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Good ^{afternoon} ~~morning~~, my name is Dana McClain-Kelly. I am the parent of two children (grades 4 & 6) who presently attend St. Leo Catholic Urban Academy in Milwaukee. It is because of Choice that I am able to send my children to St. Leo.

As a parent, I am responsible to make the best possible decisions for my children. Choosing the school that they attend is one, if not the most important task of all at this time. I chose to put my children in St. Leo to give them an opportunity to receive a better education.

For the past four years, I can see the academic growth in my children. Both girls are above average students in all subjects. They are challenged, and never limited to mediocracy. St. Leo addresses the total child, mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually. Even though St. Leo is located in the inner city of Milwaukee, I have no problem entrusting my children to the staff and faculty. When my girls walk into the doors of the school each morning, I know that I have made the right decision, because the staff and faculty at St. Leo are going to take excellent care of my most important resources, my children. Without choice I would not be able to afford this much needed education.

Thank-you

My name is Jesse Mattner. I am a first semester sophomore at the UW-Madison. I previously attended Lawrence University in Appleton, WI. Coming from a small private liberal arts school to a massive public liberal arts school, I think I offer a unique perspective on the UW-system and its financing. I transferred to Madison for three reasons: money, quality of education, and culture. I currently receive the maximum allotment of financial aid both from the system and from the federal government. I work double full time throughout the summers to pay for my education and I fear that many students in my same situation may soon be priced out of an education.

I was wary of the quality of the education I'd receive from Madison in comparison to my education at Lawrence. However, since I've been here, I can honestly say that my education has been far better than at Lawrence. The experiences that I've had thus far are unparalleled. But, once again, change is in the air. This is due to insufficient funding for the Madison Initiative and it is due to insufficient funding for students drawn to the university. In a written testimony from Brad Ludwig, he states that every dollar spent on education in this state has been returned ten fold to the economy. The numbers speak for themselves. By not funding the excellent hiring initiatives and student funding initiatives, the Governor must realize that he is turning the best Institute of higher education in Wisconsin from an Institution of brilliance to a status quo school.

Finally, Madison is arguably the most intriguing collection of cultures and attitudes I've ever seen. The out of class learning experiences are phenomenal and I truly feel that what I learn about life is a part of my higher education. If so, government funding to this valuable portion of my education is dwindling. Let me rephrase, it is not happening. The PEOPLE program, Plan 2008, and the Madison Initiative were all extremely underfunded reflecting our Governor's commitment to creating a cultural education. Testifying with me today are:

Here's a heart-felt letter from a student of color: **Jayson pope**

I walked into the cafeteria for dinner tonight. It was a usual night. I wanted to catch a bite to eat before hitting the books. Like I said, there was nothing unusual about the night.

I had just spent my entire day at the Plan 2008 Campus Forum. It was an entire day spent discussing issues of diversity on campus. So there was one thing on my mind as I walked into the cafeteria: diversity.

As I walked in, I took special notice of who was there. And, as I stood in line, something hit me. I was the only student of color in the entire cafeteria. Keep in mind that it was dinner time... which is when the cafeteria is the most crowded. But still, I was the only student of color in the entire cafeteria.

Then I approached the serving line and did see a couple other minority students. I should have felt a little better, but I only felt worse. You see, there were four students serving the food that night. All four students were students of color. I didn't feel better.

I began to realize that the campus I came to is not the one I am at. At the campus I came to, you don't have to search to find students of color. At the campus I came to, I am not the only student of color in the cafeteria. At the campus I came to, students of color don't have to worry about being the only minority student in an all-white world.

As a student, a student of color, I ask that you, the leaders of our state, help make UW-Madison into the school that so many students of color dream it to be. Make UW-Madison a place where you don't have to search to find students of color.

Plan 2008 aims to make UW-Madison a place where I don't have to worry about being the only student of color in the cafeteria. Fund Plan 2008 and make UW-Madison into the campus that I came to.

Jason Davis:

In the light of several events that have been detrimental to the UW Madison's campus climate. These unfortunate incidents will successfully dissuade prospective students of color from attending the University thus the already small pool of applicants will diminish to even smaller levels. We need to remedy the problem of uniformity. We have a campus in which students like myself feel isolated and cloistered because of the scarcity of students with similar cultural backgrounds. The PEOPLE program is the best possible solution to this quandary. Though it is not a solve-all, I repeat it is meant to augment other recruitment services. With the proper funding it can substantially increased student of color enrollment. I worked as a counselor with the PEOPLE program last summer. The funding was insufficient for the type of training and experience these students deserve. The students were cognizant of the fact and had their hopes faltered in attending the university. The amount of money allotted to the program will reflect the student's outlook for enrollment. The program is also too narrow allowing for the participation for a majority of African Americans where as more funding would allow for recruitment of students in cities such as Chicago or Minneapolis with a more diverse pool of students. When you think about funding for PEOPLEP, think about the tremendous positive effect it could have on the campus climate as a whole and students like me.

Testimony of
Maria Pelzer, student
WISPIRG, vice chair

April 11, 2001

Good Morning. My name is Maria Pelzer. I am a student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison majoring in entomology and biological aspects of conservation. I am also the vice-chair of the Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group (WISPIRG) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. WISPIRG is non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting democracy, protecting the environment and protecting consumers, with about 15,000 citizen members across the state and student chapters at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I am here today to speak about Governor McCallum's budget and the burden it puts on students and higher education.

As a full-time student here at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I find the governor's dedication to education appalling. In my three years here at the University, I have continually had to find sources of financial aid and am currently working over twenty hours a week to fund my education. I can hardly believe that a state that claims to be the nation's "Education State," as stated by former Governor Thompson in his State of the State address a short while ago, shows so little support in funding education in the new budget. If tuition increases this next year and financial aid stays stagnant, how many hours a week will students like myself have to work to afford their education? And how many students will no longer even be able to afford their education?

The lack of funding of the UW-system, which will drive tuition up, in addition to the lack of increase in financial aid will cause many current and incoming students to be unable to afford higher education. I am also disappointed in the Governor's failure to fund programs such as the Madison Initiative, continuing the partnership between the state, students, and private funds to pay tuition, and diversity programs.

It is clear that education is not a priority based on Governor McCallum's proposed budget. We cannot think about improving our state if we fail to invest in the future leaders at the public universities in our state. I urge the state to commit to higher education and the future by increasing financial aid when there is an increase in tuition and funding programs like the Madison Initiative and diversity programs in the UW-system. Thank you.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Missy Webber and I am an out-of-state student attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I am a freshman here and am very concerned with tuition and diversity on this campus. My highschool was 3 times as diverse as this university and my highschool was considered to have a lack of diversity. That's pretty pathetic. UW-Madison is a joke amongst all of my friends and family back home as being a sad excuse for a diverse environment. That's unacceptable. Diversity, being influenced by a variety of viewpoints and ideas and cultures I otherwise would not have been exposed to, makes me a well rounded person. That's why it's important we start doing something to increase diversity. But underfunding or simply not funding diversity programs isn't going to help anything.

My second concern is tuition. I don't care if you are in state, out of state, male, female, rich or poor- no one wants to pay higher tuition. Especially when needed programs that would make our school worth the tuition we pay are not being funded. So my tuition is going to go up while my education is being devalued all from the same budget. Now, I'm not an expert but that doesn't seem right. But only you can do something to physically change the budget and make a difference. My parents have two kids in college- totaling fees of over \$40,000 a year. My parents are very unhappy at the high tuition and don't understand why I couldn't attend University of Illinois which would be considered in state for me. I told them I wanted to attend UW-Madison because it was a better school. But now I'm not so sure. Maybe next year I will be attending University of Illinois where education and tuition are taken seriously.

Sincerely,
Missy Webber

Jennifer Jankowski:

I am a junior at the University of Wisconsin Madison and I am displeased with the Governor's budget. I am trying to avoid going into debt by getting a college degree but a tuition increase hurts my chances of that. I am also upset that Plan 2008 did not get its necessary funding. I come from an area that is not very diverse and coming to the university was my chance to be around a more diverse group of people. I think this is important to my educational experience that I work with and learn with people from different backgrounds, races, religions, etc. I have heard of companies who have threatened to stop recruiting here if something is not done about this issue. We are last in the Big Ten in terms of diversity and minority enrollment. The university deserves to get all the funding that is needed. I know for example that the university's maintenance budget has not been increased in eight years and there is a huge backlog of things to be fixed. If we can build new biotech buildings we should also fund the university so they can fix what is broken with the buildings we already have.

Good afternoon. My name is Jayson Pope and I'm a student at the University of Wisconsin Madison. I am here today to implore you to fund the full \$10 million for Plan 2008 and include indexing language for the Lawton Grant and the AOP grant.

Remember, U.S. businesses are going global. The demographics of the workforce are drastically changing. People of color are contributing in the workforce like never before. Working in the "real" world requires that graduates are able to communicate and interact with people from different ethnic and cultural background. If graduates are not able to do so, they will get trampled in the corporate global boom.

As a student invested in achieving diversity at UW-Madison, I know that the state IS NOT preparing its graduates to succeed in this new global environment with an extremely diverse workforce. We are not receiving the necessary preparation for the real world.

In fact, at UW-Madison, we obviously lag behind other "world-class" universities in our diversity statistics. The state is not preparing its students to compete. For instance, at University of Michigan, there are nearly 25% students of color. At that top quality university, students are being prepared for life after graduation. However, at UW-Madison, we have less than 10% students of color; Less than 10%. The state, and Governor's McCallum's proposed budget does not prepare us. Ask any student at UW Madison. We are far from providing the necessary interactions and education necessary to compete in our global environment. In fact, several corporations have considered to stop recruiting graduates from Madison because they are not able to perform in a diverse workforce. We need funding for Plan 2008 to prepare us for life after graduation. Without your support, you are cheating your students. Again, without your support, YOU are cheating your students.

So, as a student representing hundreds of other students on campus, and as a taxpayer, I am being cheated out of my education. Without the necessary support for the Lawton Undergraduate Minority Retention Grant and the Advanced Opportunity Program, I am not receiving the quality of education that I've been promised.

As an undergraduate student of color from a low-income family, I know, first-hand, how crucial this grant is to retaining students like me. I know because I felt its direct impact. Receiving that grant was crucial to me staying at UW-Madison. I was able to interact with and prepare other students to life and work with diverse populations. Without the Lawton grant, I wouldn't have been able to participate in my and other's education.

I am also imploring you to include "indexing" language in both the Lawton Grant and the AOP grant. Tuition in the state is consistently rising. This is making it harder for students like myself to continue to pay for my education. Indexing language would guarantee that the state link the amount of the grant to the steadily rising cost of tuition. Without that language, you will be pricing me out of my education. You will be denying me from my education at this "world-class" institution.

Again, I thank you for your time and ask that you oppose the governor's proposed budget and be intelligent. Stop funding super-max prison and truly invest in my future. Fund Plan 2008 and include "indexing" language for both Lawton Grant and the AOP grant.

Black Hawk Elementary
Sauk Prairie School District
Superintendent: Tom Andres

SAGE Components

Staff Development

Rigorous curriculum, 15:1 class ratio, and community involvement, the three SAGE components, have become cornerstones for our K-1 programming in the Sauk Prairie district.

Kindergarten and first grade curricular objectives have been identified and assessments developed. Assessments are given three times a year. With the frequency of assessments interventions can be made in a timely manner so that no child is left behind. Small class sizes make this process manageable for the classroom teacher, enabling the teacher to know the instructional level of each child at all times. This accountability component of our curriculum and instruction is feasible because of SAGE.

Our SAGE school has a high poverty rate as defined by the free and reduced lunch numbers (30%). In addition to the poverty rate we have a large number of Hispanic students (16%). SAGE has also facilitated instructional support for minority students in our school. — We ask that you support an increase in SAGE to the next grade level.

Black Hawk has developed a strong accountability component for K-2 instruction and curriculum, insuring that students are reaching stated objectives or receiving appropriate interventions. The SAGE components of small classes, rigorous curriculum and community involvement insures students' school success with SAGE.

Tom Andres
Superintendent
Sauk Prairie School District
Sauk City, WI 53583
608-643-6981

Thoughts Concerning Education

I am completing my first year as Superintendent in the Sauk Prairie School District. It is a wonderful job because of my opportunity to be in contact with students and teachers involved in a wonderful relationship and doing great work in the learning process. I am here to address the issue that seems to have accumulated an incredible amount of evidence that supports all of us standing up to encourage you to continue your efforts in that direction.

I am referring to the SAGE program that provides a class size that makes it manageable and support funds to provide professional development to ensure that teachers are able to do the things necessary to educate every student regardless of their situation. The evidence available from our district's involvement has convinced our school board, teachers, parents, and administrators that this is a program that deserves our attention. The intermittent assessments that are built in the activities of the curriculum have provided us with a clear picture of each student's progress. We feel confident that the SAGE program fits our basic guiding principles and as a result will assist our students in reaching a reading, writing, and computing level that will prepare them for the next level of their educational career.

As you are well aware the challenge in our society to educate our children has reached a new level. The SAGE classrooms provide an environment that makes attention to individual differences possible. Special Education students have greater opportunity in this type of classroom. I have witnessed this attention and I have seen the results. I am humbled by the nature of elementary teachers and their love for their children and their profession. It is time that we support this significant process by supporting the SAGE program. Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts and observations with you.

Conclusion

Tom Andreg
Superintendent
Sauk Prairie School District
Sauk City, WI 53583

608-643-5981

unable to bring him to school. One of the school aides has picked him up and taken him home all week because Donald called us and asked for help. Although they now live about a mile away from school, Donald's mother wants him in our school, in the smaller class, with caring adults that help him with more than his math facts.

In many schools parents are expected to attend parent/teacher conferences. At St. Leo CUA our teachers and other staff members have much more contact with the families. Teachers call the homes or talk to the parents when dismissing or greeting the students. Parents are frequently in our building – just checking. When concerns arise, the families and staff members work together to find a solution. The students know that we are working together for their benefit.

Many of the students enrolled in St. Leo CUA have had problems at other schools. They are not the students on the A Honor Roll in the public schools. They are students with needs, academic and emotional. Now they are experiencing success and acceptance. Their families are accepted as they are. We work with our families to educate the whole child. Unfortunately, most of these families could not afford a Catholic school, even if it is right across the street. Without the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, our students would be unable to come to St. Leo CUA and talk about their religion or pray. These are important parts of our students' lives. Their families believe the religious development of the child is an important aspect of how the child will be as an adult. We need adults who care about each other. We need the Choice program to allow our families these options. Thank you.

Thank you, Senator Burke, Representative Gard, and members of the committee. My name is Judy Birlem and I am speaking in support of the budget provisions for the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. I am the principal of St. Leo Catholic Urban Academy on 24th and Locust. Currently there are 214 students at St. Leo CUA in four-year old kindergarten through eighth grade. Of these 214, 189 participate in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, about 88% of the student base. Of the 25 students in my school who are not eligible for the Choice program, 5 students are from families with an income level that is just over the criteria, and would be eligible if the income level was comparable to the Federal hot lunch guidelines.

I want you to know some of my students. They could not be here today to tell you themselves how important they believe their education is that they are receiving at our school. Many of their parents could not testify today as to the importance of having a choice in schools.

First meet the Bateman family. There are four boys in this single-parent family. Mom has no relatives in the area and the fathers are not active in the boys' lives. Ms. Bateman relies on the school to help her with the development of her children. The older boys started school in the public school system. The oldest was not doing well academically or behaviorally. Since the family has been at St. Leo, the boys academic work has improved. However, the most significant improvement has been in their behaviors. Brent now knows how to make wise choices in his behavior and to remove himself from potentially harmful situations. His mom and I believe this is due to his being in a smaller class of only 14 students and the care and guidance he is receiving from his teacher and other staff members. This is one mom who knows the value of having her children in a Catholic school and would not be able to afford it on her own.

Next, I'd like you to meet Donald Payton. Donald is a first grader in a class of 14 students. When Donald first came to our school, it was merely a convenience factor – our school was across the street from where Donald and his family lived. Donald's mom has had a rough year. She was in an abusive relationship that resulted in Donald, his little sister and mom moving into a shelter for abused women for three weeks. During this time Donald missed quite a few days as mom did not have transportation for him. Donald cried about missing classes. Mom has moved from across the street for the third time. This week, mom has again had problems resulting in her being

The Preamble to the US Constitution

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

With the Constitution in mind as I write this letter on the matter of the CHOICE program in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I am reminded of my rights given to me as a natural born citizen in this great nation, The United States of America. I was taught in school of the right to vote, be elected to office, right to not be judged because of race, creed or religious beliefs.

CHOICE, isn't that what being American is all about? The 'choice' of making my own 'choice' over my needs and the needs of my family? Mindless of the fact that I may be a lower income worker, possibly a minimum wage worker. Does that take away my right to a choice of where I want my children to be educated?

Are private schools only for the higher income families? I ask not for an elite private school for my children, of such grand ideas I have none at all. I wish for a quiet, well run religious school to educate my children. I prefer not the public schools, the ones Uncle Sam has put his stamp of approval on for me to use just because I do not make over \$50,000 dollars a year. Public schools with gangs and an under-paid, bitter teaching force that are so unhappy with their work that they cannot function in their capacity to teach because of the violent and hostile environment they are forced to work under.

I often wonder at this argument the government has with the CHOICE program. Is it the separation of church and state that is the issue? I find that almost humorous in the face of government issue monetary value. May I refer to the coins and paper money of this great country. On all of them church is not separated from state by the simple words printed on them. 'In God We Trust'

May I also refer to just the past President Mr. Clinton. In the Constitution of the United States it is obligatory for the President to take an oath and I quote from Article II, clause 8;

Clause 8:

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:--"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

How am I to believe in a government that upholds a leader of a nation that makes purgeries in a

court of law, commits adultery and deals in illegal business dealings during the time he is in office.

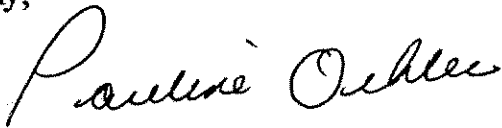
Yet the government of this great country will stop a program like CHOICE that helps the lower income families to get their children a good, christian education and then keep a President in office that breaks every rule to that office including and up to purgery.

I ask you honestly, how do you people sleep at night knowing you are denying thousands of children a good education. Look again at the preamble of the Constitution please.

We the People of the United States, (This means ALL people, lower income and higher income) in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice (justice for all not just the ones that can afford it and hold our former President accountable), insure domestic Tranquility (Tranquility, this means a calmness. This means peace of mind), provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare (Welfare in the sense of health and well being), and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

All these things are our rights under the law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pauline Oehler". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Pauline Oehler

Good Morning Senator Burke , Representative Gard and Member of the Committee,

My name is Chia Herr. I have six children. All of them have attended St Adalbert Catholic School using the Choice Program. I am representing many of the other parents from St Adalbert who could not come today.

St Adalbert has several Hmong families, over 100 Hispanic families, black families, native American families and a few European families, some Loatian families and an Arabic family. We all have one thing in common. None of us earn very much money. 96% of the students there are low income.

As parents, we have something else in common. We want to make a choice of where we send our children to school. If we earned a lot of money, we could choose any school. We need that same option even if we don't make much money.

The other thing we have in common is that we want to send our children to a Catholic school. We want what the Catholic schools have to offer. My children are receiving a good education there and are able to practice their values at the same time.

This program gives the money to me so I can make my choice. I am asking you to continue supporting this program for my children and for the other children in the Choice program.

I hope my children will grow up to be good workers who will pay taxes to help support this program for other struggling children. Right now I am asking you to help my children so they will be able to realize that goal.

Thank You

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Thank You

Good Morning Senator Burke, Representative Gard and members of the Committee,

My name is Cristina Cetina. My children attend St Adalbert school using the CHOICE program. I am speaking today for many of the parents of children at St Adalbert school who could not come here today. These parents are my friends and know what they think.

St Adalbert has 250 children who come from low income families. Most of these students are minority students; many speak little English. All of these children have something in common. Their parents can not afford to send them to private schools because they simply do not earn enough money to do so.

Many of the families at my school struggle just to put food on the table and keep heat in their homes. Paying for education, no matter how little it may be just is not possible.

We are very happy to have this program which lets us send our children to St Adalberts. Without it, I would be forced to send my children back to MPS. I do not want that. I want to be able to send my daughter and son to a Catholic school where I know they are getting a good education in a safe school.

I know that parents who earn a lot of money can choose where they want to send their child. I want that same option. The parents I am speaking for today want that same option too. Please do not take this program away from us.

Thank You

Les escribo una palabras
para decirles lo que nos ayuda el
programa choose.

A nuestros hijos para darles una
buena educación.

Gracias por su ayuda. ¡ojala dios
los ayude siempre

gracias por su ayuda
muchisimas gracias

ATT. Rosa M Navarro

I write these words to say
how choose helps our children
to get a good education.

Thank you for your help and
God bless you. A gain thanks
for your help many thanks

I have a dream, such soft words spoken with the galeforce of one of the greatest men to have graced the earth in our century.

Many people have dreams, dreams of glory, wealth, good health. Not such grand dreams as Martin Luther King Jr.. But dreams all the same for themselves and their families. Dreams of decent medicare and the like. I have such dreams for my nieces. Dreams of a good education for them. The CHOICE program makes this possible. I wish in this dream I carry in my heart for them of a good education in a strong christian background.

But it seems my dream of this for my nieces will soon become a nightmare as Uncle Sam takes a wack at the CHOICE program and stops the funding. I can then watch in horror as my nightmare unfolds and shows me my sweet young nieces in a Milwaukee Public School in a lower income neighborhood. The older, more aggressive kids offering them drugs and the gangs smirking from the sidelines waiting for them to get old enough to be 'Jumped" into the gang.

Is this what our great nation is about? That we only care about the Military strength and the space program and not for the educational needs of our young people?

I have included a part of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr's. speech to remind you of the rights and needs of the people who are not in the military, or in the space program.

This speech was for our African American Brothers and Sisters at the time. But can be applied also to our young people of every race, creed, and color of today.

I have a Dream

by Martin Luther King, Jr.

Delivered on the steps at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. on August 28, 1963

In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we have come to cash this check -- a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to open the doors of opportunity to all of God's children. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment and to underestimate the determination of the Negro. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest

to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny and their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair.

I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

Sincerely,



Dane A. Blasier

AFTER

Good Morning Senator Burke and Representative Gard and members of the committee.

My name is Julia Hutchinson, I have been the principal of St Adalbert school in Milwaukee for the past 16 years. Since it opened in 1908, St Adalbert has served a minority population of low income students. For the first forty years, classes were taught in Polish. For the next twenty years after that Polish was taught as a second language. After that for a brief period, only English was taught.

This pattern reflected what was happening in the neighborhood. New immigrants came to this area and made their homes. They went to our school, learned English, got jobs, paid taxes, and raised their families. As they prospered, they moved out to "better" neighborhoods.

This same pattern is repeating itself. As the Polish families move out, they are being replaced with a variety of people speaking many different languages. At this time there are seven different languages being spoken in my school. 92% of my students receive CHOICE. An additional 4% are also low income but not CHOICE eligible.

I want you to know, these students are successful in my school. I want to share some of their stories with you.

The Sandoval family came to us after two unsuccessful years at MPS. Their three children were in a bilingual program. When they arrived, at our school after two years of classes, the children knew only "hello" in English. Not only that, but they did not learn how to read in Spanish at all. Their parents only knew that the education they were receiving was not working for their children. Mom and Dad came to me seeking help. They knew nothing of the CHOICE program since it was the first year. They asked for help. Neither parent was working. They had eight people living in two rooms. They had no money to pay tuition. They only knew that their children needed something different. Today after three years, life is much different. The children have learned to speak English and the older one is reading and writing very well. They two younger twins are making great progress as well. The parents have great fear that without this program they will be forced to send their children to the same MPS schools that didn't work before.

There there is Maria. Maria has four sons. I remember seeing and her sons shyly standing across the street looking at their new school. I had helped Maria complete the enrollment papers. That same night they came and huddled together looking at the school. I went out and invited the boys to come and see their new school. Maria too had her sons at MPS for a year. They had learned no English at all and were doing miserably in Spanish. I spoke to them the best I could in my Spanish. They were so excited. They haven't lost that excitement. The boys are doing wonderfully. Mom is very grateful and tells me that regularly. She is afraid of losing this program because she can't afford to send them to another school and is very concerned about having them back in MPS. She sees that her sons need a good education to succeed. She sees they are getting that.

Christina came to us in seventh grade. She was performing at the second grade level, and her behavior was horrible. She had been in more than one MPS school as her mother struggled to find a solution to her problems. At the end of eighth grade, Cristina functioned at the sixth grade level. The biggest improvement, perhaps, was in her behavior. In our school she had a more supporting environment to learn appropriate conduct. Cristina problems stemmed largely from the poverty in which she lived. Her mother was truly grateful for this program. We were able to address the needs of her child. Without the CHOICE program, she could not have afforded to send her daughter to our school or any other private school.

Ashley is another daughter of a struggling single parent. Ashley came to us in fourth grade. She was functioning at a kindergarten level. We have worked extensively with Ashley and as a result she is on a fifth grade level right now. Last year her mother wanted her M-teamed so we did. The MPS personnel who conducted the m-team recommended that she stay where she is because we have her functioning two years ahead of what her intellectual ability suggests she should be able to perform. They recommended that the child NOT be returned to MPS.

We have not received the cream of the crop students from MPS. No the parents who have sent their children to us using this program are those who see that MPS is not working for their child. These have been students who have fallen through the cracks. We are receiving students who are seriously behind academically and who need something different. The parents are parents too poor to be able to send their child any where.

The parents who have sent their children to me using CHOICE are very afraid of losing this program. They see how well their children are doing. They compare the progress now to the past and they fear being forced to return to MPS. These are parents who have hopes and dreams. They see that there is a possibility of their children being able to succeed and to rise out of the poverty they now live in as a result of the education they are receiving. They know that their child will become a functioning contributing wage earning member of this community in the future who will be able to help others who may be in the same position they are now in.

Luther Standing Bear Oglala Sioux
1868-1937

Out of the Indian approach to life there came a great freedom, an intense and absorbing respect for life, enriching faith in a Supreme Power, and principles of truth, honesty, generosity, equity, and brotherhood as a guide to mundane relations.

I start this letter off with the great words from Luther Standing Bear. A man of sincere wisdom and forethought of the generations to come. The young people that would follow behind us adults and run the world when we are old and dying. It is a foregone conclusion that we need to guide our young ones as the Elders do in the Native ways. We need to educate them the best we can so they can come up from behind us and run this great nation with wisdom and honor. So how are we to do this with sub-standard education and grabbed away funds from the CHOICE program? Many great Chiefs of all native nations have seen the way the Government has lied in the past and broken treaties. I was under the assumption that this was a thing of the past and just something Uncle Sam did to the 'Savage' Native Americans.

Much to my dismay and surprise he is now busy at work doing it to all people of this nation. But in the cowardly way of the government, for he now attacks our children, the defenseless little ones. Uncle Sam wants to grab the funding away from the lower income families that must use CHOICE to get a good education for their children. How low Uncle Sams belly drags to the ground like a thieving coyote to sneak up on the childrens education funds and snatch them in the dead of night.

How easily he tosses the funds into the Foreign Nations programs and Military.

While our children languish in Milwaukee public sub-standard schools.

How can the government do this atrocity? How can they sleep at night you may ask.

I will tell you as a Traditional Native American how they sleep. They have sleep for centuries doing this because they are not lower income and do not worry for their childrens education. They have 'Big Brother' on their side bullying the small, low income, uneducated masses, keeping them in order you might say.

The only way to stop this thing from happening to stand up and say 'STOP'

Do not let Uncle Sam and Big Brother push you anymore. You have the right under the constitution to be treated fairly and with respect.

Stand up for the right to give your children a good education. Under my signature in the words of other great men to inspire you to fight for your childrens rights.

CHOICE is worth fighting for!!!!!!

Native American Militent Activist,



Karri L. Dey

From the 1927 Grand Council of American Indians

"The white people, who are trying to make us over into their image, they want us to be what they call "assimilated,"

bringing the Indians into the mainstream and destroying our own way of life and our own cultural patterns. They believe we should be contented like those whose concept of happiness is materialistic and greedy, which is very different from our way.

We want freedom from the white man rather than to be intergrated. We don't want any part of the establishment, we want to be free to raise our children in our religion, in our ways, to be able to hunt and fish and live in peace. We don't want power, we don't want to be congressmen, or bankers....we want to be ourselves. We want to have our heritage, because we are the owners of this land and because we belong here.

The white man says, there is freedom and justice for all. We have had "freedom and justice," and that is why we have been almost exterminated. We shall not forget this."

From Black Hawk, Sauk

"How smooth must be the language of the whites, when they can make right look like wrong, and wrong like right."

Sitting Bull Hunkpapa Sioux

"I am a red man. If the Great Spirit had desired me to be a white man he would have made me so in the first place. He put in your heart certain wishes and plans, in my heart he put other and different desires. Each man is good in his sight. It is not necessary for Eagles to be Crows. We are poor..but we are free. No white man controls our footsteps. If we must die...we die defending our rights."

To: Senator Brian Burke
Representative John Gard
Members of the Joint Committee on Finance

From: Joe Dannecker, Milwaukee Public Schools

Thank you Senator Burke, Representative Gard, and members of the Committee for allowing me to speak today. Preparing our children for success as citizens wherever they live in the future is imperative. The state must invest the necessary resources to accomplish this goal.

I wish to touch on a few major points. In Milwaukee Public Schools, we believe that success of our children, and our educational mission, depends not only on high quality educational services but also on the strength of our school communities. Children have needs that extend beyond the traditional school day and the traditional school role. We envision our schools as catalysts for developing sustainable neighborhoods within which our children can thrive. We need a partnership between and among the district, the community and the state. This partnership is jeopardized by some provisions in the budget.

Our most urgent concern is the proposal to freeze the rate of growth in the revenue limit and reduce summer school FTE count for revenue limit purposes. The rate of growth in the revenue limit is already insufficient to meet the costs of providing quality educational services in districts throughout the state. For MPS, these changes in the state budget will require us to cut spending by \$600,000 in FY 02 and more than \$2 Million in FY 03.

We are concerned by the budget's failure to provide full funding for all day K4 programs. Over 12,800 children are enrolled in K4 programs statewide. Our own survey indicates that 75% of parents surveyed would send their children to an all day program if it were offered. When public schools do not provide full day programs, many parents opt for private schools that do provide such an option.

The proposed budget also fails to provide for additional funding or revenue limit relief for services extending beyond the historic school day. Too many parents in Milwaukee are forced to choose schools outside their neighborhoods so that their child's transportation coincides with the work day; or they choose private schools that provide programs during this period. Before- and after-school programs are one key to reversing these practices and ensuring the safety and well-being of children during the hours when they are most at risk.

Also, like other districts, we face rapidly escalating costs of serving children with exceptional needs. We ask the State, as well as the federal government, to fully fund their original commitment to our children who require special accommodations to meet their full potential.

However, we support the Governor's proposal to allocate all new special education funds on a "census basis" approach that includes a factor for district poverty. This approach is consistent with the way federal special education funds are allocated to states.

Finally, MPS is fully cognizant of the issue of funding children in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. The district is willing to a funding strategy that treats Milwaukee taxpayers fairly.

Positive changes have occurred and will continue in MPS. MPS has produced a brief video highlighting the improvements in service to families. I would be happy to provide copies to you.

While there are many other issues of importance to us, these are some of our highest priorities. We look forward to working with you as you continue to refine the budget to meet the needs of Wisconsin families.

Thank you.

To: Co-Chairs Senator Burke and Representative Gard, and members of the Joint Finance Committee

Thank you for your support of state funding for public libraries in the past, especially the statewide on-line resource, BadgerLink. BadgerLink provides more than 6,000 magazine and newspaper articles to all citizens, young and old, from all parts of the state, through their local schools and public libraries. It's a statewide learning resource, supported by the state of Wisconsin, for all its citizens. We are concerned, however, that the Governor's budget recommends that increases for BadgerLink for the next biennium be funded with program revenue generated through fees charged to each school. The \$223,700 cost-to-continue increase for BadgerLink should continue to be funded through the Universal Service fund, in keeping with BadgerLink's importance to everyone in Wisconsin.

The Governor's 2001-2003 budget also recommends no increase in funding for public library systems in Wisconsin. This will have negative implications for all libraries in the South Central Library System, including the Madison Public Library.

Madison Public Library relies on the South Central Library System for many services, including cooperative funding for LINKcat, the automated networked computer system that includes Madison's nine libraries and 37 other libraries in southern and central Wisconsin; the System also provides a very important delivery system that supports the sharing of books and other resources among those libraries. This far-reaching regional network is a prime example of different levels of government – local, county, and state – cooperating to provide quality library services to citizens in a cost-effective manner. System services, including continuing education, technical support and training, and funding for inter-library loan expand and improve the quality and quantity of library services that we make available at the local level.

As required, the DPI budget request reflects the 13% level of local and county library operating expenditures for public library systems. However, the Governor's budget recommends no increase for public library systems. If the Governor's budget stands as presented, system funding will fall to under 9% of local funding, which will seriously undermine the long-standing partnership between state funded library systems and municipal public libraries to provide the best and most cost-effective library services to all our residents.

We also urge your support of the requested increases in funding for the four statewide library resource contracts, including the Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the Cooperative Children's Book Center, the Milwaukee Public Library/Interlibrary Loan service, and Wisconsin Interloan Services. These four library agencies provide specialized services and resources to citizens who need them in Madison and throughout the state.

On behalf of the Madison Public Library Board of Directors, and the people of Madison, I urge you to work toward improving state support for libraries and public library systems, and reaffirm the state's commitment to literacy and lifelong learning through local libraries.

Barbara Dimick 
Director, Madison Public Library

2001-03 Biennial Budget Issues

School Finance

- Restore inflationary annual per pupil increase (frozen at \$220.29).
- Increase state reimbursement for summer school (Governor reduces from 40% to 25%).

Special Education/Special Needs

- Delete Governor's recommendation regarding census-based funding for special education.
- Adopt Kettl Commission recommendation for the state to pay **100%** of low-incidence/high-cost special education expenses, defined as three times the state average by the State Superintendent's task force – about \$25,000 – but *not* funded off the top of the current SPED appropriation. (**Oppose** Governor's proposal to fund **50%** of costs of special education students exceeding \$50,000.)
- Provide the necessary resources for special education/ESL reimbursement (currently at 37%/18%) to ensure an inflationary increase over the biennium. (Budget drops reimbursement to 33%/17%.)
- Make the SAGE program permanent, providing the resources necessary for smaller K-3 classes. (**Oppose** Governor's proposal to fund SAGE in grades 2-3 only at schools where poverty exceeds 50% and shift SAGE evaluation to Dept. of Administration.)
- Ensure accountability for Milwaukee voucher students by requiring that participating students be assessed on all state tests administered to public school students.

Revenue Limit Flexibility

- Ensure that revenue limit increases match the resources needed to comply with the 3.8% Qualified Economic Offer requirement.
- Allow revenue limit latitude for essential fixed costs (utilities, maintenance, technology, transportation).
- Allow school districts to levy at least one percent of its total budget without referendum.

Policy

- Delete Governor's proposed policy changes related to charter schools.
- Delete Governor's proposed expansion of the Milwaukee voucher program.
- Delete Governor's proposed policy changes related to setting the school calendar.
- Delete Governor's proposal to use funds from the dissolution of the WI Advanced Telecommunications Foundation.
- Delete Governor's proposed policy changes related to teacher licensure.
- Delete Governor's proposed policy changes related to local referenda.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GUARANTEE IN EDUCATION (SAGE)

Background

SAGE is much more than a program that reduces K-3 classes to 15 students. Integral, indeed *required*, components of SAGE include parental involvement, on-going student assessment, high academic standards, and staff development opportunities to ensure that teachers are using the best methods in the classroom. For four successive years, SAGE has received glowing academic evaluations from UW-Milwaukee researchers, who observed orderly classrooms and widespread 1:1 attention for students.

"Last year I had a student that came in at a pre-kindergarten reading level. If I had a class of 20 or more students, there's no way I would have been able to help that student catch up."

-- Maria Dyslin, 2nd grade teacher at Mendota Elementary.

Today, the student is reading at a third grade level.

Issues

The Madison Board of Education and district staff spent months engaging the community to redraw elementary school boundary lines, done in large part to accommodate the expansion of SAGE. The district has combined state, federal and nearly \$1 million in local funds to expand SAGE from four schools in 1999-00 to a planned 23 of its 30 elementary schools for 2001-02. Approximately one-third of the total MMSD population is low-income. **The current plan will provide SAGE classes for 75 percent of the district's K-3 students, which includes 91 percent of its low-income students.** Under the Governor's proposal, only 15 percent of the district's K-3 students would benefit from SAGE and only about 25 percent of its low-income students.

The Governor's proposal only assists schools where there are high concentrations of poverty. If the Governor's proposal passes, Madison would need to spend **\$2 million out of its budget to hire the 34 teachers needed to maintain small classes at the current SAGE schools.** Under revenue limits, the district is allowed to increase its budget by about 2.4 percent. Last year over \$1 million was cut from the district's budget, eliminating several administrative positions and staff development resources, along with other moves. This year, program cuts affecting the classroom are likely. Reallocating resources is simply not possible.

One of the primary goals of SAGE -- and a core goal of the Madison school district -- is that children leaving third grade are reading at or above the standard on the state's Third Grade Reading Test. Low-income students in Madison who will benefit from SAGE are the very students who are most at risk for not becoming proficient readers. The Governor's proposal seriously jeopardizes the prospects for the overwhelming majority of the district's low-income students.

Conclusion

Schools signed five-year, K-3 SAGE contracts. The state should keep its commitment and fund SAGE to ensure that the schools currently in the program have the resources necessary to include 2nd and 3rd grade.

Special Education/Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Background

Special education (SPED) and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) programs and services are mandated by both the state and federal governments. Unfortunately, resources to provide the programs and services have not followed the mandate. Congress authorized reimbursing states for 40% of expenses, but for the 2000-01 school year the reimbursement rate is about 15%. The state, likewise, has not kept its part of the partnership. The state reimbursement, currently at about 36%, drops to 33% under the Governor's budget proposal (LEP from 18% to 17%).

Issues

The Governor's budget proposal makes two significant changes to current SPED law. Programs and services for **low-incidence/high-cost** SPED students are particularly difficult to pay for under state-imposed revenue limits. The Kettl Commission recommended that the state pay 100% of high-cost/low-incidence students. The Department of Public Instruction defined "high cost" as three times the state per pupil spending, or about \$25,000. The Governor's proposal pays 50% of student expenses over \$50,000.

The budget also recommends adopting a "**census-based**" **SPED funding formula** determined by a district's total enrollment and its number of low-income students. The proposal fails to acknowledge funding based on a student's disability, arguing that "the incentive to over-identify special education students should be reduced," by making this change, according to the "Budget in Brief." The proposal perpetuates the myth that schools have an economic incentive to over-identify students for SPED. There is, unequivocally, *no* financial incentive for MMSD to misidentify SPED students.

Over eight percent of MMSD's total enrollment (25,087) is **LEP students** (2,072). The number of LEP students with the lowest English-speaking skills increased 54% in eight months during the 1999-2000 school year. In total, 16 additional LEP staff members were required (\$512,000). This unfunded mandate, like SPED, is a first draw on the district's budget.

Conclusion

SPED/LEP expenses are squeezing MMSD's regular education program. The district supports the necessary state resources to ensure an inflationary increase for SPED/LEP over the biennium. MMSD supports the Kettl Commission recommendation for the state to pay 100% of low-incidence/high-cost SPED students, but *not* off the top of the current SPED allocation. The district opposes the census-based SPED funding change. There needs to be a full examination of the SPED identification issue and census-based funding fails to address individual student disabilities.

REVENUE LIMITS

Background

School districts have labored under state-imposed revenue caps since 1993. The caps essentially froze spending at 1992 levels. In 1995, the Legislature voted to fund 2/3 of the costs of K-12 education. It is critical to realize the state pays an *average* of 2/3 of the total cost. For Madison, due to higher than average property values, the state actually pays only *one-fourth* of the district's total budget (\$266 million), with the remainder of the costs borne by local property tax payers.

Districts are allowed annual per pupil increases, however, the increases have not kept pace with inflation. The Governor's budget freezes the allowable increase at \$220.29 per student. This allows about a 2.4 percent increase in the total MMSD budget – substantially less than the state-imposed Qualified Economic Offer (QEO), that lets school boards increase teacher salaries/benefits by 3.8% without the local union option of requesting a state arbitrator to resolve contract differences. Personnel costs account for about 85 percent of the district's total budget.

Issues

Many budgetary factors are outside the control of the district – rising utility/fuel costs, declining enrollment, legal expenses, mandated special education and English as a Second Language programs/services. To ensure schools have modern classrooms, preparing students for post secondary employment, technology is now an essential cost of doing business.

The district supports revenue limit exemptions for:

- essential infrastructure expenses (maintenance, utilities, transportation);
- security measures;
- classroom technology and technology-related staff development;
- schools to count 100% of their FTE summer school enrollments for the purposes of calculating revenue caps (Governor's budget cuts from 40% to 25%).

The district also believes that revenue limit increases must match the resources needed to comply with the QEO. Additionally, MMSD supports allowing districts to levy 1% of its total budget without going to referendum.

Conclusion

The state needs to return control of schools to local school boards. In too many instances, the state imposes mandates (school start date, staff compensation) that are better left to locally elected school board members.

Special Education in MMSD

Special Education Growth from 1994 to present

School Year	MMSD Enrollment	Special Education Enrollment	Percentage of District Enrollment in Special Education*
1994-95	24,872	3,153	12.68%
1995-96	25,046	3,285	13.12%
1996-97	25,158	3,346	13.30%
1997-98	25,327	3,501	13.82%
1998-99	25,113	3,677	14.64%
1999-00	24,943	4,142	16.61%
2000-01	25,087	4,417	17.61%

*This percentage includes students attending private/parochial schools who are served by MMSD and three and four year old students who are served by the Early Childhood program.

English as a Second Language History (1993-2000)

School Year	MMSD Enrollment	ESL Enrollment	Percentage of District Enrollment in ESL	State Reimbursement	\$ from State
1993-94	24,452	1,802	7.37%	30%	690,000
1994-95	24,872	1,064	4.28%	28%	696,000
1995-96	25,046	973	3.88%	25%	687,000
1996-97	25,158	1,114	4.43%	23%	725,000
1997-98	25,327	1,320	5.21%	21%	773,000
1998-99	25,113	1,345	5.36%	19%	744,000
1999-00	24,943	1,868	7.49%	18%	776,000
2000-01	25,087	2,072	8.26%		

NOTE: *There are currently 54 languages spoken in Madison Public Schools*

Autism Enrollment Growth

School Year	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
# of students	6	63	89	119	147	204

If the state reimbursed school districts for special education costs at the same rate as when revenue limits began in 1993 (45%), MMSD would receive an additional \$5.3 million in 2000-01 (current reimbursement is 34%).

Summary of Costs Related to Various Levels of Special Education Students

Range of Extremely High Need Students

- ❖ HIGH - \$92,503
 - ❖ Teacher (1/2) - \$26,000
 - ❖ SEA (1.00) - \$24,000
 - ❖ Special Needs Nurse (1.00) - \$36,225
 - ❖ Occupational/Physical Therapy - \$1,434
 - ❖ Speech/Language - \$1,194
 - ❖ Specialized Transportation - \$2,650
 - ❖ Assistive Technology - \$1,000
- ❖ MEDIUM - \$60,778
 - ❖ Teacher (1/8) - \$6,500
 - ❖ SEA (2.00) - \$48,000
 - ❖ Occupational/Physical Therapy - \$1,434
 - ❖ Speech/Language - \$1,194
 - ❖ Specialized Transportation - \$2,650
 - ❖ Assistive Technology - \$1,000
- ❖ LOW - \$35,834
 - ❖ Teacher (1/4) - \$13,000
 - ❖ SEA (1/3) - \$8,000
 - ❖ Interpreter (1/4) - \$9,056
 - ❖ Occupational/Physical Therapy - \$1,434
 - ❖ Speech/Language - \$1,194
 - ❖ Specialized Transportation - \$2,650
 - ❖ Assistive Technology - \$500

Range of Next Level High Need Students

- ❖ HIGH - \$28,834
 - ❖ Teacher (1/8) - \$6,500
 - ❖ SEA (1/3) - \$8,000
 - ❖ Interpreter (1/4) - \$9,056
 - ❖ Occupational/Physical Therapy - \$1,434
 - ❖ Speech/Language - \$1,194
 - ❖ Specialized Transportation - \$2,650
- ❖ MEDIUM - \$22,383
 - ❖ Teacher (1/8) - \$6,500
 - ❖ SEA (1/3) - \$8,000
 - ❖ Occupational/Physical Therapy \$1,434
 - ❖ Speech/Language - \$896
 - ❖ Nursing Services - \$303
 - ❖ Vision Itinerant Teacher Service - \$2,100
 - ❖ Specialized Transportation - \$2,650
 - ❖ Assistive Technology - \$500
- ❖ LOW - \$19,524
 - ❖ Teacher (1/8) - \$6,500
 - ❖ SEA (1/4) - \$6,000
 - ❖ Occupational/Physical Therapy - \$1,075
 - ❖ Speech/Language - \$896
 - ❖ Nursing Services - \$303
 - ❖ Orthopedic Itinerant Teacher Service - \$2,100
 - ❖ Specialized Transportation - \$2,650



4797 Hayes Road, Suite 102, Madison WI 53704
608-244-1455 fax 608-244-4785 wi_office@pta.org

Wisconsin PTA urges legislators to amend Governor McCallum's budget proposal to provide adequate funding for sound public education.

Revenue Limits

Wisconsin PTA opposes any freeze in the annual revenue cap adjustment.

Legislators need to make comprehensive school funding reform a priority in this legislative session to provide adequate funding for public education.

Immediate adjustments to revenue caps are needed in the interim.

SAGE

PTA opposes the proposal to scale-back the SAGE program.

Wisconsin PTA believes that plans to reduce class size should continue to be implemented as originally planned, allowing all schools now participating to have small classes (15:1 student teacher ratio) in kindergarten through 3rd grade.

PTA recommends that the \$36.3 million proposed increase vouchers and charter programs be invested in public schools to fully fund the proven SAGE program.

Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (Vouchers)

PTA believes that public funds should be used to support public schools, where 90% of children are educated. We do not support any increase in funding for the MPCP Voucher program.

PTA recommends that the \$36.3 million slated increase for the voucher and charter programs be invested in public schools to fully fund the proven SAGE program.

If the state continues experimenting with the voucher model ALL schools receiving public tax dollars should be held to the same standards, student assessment requirements, hiring practices and data reporting. In addition, the funds for this should be taken from the state's General Purpose Revenue and not deducted from state school aids to local districts.

Special Education

WI PTA recommends that the state budget proposal be amended to include sufficient funds to reimburse school districts for 50% of special education costs.

In addition, WI PTA recommends that local school districts receive an additional reimbursement when they have children whose special education costs are extraordinary. For these "high-cost" students the additional reimbursement should be 90% of the costs of services that exceed \$25,000 (three times the state average per pupil spending).

Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

WI PTA recommends that the budget include funds to increase reimbursement for English as a Second Language Programs from 17% to 60% of costs incurred for all students with limited English proficiency.

Teacher Licensure

Wisconsin PTA opposes changes to the current teacher licensure law. Wisconsin PTA advocates for the maintenance of high quality teacher education and certification requirements that include: subject matter preparation, design of instruction, the art of teaching and training in parent involvement.

Wisconsin PTA believes alternative certificate holders should be required to complete the necessary training to acquire a "regular certificate" and to monitor that process to insure completion in a timely manner.

Teachers with temporary or alternative certificates should be held to the same high standards as teachers with "regular certificates".

Responsibility for Education Evaluation and Accountability

Wisconsin PTA opposes removing oversight for educational programs from the Department of Public Instruction. The relation between academic standards, curriculum, and assessment dictate that oversight of all these functions remain with one governmental agency.

The Department of Public Instruction, headed by an independently elected state superintendent, has the resources and skilled individuals to support education evaluation and assessment in Wisconsin. A politically appointed "Board" may not have what is in the best interest of children as it's top priority. We need to work to keep partisan politics out of this arena.

My name is Kristen O'Neill and I am a parent from the Milwaukee Public Schools. Our urban district is in a funding crisis, as many other districts are, and I could testify today about many items that need to be looked at in Gov. McCallum's budget. I will limit my testimony to the SAGE program.

The SAGE program is one of the most effective programs our children and teachers are participating in. In Milwaukee we have high areas of concentrated poverty; one in every 3 children come from a poor household. We also have a high number of children who have special education needs. These needs come at a high cost to school districts and currently special education is severely underfunded. Many of the children in MPS are learning English as their second language. All of these children benefit from having reduced class size. Currently we are financially unable to provide adequate services for all of these children, but the SAGE program gives them an opportunity to succeed in their classroom.

SAGE doesn't only benefit children who need more assistance. SAGE benefits every child. SAGE benefits every teacher. The smaller class sizes are an example of what education at every grade level should look like.

If Gov. McCaullum's budget goes through as it is written today, SAGE will not expand to more classrooms. In fact, many schools, including my daughter's school will not have SAGE classrooms past 1st grade. Other schools with SAGE classrooms will have to return to their larger class size, sometimes ranging up to 35 students per teacher.

Our children are benefiting from this program. Our teachers are benefiting from this program. Our state is benefiting from the SAGE program. Please find alternatives to the current budget. Our goal in education should be to give every child the opportunity for success. SAGE is a big part of this goal and we need your help in preserving the program.



**CHILD CARE
RESOURCE
& REFERRAL
NETWORK**

Making Child Care Work

*Jane Penner-Hoppe
Executive Director*

Wisconsin Child Care Resource & Referral Network, Inc.

6314 Odana Road, Madison, WI 53719
phone: 608-271-1230 • fax: 608-271-1268
www.wisconsinccrr.org

Why Invest in Early Childhood?

The Public Supports It

Numerous studies confirm that an overwhelming majority of the public feels this is an important priority.

- “Fight Crime: Invest in Kids” polling data shows that the public believes that children are a much higher priority than tax cuts. The following issues were rated as a higher priority than tax cuts: “providing access to after-school programs and school readiness programs like Head Start (67%)”; addressing child abuse and neglect (78%); and, better education of disadvantaged students (78%). More information on this study is available at <http://www.fightcrime.org/pressdocs/taxcutrelease.html>.
- The Communications Media Consortium has led the development of early childhood public awareness campaigns in several states, including Florida, Colorado, and Illinois. The polling data in all of these states confirms that early education and care are high priorities for a majority of the public. More information on these efforts can be found at www.earlycare.org.

Children Benefit

Evidence is mounting that the early years are an absolutely critical time for shaping the future growth and potential of young children

- Brain development research has confirmed that interaction, stimulation and touch during an infant’s early days and first three years literally build a baby’s brain. See Great Beginnings: “The First Year’s Last Forever”, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, www.wccf.org.
- Child Care Quality: Does it Matter: Does it Need to be Improved? – A recent HHS study set out with the intent of documenting if the quality of care matters. The overwhelming conclusion was that quality does matter and has an important impact on a child’s future growth and development. (See Executive Summary of this study at aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/ccquality00/execsum.htm)
- Major national studies including the Cost, Quality, and Outcomes Study, Abecedarian Project and the Perry Preschool Project have done over time research on children who participated in high quality, early childhood programs comparing them to children who did not have this opportunity. The results showed that the children in quality preschools were more likely to: show long term gains in IQ scores, reading and math, earn higher incomes; attend a four year college, and, delay parenthood. In addition, these children were less likely to: be arrested, receive public assistance; and fail to complete high school (see also, “Child Care Quality findings for summary of these findings”).

Parents and Families Benefit

If a parent believes their child is in an environment where they will be nurtured and thrive, they are more likely to go to work or school with confidence. This translates into a more productive employee or student.

Employers Benefit

- The Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy allows thousands of parents to work each year, helping to alleviate a critical labor shortage.
- When employers provide on-site child care or other child care assistance to employees, it helps to recruit and retain good employees.
- Absenteeism is reduced
- Employees are happier at work

Society Benefits

- All of the studies previously noted confirm that children in high quality early learning environments are more likely to grow into positive, contributing members of society.

- If children are ready for school when they enter they are more likely to successfully finish school.
- Improved education leads to a better prepared work force in the future.
- Today's children will be tomorrow's work force – including doctors, educators, lawyers, child care providers, skilled and technical professionals, service industry workers, and other key parts of our future economy.

What Role do Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agencies play in the Child Care system?

Wisconsin has seventeen (17) CCR&R agencies that cover Wisconsin's 72 counties CCR&R agencies are information brokers at the local level that assist families and communities in the following ways.

- Helping families find suitable child care for their needs
- Tracking a wide range of data about child care supply, demand, cost and quality.
- Educating parents and the communities about the importance of high quality care.
- Maintaining an up to date listing of child care availability in their area.
- Working with local employers to identify employee child care needs;
- Providing training for child care providers;
- Offering and facilitating child care provider and parent support groups
- Providing information about child care issues through regular newsletters
- Helping to serve as the voice of families and child care providers at local community collaborations focused on early childhood.

The **Wisconsin CCR&R Network** is an umbrella organization for Wisconsin's 17 member agencies. The Network is a peer support, training and information sharing organization designed to work with member agencies on meeting the Network's mission – to exercise leadership in the building of an inclusive, high-quality child care/child development system, and to promote the professional growth and development of member agencies. Additional key roles of the Network are annual data report preparation, and serving as a statewide voice for local CCR&Rs.

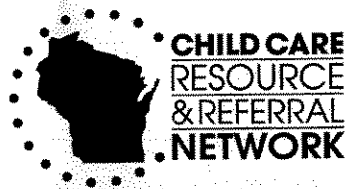
What Are the Major Issues?

- Wisconsin is fortunate to not have a waiting list for child care assistance, however the state is now presented with the dilemma of increasing use of the subsidy program and higher than anticipated costs for continuing full coverage of all families.
- Even with this benefit, some parents have difficulty meeting the co-pay requirement.
- Nationally, economists tell us - "Parents of young children tend to have low incomes relative to their permanent incomes, and may face borrowing constraints that reduce their ability to pay for high-quality care" (Child Care Quality Study, Executive Summary)
- The quality of child care is not adequate for a large number of children. The 1995 Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study showed that 86% of centers in four states were rated as mediocre or poor in quality; and 40% of infant-toddler rooms were not only mediocre to poor quality but were found to be endangering the safety and health of children.
- Wisconsin – like the rest of the nation – faces the difficulty of a low salary for child care workers and low or no benefits for child care workers. In Wisconsin, the average wage for a child care teacher is \$7.80 an hour with few, if any benefits. The beginning of the TEACH program in Wisconsin will hopefully begin to have an impact in this area as it has done in other states, e.g., North Carolina.

What Would Help?

- Increased respect and recognition of the importance of the early childhood and early childhood professional's role in meeting the needs of young children.
- Sustaining and building on the financial support for parents to enable them to pay for the high quality care their children deserve.
- Continued investment in efforts that will boost the pay and benefits of child care workers, and lead to decreased turnover in staffing of early childhood programs.
- Increasing the awareness of support of family-friendly workplaces that allow for flexible work environments to meet family needs.
- Continued support of improving quality in early childhood programs.
- Boosting support for agencies – namely Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies who provide: information, support and training about quality child care and how to find it; key information on the supply of child care and related issues; and, training, support and assistance of child care providers.

For more information – contact the Wisconsin CCR&R Network Office, 608-271-1230 or your local at CCR&R, 1-888-713-KIDS



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RESOURCE
& REFERRAL
NETWORK**

Wisconsin Child Care Resource & Referral Network, Inc.

6314 Odana Road, Madison, WI 53719
Phone: 608-271-1230 • fax: 608-271-1268
www.wisconsinccrr.org

Making Child Care Work

Wisconsin Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCR&R) Network, Wisconsin State Budget Position Paper April, 2001

Background

Wisconsin has seventeen (17) CCR&R agencies that cover Wisconsin's 72 counties. CCR&R agencies are information brokers at the local level that assist families and communities in the following ways.

- Helping families find suitable child care for their needs
- Tracking a wide range of data about child care supply, demand, cost and quality
- Educating parents and the communities about the importance of high quality care
- Maintaining an up to date listing of child care availability in their area.
- Working with local employers to identify employee child care needs
- Providing training for child care providers
- Offering and facilitating child care provider and parent support groups
- Providing information about child care issues through regular newsletters
- Helping to serve as the voice of families and child care providers at local community collaborations focused on early childhood.

The Wisconsin CCR&R Network is an umbrella organization for Wisconsin's 17 member agencies. The Network is a peer support, training and information sharing organization designed to work with member agencies on meeting the Network's mission – to exercise leadership in the building of an inclusive, high-quality child care/child development system, and to promote the professional growth and development of member agencies. Additional key roles of the Network are annual data report preparation, and serving as a statewide voice for local CCR&Rs.

On behalf of the Network and CCR&R, we would like to thank you for your previous support of child care in Wisconsin. We understand that the state is facing a very tight budget year but believe the following programs in the Office of Child Care Budget as proposed in Governor McCallum's Budget, are absolutely critical for Wisconsin's young children and their families.

We call your attention to the following items.

1. Increasing the base funding to CCR&R agencies

Rationale:

- CCR&R's are a key information and referral source for families in the state. In 2000, nearly 19,000 families were served by the CCR&R System.
- Beyond referral services, CCR&R's provide more in-depth consultations to parents, child care providers, community agencies, and employers. The use of these services grew dramatically in the last year. In 2000, 10,000 parents received consultations, this is double the number of consultations provided in 1999. Child Care providers received consultation on a wide range of issues over 18,000 times during the previous year – a 55% increase over 1999. Community agencies around the state received support and assistance from CCR&Rs on nearly 13,000 occasions in 2000, a 45% increase over 1999. In addition, consultations were provided to employers 715 times.
- CCR&R's launched several major initiatives in the last biennium, including the Mentor/Protegee Program, a wide range of projects that used locally-matched child care dollars to build the quality of child care services, Centers of Excellence replication grants, and other services.
- Education about quality child care is an essential component of CCR&R services. There is growing evidence that quality child care is essential for future child growth and development (see "Child Care

Quality: Does it Matter, Does it Need to Be Improved?" – see also, companion for talking points – Why Invest in Early Childhood).

- **Support the proposed increase for the Wisconsin Share's Child Care Subsidy Program.**

Rationale:

- Wisconsin low-income families continue to have difficulty affording quality child care. This support helps increase the likelihood that suitable arrangements for child care will be found.
- This benefit helps to insure that workers can keep stable employment.

- 2. **Invest in initiatives that boost the quality of child care in Wisconsin, e.g., Locally-Matched programs, Early Childhood Centers of Excellence**

Rationale

- A growing body of evidence has tied high quality child care to improved child outcomes in education and avoiding negative activities ("Child Care Quality: Does it Matter, Does it Need to be Improved")
- It is essential that we recognize that learning starts when a child is born and not when they enter school. Efforts to nurture and support children in the early years are critical. (See "Great Beginnings: the First Year's Last Forever). Investing in quality child care will help children in Wisconsin get the best possible start.
- Locally-matched projects around the state have piloted innovative projects designed to increase child care quality in the state. Examples of these efforts include: respite care for child care providers, inclusive training and technical assistance, after-school programs, public education to elevate awareness of quality child care, and benefit programs for child care providers.
- The Centers of Excellence are laboratories for developing high quality model programs for child care in Wisconsin.

- 3. **Invest in improved pay and benefits for child care workers – support increases in the Wisconsin TEACH and REWARD Program proposed.**

Rationale:

- Current pay and benefits for child care workers average around \$7.00 an hour. Typically, child care centers offer little or no benefits. This low pay and minimal benefits contributes to turnover of child care providers in the field.
- Research tells us that children need stable, caring environments where they can thrive in child care settings. Reducing turnover is key to achieving this goal.

- 4. **Support the "Kids Cabinet"**

Rationale:

- Funding streams for children are fragmented and uncoordinated. Progress has been made in this area, however, a more coordinated system at the state level would help to better streamline the support of services.
- Maximizing use of several resources at the local level, including child care, schools, health and others, will insure that children and families have access to a range of services.
- Efforts to collaborate require significant investments of time and resources. The proposed planning grants will help communities in achieving the goal of collaborating to meet the needs of children and families.

Questions or Comments? Please contact us at 608-271-1230 or contact your local CCR&R at 1-888-713 KIDS



EDGEWOOD COLLEGE
1000 Edgewood College Drive
Madison, WI 53711-1997

(608) 663-2206
(608) 663-3291 (fax)
www.edgewood.edu

Office of Financial Aid

To: Members of the Joint Finance Committee,
From: Steven M. Schuetz, Director of Financial Aid, Edgewood College
Re: Increased funding for the Wisconsin Tuition Grant Program

Being a financial aid administrator, I obviously have a vested interest in increased funding for the Tuition Grant program. But I'm not here to talk about how increased funding will benefit me, I'm here to speak on behalf of the over 500 Edgewood students who rely on the Tuition Grant every year to realize their dreams and the Edgewood students and their families who are currently working through the financial aid process and soon will be making the decision of whether or not to return to Edgewood.

First, I'd like describe the type of student who takes advantage of an Edgewood education:

Over 80% of our students are from the State of Wisconsin.

Over 85% of our undergraduates rely on some form of financial aid.

1/3rd of our students are first generation college students.

Approx. 65% of our alumni reside, work, and raise families in the State of Wisconsin.

Second, I'd like to give you an idea of the impact the Wisconsin Tuition Grant has on our campus:

38% or 522 Edgewood students received a Wisconsin Tuition Grant this year. 52% of these students received no other government funded grant assistance. 161 Additional students qualified for the Wisconsin Tuition Grant but did not receive a grant due to lack of funding.

Unfortunately for many students, the decision to return to Edgewood is a financial one. I am aware of the current budget restrictions and the tough decisions you are being faced with. However, I urge the legislature to see increased Tuition grant funding as a long term investment in these students and State of Wisconsin.

Wayne Sherry
District Administrator
Vermont Area Schools
Winoona, Vt. 56665

Re: Changes in Charter School Legislation

Testifying against proposed legislative changes in charter school legislation. Technical colleges and two-year colleges/universities ~~programs~~ ^{systems} should not become chartering institutions.

A. Why leave chartering authority with public K-12 school districts and ~~boards~~ ^{boards}?

1. It encourages and promotes change in K-12 districts.
2. School boards are invested - providing oversight
 - a. They are part of the charter school planning process.
 - b. Approve waivers from board policy and procedures. This allows for flexibility - KEY to charter schools.
 - c. Boards provide staffing. Charter grants provide no funding for staff. This is a major local commitment and assures continuation of programs when grant funds from grants are gone.
3. More readily accessible to parents and students if the charter is a public school program. Students have access to transportation, graduation, school counselors, classes in regular school programs, athletics and the arts.

B. Why not allow chartering with Technical Colleges and Two-year Colleges/Universities.

1. Does not promote commitment to local school boards, as stated above.
2. If post high school institutions could charter, it would promote more students taking youth options courses, very costly for local K-12 school districts.
3. Does not promote change in secondary schools or new options for students that are promoted by local schools.

Please leave Charter School legislation as it is. Thank You



"For these are all our children . . .
we will all profit by, or pay for,
whatever they become." James Baldwin

RESEARCH • EDUCATION • ADVOCACY

Joint Committee on Finance
2001-2003 Budget Hearing
April 11, 2001

On behalf of the Wisconsin Council on Children, thank for the opportunity to address you regarding our concerns with the proposed budget. Project Attorney Carol Medaris is presenting oral testimony today regarding our specific recommendations concerning the W-2 program and related services to low-income working families. There are three additional areas we would like to comment on.

- **Medicaid Coverage for Youth Aging out of Foster Care**

Recommendation: Expand Medicaid coverage to 18-21 year old youth who have aged out of the state's foster care system. Begin the program on July 1, 2001.

Based, in part, on research conducted on youth aging out of Wisconsin's foster care system, Congress passed the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act in 1999. One of the provisions of the Chafee Act is the state option to pull down federal Medicaid dollars to provide health care coverage to youth who age out of the foster care system. While the Department of Health and Family Services included this in their budget request, Governor McCallum's proposed budget fails to do so.

Based on a July 1, 2001 implementation date, the state's share of cost for the program would be an estimated \$177,500 in GPR for the first year and \$505,200 GPR in the second year. This is not a high-cost program.

When teens leave home they usually have a place to return to when they need guidance and support. They are often able to remain on their parent's health insurance policy until they reach the age of 21. Foster parents are under no obligation to continue their relationship and receive no support from the state to do so. The Chafee Act recognized this and made provisions, including the Medicaid option, to alleviate some of the stresses on these youth.

- **SAGE (Student Achievement Guarantee in Education)**

Recommendation: Make good on the legislature's 1999 commitment to the SAGE program for low-income students in all school districts. Reject budget provisions seeking to scale back the program.



A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHILD ADVOCATES

A growing body of research demonstrates the effectiveness of reducing class sizes in the early grades. The research finds long lasting improvements in student achievement, particularly for children from low-income families. In addition, SAGE schools report decreased school discipline issues and increased parental involvement. In smaller classes, all children enjoy more individual attention and instruction from teachers.

The Governor's budget would cut funding to at least 370 schools statewide by restricting the program to kindergarten and first grade in schools with less than 50 percent low-income student population. Second and third grade funding would only be given to schools with 50 percent or greater low-income students. This is a departure from the legislative commitment made in 1999 to expand SAGE to schools with 30 percent or greater low-income students in the second and third grades.

- **Birth-to-3**

Recommendation: Provide an increase of two million dollars in each year of the biennium to fully fund the Birth-to-3 program and oppose any changes to the current eligibility criteria.

As you are aware, the Birth-to-3 program is an early intervention program serving families of children with developmental delays and disabilities. Due in great part to improved and earlier identification Birth-to-3 participation has been increasing statewide. Federal and state dollars, however, have remained stagnant, causing a gradual erosion of services, county overmatches and waiting lists for services.

Research shows the importance of early intervention on a child's brain development. Missed opportunities in the earliest years results in more costly and time-consuming interventions later on. With positive advances in newborn screening increased numbers of children should be identified as needing Birth-to-3 services.

For more information on these important issues, please see the attached issue papers prepared by the Council. We would be happy to answer any questions. You can reach Executive Director Anne Arnesen at 608/284-0580.

Making Wisconsin
Work for Kids
Issue Paper #1

CONTACT INFO

Wisconsin Council
on Children and
Families

16 North Carroll Street,
Suite 600

Madison, WI 53703

Phone (608) 284-0580

Fax (608) 284-0583

and

1442 N. Farwell Street,
Suite 508

Milwaukee, WI 53202

Phone (414) 831-8880

Fax (414) 298-9127

www.wccf.org

Child Welfare:

Hard Times For Troubled Kids

Recommendation:

Expand Medicaid coverage to 18-21 year old youth who have aged out of the foster care system and pull down federal dollars to implement this program. Begin the program on July 1, 2001.

Background:

Governor McCallum's 2001-2003 Biennial budget fails to include a request by the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) for \$47,500 GPR in 2003 to begin phasing in a program extending Medicaid coverage to youth ages 18-21 who have been in the foster care system. This request reflects a recent federal policy change in the Medical Assistance program that allows states an option to insure foster care youth who "age out" of the foster care system.

Recognizing the unique problems faced by youth who are transitioning from foster care to independent living, Congress passed the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act. President Clinton signed it into law on December 14, 1999. In addition to the MA option, the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (as it is more commonly known) provides flexible funding for states to implement programs aimed at meeting educational, vocational, financial, emotional, social, medical, and housing needs imperative to self-sufficiency for foster care youth. Federal funding for the program was increased from \$70 million to \$140 million as a capped entitlement.

If the program starts on July 1, 2001, the cost for the first year is estimated to be \$177,500 in General Purpose Revenue (GPR). This would draw down \$245,100 in federal funding (FED). Second year implementation costs are estimated at \$505,200 GPR and \$697,600 FED for a total of \$1,202,800. When fully implemented the cost is \$1.6 million to cover 1,100 youth including those leaving out-of-home placement in group homes, residential care or juvenile facilities. These estimates may be high since they are based on the assumption that all eligible youth would participate. However, some youth may move out of state; others may access health insurance through jobs or not apply.

The Problem

Teens leaving home at age 18 or 19 years is a common experience in our society, but it is usually expected that they may return home for financial and emotional support from time to time. Teens leaving foster care when they are declared independent at age 18 face different challenges than many youth. They have no source of financial support. Foster parents have no obligation to continue a relationship with them, although some do continue to help. Fortunately, the Chaffee program has new provisions that alleviate some of these problems. And the Medicaid option was one of the most important.

Rationale:

Research has shown that youth who age out of the system have continuing health care needs, as do most teens and young adults. While other young adults may have the option of staying on their parents' insurance policy, foster care youth are cut off and expected to fend for themselves.

Funding the DHFS proposal would allow more youth to access MA services, particularly the mental health services for a longer period of time. This may lead to better employment opportunities with an increased probability for access to employee-based health care.

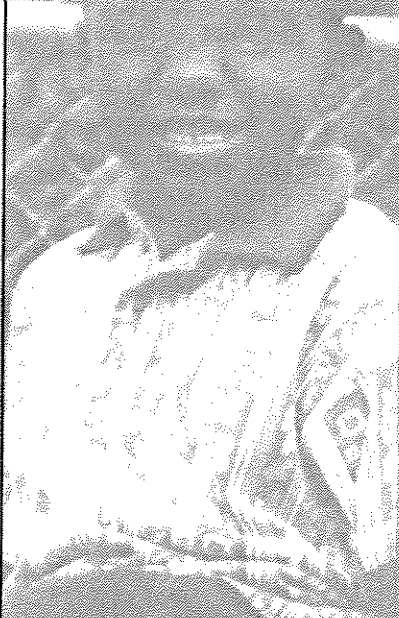
A recent study by Mark E. Courtney and Irving Piliavin followed Wisconsin foster care youth prior to exiting out-of-home care and 12 to 18 months again after exiting. Their findings highlight the urgency of this issue:

- Wisconsin foster care youth experience more psychological stress than other youth their age as evidenced by scores on the Mental Health Inventory. These scores remained high, 12 to 18 months later.
- Forty-seven percent of these youth received some form of mental health or social service the year before they left the foster care system. The most common service received was individual counseling or therapy followed by group counseling or therapy. Thirty-eight percent of youth had taken medication to alleviate emotional distress. Five percent of youth had received substance abuse treatment. Only twenty-one percent of these youth received mental health or social services following their emancipation.
- Fifty-one percent of youth had no health insurance coverage at follow-up.
- The general health of Caucasian foster youth in Wisconsin is significantly poorer than other Caucasian youth of the same age group in the general population, as denoted by scores on the General Health Rating Index.
- Obtaining medical care was the greatest problem reported by youth attempting to acquire independence. Forty-four percent said they had a problem finding medical care most or all of the time.
- Only 11 percent of youth interviewed reported receiving concrete assistance in obtaining health insurance before discharge from the system.
- Other states in our region have all chosen to participate in the Medicaid option.



For detailed information on these issues visit our website at www.wccf.org or call our office at (608) 284-0580.

Making Wisconsin
Work for Kids
Issue Paper #10



CONTACT INFO

Wisconsin Council
on Children and
Families

16 North Carroll Street,
Suite 600

Madison, WI 53703

Phone (608) 284-0580

Fax (608) 284-0583

and

1442 N. Farwell Street,
Suite 508

Milwaukee, WI 53202

Phone (414) 831-8880

Fax (414) 298-9127

www.wccf.org

No Wisdom in Governor's SAGE Cuts

Recommendation:

Make good on the legislature's 1999 commitment to the Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE) program for low-income students in all school districts. Reject budget provisions seeking to scale back the program.

Background:

The goal of the Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE) Program is to improve student achievement, particularly for kids from low-income families, through the implementation of four reform strategies:

1. Reduce classroom ratios to no more than 15 children to one classroom teacher;
2. Establish lighted school houses that are open early in the morning until late in the evening. Use the school to house a variety of services increasing collaboration between schools and their communities;
3. Implement a rigorous curriculum focusing on academic achievement;
4. Improve professional development and staff accountability.

SAGE was created under 1995 Act 27. The Act awarded five-year grants to school districts with at least one school where a minimum of 50 percent of the school's students were eligible for the free/reduced lunch program (FRL). In addition, school districts were eligible for SAGE if 30 percent of a school's students were eligible for FRL and the school board was not receiving a preschool to grade 5 program grant on behalf of that school. In the 1996-97 school year SAGE began with 30 schools in 27 districts in which class sizes were reduced in kindergarten and first grade. These original schools expanded the program to second grade in 1997-98 and to the third grade in 1998-99. Under 1997 Act 27, a sec-

ond round of school contracts was authorized. These schools began in 1998-99 and have expanded to grade three this year (2000-01). Finally, under 1999 Act 9 (1999-01 state budget), the legislature expanded the SAGE program to a third round of schools, bringing the total number of schools participating in SAGE to 566 schools in 241 districts statewide. In addition, the legislature created a new \$3 million categorical aid program to reimburse school districts for 20 percent of debt service costs related to the construction of new classrooms for the SAGE program.

The Governor's Budget

The Governor's budget would cut funding to at least 370 schools in the SAGE program by restricting the program to kindergarten and first grade in schools with less than a 50 percent low-income student population. The bill would provide kindergarten through third grade funding only to schools that have 50 percent or greater low-income students. Approximately 115 to 130 schools would remain eligible at this level.

Under the Governor's proposal approximately 18,370 children who currently benefit from the SAGE program in first grade would return to larger class sizes in the second grade next school year and miss out on the known benefits of smaller class size in the critical early grades of elementary school.

Rationale:

A growing body of research, including studies of Wisconsin's SAGE program and Tennessee's 1990 Lasting Benefits Study (Project STAR), demonstrate that significantly reducing class size coupled with increased services for children and families in the early grades can have long-lasting positive affects on student achievement, particularly for children from low income families. Wisconsin students participating in SAGE showed significant improvement over comparison students from the beginning of first grade to the end of third grade across all academic areas. While the gap between African American students and white students remained, gains made by African American compared to white students were significantly larger in SAGE schools from the beginning of first grade to the end of third grade.

Schools participating in the SAGE program report that smaller classes enable them to give all students individual attention and instruction each day. Schools from Mountain Elementary in Suring to Wauzeka Elementary report that the SAGE program has resulted in closer parent teacher relationships, decreased discipline issues, and increased student performance.

For detailed information on these issues visit our website at www.wccf.org or call our office at (608) 284-0580.



Making Wisconsin
Work for Kids
Issue Paper #6



CONTACT INFO

**Wisconsin Council
on Children and
Families**

16 North Carroll Street,
Suite 600
Madison, WI 53703
Phone (608) 284-0580
Fax (608) 284-0583

and

1442 N. Farwell Street,
Suite 508
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Phone (414) 831-8880
Fax (414) 298-9127

www.wccf.org

3 to Get Ready:

Birth-to-3

Recommendation:

Provide an increase of two million dollars in each year of the biennium to fully fund the Birth-to-3 program and oppose any changes to the current eligibility criteria.

Background:

Wisconsin's Birth-to-3 Program is an early intervention initiative serving families of children with developmental delays and disabilities since 1991. Created under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the program goals include:

- Minimize developmental and physical delays in children;
- Reduce educational costs;
- Minimize institutionalization;
- Increase chances of independent living;
- Enhance the capacity of families to meet their children's needs;
- Increase the ability of state and local agencies to identify and serve special needs children.

Administered by the counties, Birth-to-3 programs accomplish these goals through a variety of supports for children and their families. Funding for Birth-to-3 is provided by federal grant, state GPR and county matching funds. In 1999-2001, \$4.7 million GPR and \$5.5 million FED was budgeted annually for counties to administer the program. In addition, counties contributed \$9.4 million in 1999, an overmatch of \$4 million.

The Governor's budget for 2001-2003 does not include an increase in program funds.

Rationale:

Birth-to-3 program participation has been increasing state-wide due in part to earlier identification of eligible families. In 2000, the program served more than 7,500 families, a 21 percent increase over the number served in 1996. However, state funding for the entitlement program has remained level since 1996, while federal contributions have increased 9.8 percent and county funding has increased 34 percent.

Stagnant state and federal support has caused a gradual erosion of services. Many local Birth-to-3 programs have reduced the frequency and intensity of the services that a child receives, while others provide only services that are reimbursed by third party payers (such as insurance plans). The most common scenario, however, is that counties are making up for the shortfall by using county tax dollars at the expense of other community programs for people with disabilities. The result is increased county waiting lists for other needed services.

The rationale for increasing state funding is compelling:

- Research shows the importance of early intervention on children's brain development in the first three years.
- Early intervention can prevent or reduce future learning problems in special needs children.
- According to the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, private insurance companies are increasingly treating Birth-to-3 services as habilitative (learning new skills) rather than rehabilitative (regaining lost skills), and, therefore, are not funding these services. In addition, insurance companies are reducing their coverage of services provided in a child's natural setting (playground, home, daycare vs. clinic).
- Positive advances in newborn screening will continue to identify children and families who will benefit from early interventions.



For detailed information on these issues visit our website at www.wccf.org or call our office at (608) 284-0580.

WHO IS "BIRTH TO THREE LASTS A LIFETIME"?

"Birth to Three Lasts a Lifetime" is a contingent of caring parents which developed out of a support group for special needs families.

The parents united this January to fight for increased funding for the Birth to Three program - a program they firmly believe in.

Currently, the core group consists of parents in all corners of the state and represents the concerns of families in every legislative district.

Parents want legislators to know the daily struggles of raising a special needs child. The Birth to Three program is essential for their development and future.

In addition to providing therapy instruction, the Birth to Three program gives parents hope. They support parents and put them in touch with other families. They encourage parents to do the best they can during difficult times.

"Birth to Three Lasts a Lifetime" believes the state legislature has a duty to provide increased funding for these children - for the good of society as well as each special child.

BIRTH TO THREE LASTS A LIFETIME

CONTACT:

Catharine Kriepps, West Bend

(262) 338-8537

ckriepps@attglobal.net

BROCHURE CREATED BY A PARENT:

Lisa Pugh, Madison - (608) 441-0762;

mpgh1524@aol.com

WITHOUT A FUNDING INCREASE

County Birth to 3 programs may not be able to offer enough services to meet the needs of a child.

***Intervening early is meant to lessen learning problems later on. Continued unaddressed delays will carry a price tag.*

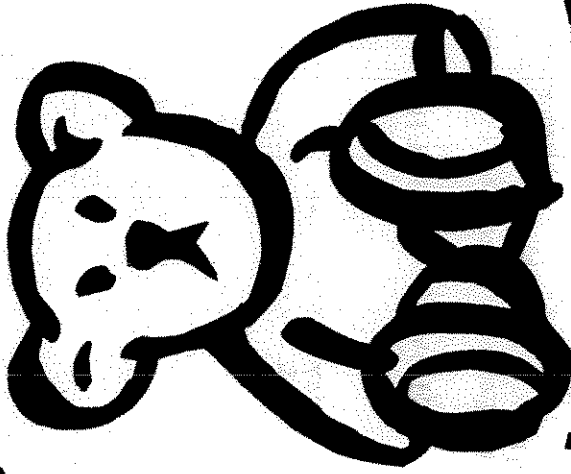
Other programs for the disabled will continue to suffer as counties struggle to cover costs.

Counties may be forced to break the law and suspend services to families in order to balance their Birth to Three budgets.

The Wisconsin Council on Developmental Disabilities opposes changes to the Birth to Three program eligibility criteria and ability to pay system for families.

***The council, in a letter to the Department of Health and Family Services, states that the only way to fully serve every child in need of this program is through an "increased level of federal and state funds."*

Birth to Three



Lasts a LIFETIME

PROGRAM IN CRISIS

Federal Legislation says the Goals of Birth to 3 are:

- *Minimize developmental and physical delays in children.*
- *Reduce educational costs.*
- *Minimize institutionalization.*
- *Increase chances of independent living.*
- *Enhance family's ability to meet child's special needs.*
- *Enhance ability of state and local agencies to identify and serve special needs children.*

BIRTH TO THREE FACTS

- ◆ A federal mandate guarantees Birth to Three services to all qualified children – there can be no waiting lists.
- ◆ Research shows the importance of early intervention on brain development in children during the first 3 years.
- ◆ Through early intervention, prevent or lessen learning problems in special needs children.
- ◆ In 2000, Wisconsin served nearly 7000 children in the Birth to 3 program.
- ◆ Wisconsin has received federal funds for Birth to 3 since 1987.
- ◆ Wisconsin implemented its own Birth to 3 program in 1991.
- ◆ Birth to 3 participation has increased 21% statewide since 1996.
- ◆ Wisconsin was once considered a national leader in services for children with disabilities. In recent years, other states have contributed additional funding for Birth to Three, while Wisconsin has not

STATUS OF BIRTH TO THREE FUNDING

- ◆ Currently Wisconsin receives \$6.1 million in federal funding for Birth to 3.
- ◆ Currently state and federal funds = 53% of total Birth to 3 funding.
- ◆ Counties pay 47% of total Birth to 3 costs.
- ◆ Wisconsin has not increased state Birth to 3 funding in the last two budgets – since 1996.
- ◆ Since 1996, Federal funding increased 9.8%, county funding increased 34%, (state funding increased zero percent.)
- ◆ Most counties believe in and support the Birth to 3 program, but struggle to keep it afloat financially. Counties say they cannot adequately serve children without additional state dollars.
- ◆ Private insurance is contributing less and less to cover Birth to 3 therapies each year.
- ◆ Advocates are requesting \$4 million in the next budget to fully fund Birth to 3.

IMPACT ON FAMILIES AND BIRTH TO THREE PROGRAMS

- ◆ Many county Birth to 3 programs are experiencing a high employee turnover rate due to lower wages.
- ◆ Providers are under stress to work within tight budgets – pressured to reduce travel time and work as many “billable hours” as possible.
- ◆ Provider turnover translates to stress on kids and their families, and delays in service.
- ◆ In 2000, Dodge County was forced to pay nearly \$200,000 in deficits to Birth to 3 therapy agencies due to travel expenses, etc. not covered by state/federal funds or private insurance. These were unanticipated costs due to the increased number of enrolled children.
- ◆ In 1999, Waukesha County paid \$61,000 in deficits due to unforeseeable costs.
- ◆ In many counties, money that goes to cover deficits in the Birth to 3 program must be taken away from other programs for the disabled.
- ◆ In November, Ashland County families received a letter saying early childhood education and some therapies would be cut because of a budget deficit.
- ◆ Last fall, Dane County Birth to 3 services were suspended for one week for some families due to lack of funding.
- ◆ In some counties, programs offer a “limited menu” of services to parents based upon what they can afford to provide, not what’s in the best interest of the child.
- ◆ Even though it is not legal, many counties have threatened to impose a waiting list for Birth to 3 children because they cannot handle the financial burden.