Do they suggest that should the new employee like the community and stay, the district will provide them with a post-retirement package of at least 10 years of pre-paid medical insurance?
15. Do they explain to the new employee during pre-school inservice that numerous lunches and breakfasts will be held to honor them and acquaint them with civic organizations, community members, union leaders, and staff?
16. Do they explain they have a list of qualified child care providers on retainer who can be called in emergencies?

These are things that new employees leaving college should be asking prospective employers.



Activities Students are Involved In

- Operation Snowball- Retreat for Middle School Youth
 - Salvation Army Bell Ringing
 - Volunteering At the Children's Museum
 - Beautifying Our School
 - SADD- Students Against Destructive Decisions
 - Yellow Ribbon- Suicide Help
 - Peer Mediation
 - Teen Court- Alternative Juvenile Prosecution
 - Peer Tutoring
 - National Honor Society
 - BCT- Building Community Together
 - Bone Marrow Drive
 - Blood Mobile
-and various other things

Every year students from Northland Pines are doing amazing things. We are the people that are going to be making a difference in the world in twenty years. With all of this potential that we have, we ask you just one question:

Don't you think we're worth it?

The state provides an ample amount of aid (67%), but because of the revenue cap created by the state of Wisconsin, districts, such as ours, do not receive enough state aid to keep the school running as well as it could. In theory we should be able to get money for our schools through referendum, but in the past three years, every vote put out to the public has failed. The people of our community don't want to have to spend more money on education when they are already spending millions per year on things that they have no control over. The only issues that they are allowed to vote upon are school referendums. They can't say no to a brand new multi-million dollar jail, so they say no to what they can, the students' future. In Illinois the projected prisoner rate is determined by the literacy rate of the second grade students around the state. With this connection between crime and education, is it wiser to spend more money on prisons or to invest more into education?

You Decide

CUTS

(Made in the Past Five Years)

Curriculum and Instruction Director and Secretary
 Children At-Risk Coordinator
 District Social Worker
 Gifted and Talented Coordinator
 AODA Prevention Coordinator
 High School IMC Aide
 High School Office Aide
 All Study Hall Aides
 Middle School Locker Room Aide
 Middle School LD Aide
 Eagle River Reading Recovery
 Technology Coordinator
 Building and Grounds Maintenance Budget
 Activity Bus
 All Field Trips
 Retiree Student Assistance Program
 Student Accident Insurance
 Textbook account
 Professional Development/Employee Travel
 Breakfast Program
 Reduced Middle School Co-curricular Programs
 Unemployment Compensation Account Reduction
 Summer School
 High School CD Aide
 District Hearing Impaired Interpreter



OPINIONS

"Why are teachers the only professionals that are subject to caps on their salaries? Why are educators being discriminated against?"

Northland Pines Teacher

"If people could vote whether to have more state funding for schools or jails, schools would win every time."

Concerned Community Member

"The caps have made it difficult to pay for extra-curriculars since they are so expensive now."

NPHS Student

"I don't think people realize the strain it puts on students when the funds are not available for them. Instead of just having to deal with getting through high school successfully, they are burdened with higher fees and the threats of their extra curricular activities being taken away. That is a shame!"

Northland Pines Teacher

"It's great to have my license, but it's too bad that I can't drive to school because of the \$100 dollar parking fee."

NPHS Student

"The idea of the cap was in the right spot, but it must be realized that high property value does not equate high income. We are a low income area, but because of our property we don't receive much aid."

Concerned Community Member

Increased Fees

1. Co-curriculars- \$35/activity (from \$5)
2. Driver's Education- \$320 (from \$90)
3. School Parking Pass- \$100 (from \$20)

Mission Statement

THE NORTHLAND PINES SCHOOL DISTRICT IS DEDICATED TO THE EXCELLENCE OF EVERY STUDENT BY FOSTERING A COMMUNITY COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE, RESPECT, HONESTY, AND INTEGRITY.

Our district has been very dedicated to our education, but if the budget laws do not change the quality of education will deteriorate.

Do you believe in Revenue Caps or local control? They don't co-exist very well.

Our district has not been seriously impacted by Revenue caps – yet.

But the signs are definitely visible.

We don't want to end up like things are in Florence – and other places.

If you can't remove Revenue caps totally in this budget cycle, then PLEASE give us a little flexibility by approving the 2% discretionary local decision as advocated by WASB.

An equal concern is adequate funding for Special Education. You mandate more but send us less. That is simply unacceptable.



Dennis P. Karman
400 Jefferson Street
Peshtigo, WI 54157-1024

Member Peshtigo Board of Education
WASB Policy & Resolutions Committee 2000-2001
1999-2000

Joint Finance Committee Hearing Testimony
Peshtigo, Wisconsin
April 5, 2001

My name is Jan Dooley, and I am a business education teacher, school-to-work coordinator, youth apprenticeship coordinator, and newly-designated project coordinator for school reform efforts for the School District of Florence County.

Three years ago, our district embarked upon an exciting journey. We wrote grants for comprehensive school reform for each of our two elementary schools, and we were fortunate to be two of the first 20 schools in the state of Wisconsin to receive such grants. In the past three years, with the guidance of professional consultants, teaching and learning in our elementary classrooms has been transformed. Today, we see our students actively engaged in their learning in every classroom, where they are excited about learning and where they are taking responsibility for their own learning. No longer are students passive participants. Our students are learning and applying knowledge in authentic and meaningful ways. We also see teachers speaking a common language and sharing a common vision.

In January of this year, we submitted applications to receive two additional Comprehensive School Reform grants, recognizing that we must continue this powerful process of change at our middle school and high school levels. We recently received notification that we are being awarded both grants. Thus, we will be one of the first school districts in the state to undergo systemic change K-12. These are exciting times, or are they?

How do we sustain our reform efforts? What we are discovering is that we are becoming the training ground for our Michigan neighbors just across the border. We invest in the training; they reap the benefits of such training. Our teachers who are trained in innovative teaching methods are being lured to the Michigan schools because they will receive \$5,000-\$15,000 more

per year by just crossing the state line. Translating the additional money to the life teaching span of the typical educator, we are talking about \$150,000 to \$450,000 more. Do we blame our teachers for leaving us? Moreover, our neighboring district administrators love us.

During the last three years, we have had two of our staff members trained as reform trainers in order to help sustain the process. Having two in-house trainers sounds wonderful; however, one of the trainers is our Library Media Specialist, and our district cannot afford a library aide to supervise the library in order for this trainer to work with new teachers. The second trainer is our elementary principal, whose supervision responsibilities include the K-5 Florence Elementary School, K-6 Hillcrest Elementary School, and 6-8 Florence Middle School. How much training can be accomplished when you are supervising three schools, and one of them is 15 miles away?

Our initial three-year grant period is about to end. In order to bring the process to the point where it is institutionalized, we will be hiring the professional consultant for 15 days next year to continue to work with staff and to train administrators in effective administration of the process. In order to support bringing the consultant back, across-the-board cuts have to be made in areas which support the process in other ways, such as materials and supplies for class projects, technology, field trips, conferences, etc. Making such cuts breeds unrest because all are vital to the foundation of systemic change.

What can be done to assist us, as we struggle to find a way to not only bring systemic change to our district, but to have it become a vibrant process for learning? All children need and deserve a great school. We have a powerful opportunity to create such a school; but, in the end, will it ever be all that it could be?

Thank for your time.

HC 3 Box 121
Florence, WI 54121
(715) 528-5727

April 4, 2001

To Members of the Joint Finance Committee:

Without a doubt, revenue caps have had and are having a profoundly negative impact on the Florence County School District. I am a father of two girls, ages 10 and 7. Every year, the Florence County School District has been forced to make cuts in their education. Since my oldest daughter started school the following programs have been eliminated at the elementary, middle and high school level:

- ◆ Elementary art
- ◆ Elementary guidance
- ◆ Gifted and talented
- ◆ Middle school foreign language
- ◆ Auto mechanics

Additionally, every year there is also discussion regarding eliminating elementary music and physical education.

For my children and the children of Florence County, these program cuts due to revenue caps are not acceptable. Children need a quality education to compete in today's society. Our communities and state need well educated children to lead us into the future. Revenue caps are not allowing our school district to provide a well-rounded education for the children of Florence County.

As Michigan is only less than 20 miles away, our district is constantly competing with Michigan school districts for quality teachers. As revenue caps have caused our school district to fail to offer adequate salaries to our teachers, we have lost many outstanding teachers to neighboring Michigan districts. Wisconsin children, the children of Florence County, should not receive a lessor education than the children living 20 miles away in Michigan. However, due to revenue caps, this is becoming the reality in Florence.

I have heard that unless there is a change in the school funding formula that the Florence County School District will have to close its doors in April of 2003. What does the state of Wisconsin plan on doing as the Florence County School District and other districts throughout the state are forced to close school due to lack of funding? Is bankrupting a school district what revenue caps were set out to accomplish? If not, is the state looking at changing the funding source for public education? If revenue caps stay in place and the Florence County School District is forced to eliminate more programs or continues to lose quality teachers due to depressed salaries, my children will not remain in Wisconsin public schools. They will be students of the Michigan public schools as we will become residents of Michigan. I have always believed that the Wisconsin public school system was a system that valued excellence and quality. With the gutting of public education caused by state imposed revenue caps, I now longer believe Wisconsin truly values education. Reverse this trend and fund public education by lifting revenue caps.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Gatzow

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April 4, 2001

To Members of the Joint Finance Committee:

As someone who attended public school in Wisconsin and has lived in Wisconsin all of my life, I have always believed that Wisconsin has had the finest educational system in the nation. Since witnessing the slow atrophy caused by revenue caps of the educational system in Florence County, I now have serious doubts. I am a parent of two elementary aged children, ages ten and seven. My husband and I value education and realize that our children's future is dependent on the education they receive. Revenue caps has severely hindered their education and without significant changes in school funding, the educational system in Florence County will only continue to erode.

The Florence County School District has been forced to make numerous and excessive cuts in the educational programming they offer due to revenue caps. Elementary art, guidance, and gifted and talented have been eliminated in addition to middle school foreign language and high school auto mechanics. Supply budgets are reduced, district funded field trips eliminated, user fees for athletics added, and fees for classes such as drivers education have been raised all as an attempt to survive the devastation of revenue caps.

As I read the papers, I have become aware of the state's desire to implement high stakes testing. Under revenue caps, the Florence County School District has no money available to offer remedial education to those children who need it in order to not only pass the high stakes testing but to succeed in life. How cruel it is to set the bar high, tell the student they have to reach that bar, but provide no source of funding to assist those that are struggling in reaching that bar.

As a community that borders Michigan, the Florence County School District has lost many outstanding teachers to Michigan school districts. This is mainly because revenue caps have not allowed our district to offer our teachers the salary increases they deserve. They are lured away by the Michigan districts that offer \$5,000 to \$10,000 more in salary. The children of Florence County deserve to have quality educators and to receive an education equivalent or better than their counterparts 15 miles away in Michigan. Revenue caps do not allow this to happen.

In discussing its financial situation, the Florence County School District has stated that unless revenue caps are lifted or the methods of funding schools are changed, it will run out of money during the 2002-2003 school year and will be forced to close its doors in April. What does the state plan to do if the Florence County School District is forced to close its doors early? I sincerely hope that you have an answer to this question and that the problem of the lack of school funding is solved long before the Florence School District is forced to close its doors. If something does not change in how public schools are funded in Wisconsin, if revenue caps are not lifted, the one certainty that I do know is that the Gatzow children will no longer be attending a Wisconsin public school as the Gatzow family will no longer be living in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,



Monica Gatzow