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*Lynda Thompson Palecek M.S. NCSP
School Psychologist
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My name is Lynda Palecek and I am a practicing school psychologist and I am a representative of the Wisconsin School Psychologists Association. Our association is also a member of the Quality Education Coalition. In February 2001, Governor Scott McCallum unveiled the state's biennial budget for fiscal year 2001-2003. After careful review of the budget, I wish to bring some important points to your attention regarding teacher licensure, assessment accountability, and school finance and agency operations.

- 1) **We need to maintain high standards for teachers who work in the classroom.** Under current law, any individual who holds a valid teacher license must complete a state-approved curriculum of course work at an accredited institution of higher education. It is the training that is acquired that prepares the individual to be an effective leader in the classroom. While the state has experienced a severe shortage of educators over the past years, proposing changes in training that makes it easier to obtain a teachers license has the potential of creating more harm to children than good. It is impossible to think that the individuals we entrust to prepare and educate our children may not have any experience in education or a college education. Instead we need to work within the current licensure structure that is already passed into law and work to provide other incentives to attract qualified college educated individuals into the field to education to teach in Wisconsin's schools. Qualified individuals who are trained in the field of education strive for and maintain the same high standards of achievement we all desire for our students.
- 2) **We need to maintain the Department of Public Instruction.** The intent of the state constitution was to create an office of state superintendent to not only advocate for public education but also to supervise it. This position is an elected position that acts independently of the political influences from the governor's office or other political agencies. The creation of a separate Governor-appointed Board on Education Evaluation and Accountability violates the intent of the Wisconsin constitution. It reduces the role and function of the Department.
- 3) **We need to fund special education services to the maximum extend possible.** Each year the cost of educating children with special education needs increase. The proposal outlined in the Governor's budget does not provide sufficient funds to meet current levels of reimbursement for special education services. It is recommended that the state categorical aids for

special education services increase to 50% reimbursement rate. Secondly, it is a concern that the Governor's proposed 2001/2003 biennial budget does not provide sufficient funds for high cost special education students. It is recommended that provisions in the budget increase state aid to 90% reimbursement rate for the expenditures of high cost students that exceed 3 times the school district's average cost per pupil. It is recommended that a one time revenue cap exemption for the unreimbursed school district expenses for these children be considered. In 1997, new special education language was written and passed into law. It is recommended that if the education committees wish to consider changes it needs to be achieved through an introduction of a separate bill brought before the Senate and Assembly Education Committees.

- 4) **We need to increase funding for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Program Administration.** Current proposals found in the budget recommends a reduction for monies for the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Prevention Programs. Recent incidences on the campuses of our nation's public schools have shown us that school violence and drug use are on the rise. It is recommended that an increase in funding in this area be considered not a reduction. It is money distributed to schools by the Department of Public Instruction that has offered grants and programs to school districts whose focus is to develop programs that reduce violence, increase awareness of drug and alcohol misuse.
- 5) **We need to maintain appropriate funding to guarantee student achievement in education.** The emphasis in Wisconsin has been placed on raising the bar for standards in the public schools. Once these standards are set achievement will follow. In addition to standards, reduced class size and a smaller teacher pupil ratio promotes better achievement in the classroom. The SAGE program endorses these practices. At a time when an expansion of the program is needed to promote better achievement in the classrooms, proposals in the budget are doing the exact opposite. It is important that we fund education initiatives in the public schools to the maximum and maintain consistency across classrooms and grade levels.

As the finance committee begins to make revisions in the budget proposal I urge you to keep in mind the points presented. Reductions made that affect programs for children, standards for teachers and funding for services will compromise the educational future for All children.

WCBVI and WSD 2001-03 Biennial Budget Request

Please see the attached document for details on the status of specific items requested by WCBVI and WSD in the State Superintendent's 2001-03 Budget Request.

General Concerns:

Reduction of DPI's GPR for operations

The Governor's budget reduces DPI's GPR budget by \$2.5 million over the biennium. Approximately half of that reduction would be allocated to the residential schools, possibly affecting about 10 positions. The WCBVI is statutorily required to increase its services to the approximately 1,200 blind and visually impaired students statewide, and WSD is working to improve its services to the approximately 1,400 deaf and hard of hearing students statewide. A cut in its base funding would devastate these efforts. It would also be nearly impossible to maintain its efforts to improve services for the approximately 250 students currently at the residential schools.

Requirement to distribute the maximum amount of federal aids to school districts

Taken literally, this provision would prohibit the State Superintendent from using federal discretionary grants to help the schools. In 2000-01 WSD and its outreach efforts received \$2,164,300 in federal grant dollars. WCBVI received \$1,745,000. The grants fund 40 positions at the schools. It must be noted that the Department of Administration indicates it was not the governor's intent to eliminate federal funding for the residential schools, nor was it the governor's intent to eliminate funding for federally-mandated services. However, under the budget language, grants to DPI or CESAs for mandated and discretionary projects would be eliminated.

No increase in GPR funding for WSD (see attached)

The WSD has functioned without the benefit of cost-to-continue increases to its budget for several years. Amounts budgeted for LTE's, supplies and services and permanent property have become increasingly inadequate to cover actual costs to operate the school. Lack of recognition of these needs will force the schools to decrease, instead of enhance, services to students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

No increase in GPR funding for WCBVI (see attached)

The WCBVI was directed by 1999 WI Act 9 to enhance statewide services to blind and visually impaired students and to continue the operation of a residential school. These include: improved access to high quality information; expanded opportunities for teacher licensing and other professional staff development; expanded availability of specialized curriculum, instructional materials and technology; expanded pupil access to specialized instruction and related services;

and improved coordination of services. In addition, the WCBVI will greatly expand the number of programs and services provided to pupils on a short-term basis.

Lack of additional resources will make it exceedingly difficult to carry out the intent of this legislation and improve services for blind and visually impaired students statewide. Combined with the GPR reductions mentioned above, it creates a critical situation for DPI and the WCBVI.

Support for WCBVI Technology Upgrade (see attached)

The DPI and WCBVI supports the inclusion of funding to upgrade and replace assistive technology devices and related software programs, and upgrade the information technology network at the WCBVI. It is hoped the provision can remain in the budget.

Support for Newsline for the Blind Provision (see attached)

The DPI supports the inclusion of funding to provide an additional \$23,000 in 2002 and \$22,000 in 2003 from the Universal Service Fund to expand Newsline for the Blind Services.

Teacher Licensure Changes

The DPI is concerned about the provisions that allow an unlicensed instructor to teach in Wisconsin classrooms. Both WSD and WCBVI require appropriate teaching certifications and licensed instructors. This proposal undermines the professionalism of teachers, and defeats the work of the education community in developing improved teacher standards, revamping teacher education programs, and providing mentors for beginning teachers.

Contacts:

Jerry Landmark, State Schools Administrator, 608-758-6104 or 608-267-3764
Mark Riccobono, WCBVI Director, 608-728-6121
Alex Slappy, WSD Superintendent, 262-728-7120

**Department of Public Instruction
2001-03 Budget Request**

Wisconsin School for the Deaf

Agency Request	Governor's Budget
<p>Limited Term Employees (LTEs) \$78,000 was requested for FY02 and FY03 to adequately cover the cost of LTE expenditures for substitute teachers, teacher assistants, child care counselors and support staff.</p>	Request not included
<p>Supplies and Services (S&S) \$70,500 in FY02 and \$92,900 in FY03 was requested to cover the following costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in repair and replacement costs—campus physical plant \$42,500 • TTYs for public phones to be accessible to pupils (8 TTYs @ \$2800) [NOTE: FY03 only] \$22,400 • Data and video link services to WSD Distance Learning Center \$19,000 • Lease of color copier for graphic arts program \$ 9,000 	Request not included
<p>Permanent Property \$20,000 was requested for FY02 and FY03 for capital purchases including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tractor with accessories for mowing and snow removal • resurfacing four outdoor play areas with rubberized tile to ensure pupil safety 	Request not included
<p>Statewide Services Statutory language was requested to establish the Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. This proposal would refocus the mission of WSD from a residential school only to a statewide educational resource center for the benefit of all Wisconsin children who are hearing impaired.</p>	Request not included

**Department of Public Instruction
2001-03 Budget Request**

Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Agency Request	Governor's Budget														
<p>Staffing \$239,600 and 4.0 FTE was requested in FY03 to support the staffing level recommended by the State Superintendent's transition plan to implement the 1999 Wisconsin Act 9 provisions establishing the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired.</p>	Request not included														
<p>Limited Term Employees (LTEs) \$67,800 was requested for FY02 and FY03 to adequately cover the cost of LTE expenditures for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substitute teachers, teacher assistants, child care counselors and support staff • student summer school program • conducting short evening recreational classes • producing large print and Braille books and tapes during peak periods 	Request not included														
<p>Supplies and Services (S&S) \$451,800 was requested for FY02 and FY03 to cover the following costs:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">• Upgrade/replace assistive technology devices and related software programs (regional centers and residential school)</td> <td style="text-align: right; vertical-align: bottom;">\$134,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">• Two-week summer school (4 sessions @ 3 sites)</td> <td style="text-align: right; vertical-align: bottom;">\$125,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">• Supplies and services support for regional sites</td> <td style="text-align: right; vertical-align: bottom;">\$ 75,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">• Pupil assistance for art, physical education and other classes (interpreters/assistants for pupils who are deaf and blind)</td> <td style="text-align: right; vertical-align: bottom;">\$ 55,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">• Replace outdated Braille and large print textbooks</td> <td style="text-align: right; vertical-align: bottom;">\$ 28,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">• Assessment/consultant/information services</td> <td style="text-align: right; vertical-align: bottom;">\$ 25,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">• Consultation contracts (ADD and autistic pupils)</td> <td style="text-align: right; vertical-align: bottom;">\$ 9,800</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	• Upgrade/replace assistive technology devices and related software programs (regional centers and residential school)	\$134,000	• Two-week summer school (4 sessions @ 3 sites)	\$125,000	• Supplies and services support for regional sites	\$ 75,000	• Pupil assistance for art, physical education and other classes (interpreters/assistants for pupils who are deaf and blind)	\$ 55,000	• Replace outdated Braille and large print textbooks	\$ 28,000	• Assessment/consultant/information services	\$ 25,000	• Consultation contracts (ADD and autistic pupils)	\$ 9,800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide \$268,000 PR-S funding in FY02 to upgrade and replace assistive technology devices and related software programs. • Funding will come from the dissolution of the Wisconsin Advanced Telecommunications Foundation's endowment fund and will be transferred to the department's continuing appropriation for funds transferred from other state agencies.
• Upgrade/replace assistive technology devices and related software programs (regional centers and residential school)	\$134,000														
• Two-week summer school (4 sessions @ 3 sites)	\$125,000														
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• Assessment/consultant/information services	\$ 25,000														
• Consultation contracts (ADD and autistic pupils)	\$ 9,800														

<p>Permanent Property \$155,000 was requested for FY02 and FY03 for capital purchases including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 water softeners and 2 Braille printers in FY02 and 3 Braille printers and 2 print-to-voice systems in FY03 \$ 26,000 • IT network upgrade for residential school campus (complete Phases 1, 2 and 3 in FY02 and Phases 4 and 5 in FY03) \$129,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide \$258,000 PR-S funding in FY02 to upgrade the information technology network at the residential school campus. • Funding will come from the dissolution of the Wisconsin Advanced Telecommunications Foundation's endowment fund and will be transferred to the department's continuing appropriation for funds transferred from other state agencies.
<p>Newsline for the Blind \$23,000 PR-S for FY02 and \$22,000 PR-S for FY03 was requested to expand existing Newsline for the Blind services to include two additional state newspapers, twelve additional telephone lines and an increase in annual subscriber fees.</p>	<p>Request included</p>

DPI 2001-03 BIENNIAL BUDGET REQUEST

DECISION ITEM XXXX - WISCONSIN SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

102 - General Program Operations;

School for the Deaf and Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

s. 20.255 (1)(b)

FISCAL SUMMARY	
2001-02	2002-03
Request	Request
\$174,500	\$196,900

Request/Objective

The department requests \$174,500 GPR in FY02 and \$196,900 GPR in FY03 to meet the ongoing costs of operating the Wisconsin School for the Deaf (WSD) and to establish the statutory authority to enhance statewide services for deaf and hearing impaired pupils.

Benefit

This request reflects the department's commitment to provide quality services and programs for pupils who are deaf or hearing impaired by providing adequate funding to support the state's residential school for deaf and hearing impaired pupils. In addition, the department is supporting a plan to provide enhanced services and options to school districts statewide and to the deaf and hearing impaired pupils they serve.

Background

Except for a modest increase for maintenance projects included in 1997 Wisconsin Act 27, the WSD has functioned without the benefit of cost-to-continue increases to its budget for several years. Amounts budgeted for LTEs, supplies and services and permanent property have become increasingly inadequate to cover actual costs to operate the residential school.

Current law provides for WSD to be maintained and governed by the State Superintendent. While recognizing the need to continue the operation of this residential facility, the State Superintendent's Advisory Committee on the Education of Pupils who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing has been gathering input since 1998 and has developed a strategic plan to provide a myriad of services to children who are deaf or hearing impaired.

Analysis of Need/Internal and External Impact

Limited Term Employees (LTEs):

The department requests an increase of \$78,000 annually for LTEs. The amount budgeted for LTE costs at WSD has covered only about 65 percent of actual costs during FY99 and FY00. Although the school has made an effort to keep LTE expenditures within its budget, an adequate number of substitutes for teachers, teacher assistants, child care counselors and support staff must be provided to maintain a safe and appropriate learning and living environment.

Supplies and Services (S&S):

The budget at WSD has been inadequate to meet increasing supplies and services costs. The Department of Administration has directed the department to allocate sufficient funds to pay for facility upkeep and repairs. However, the cost of parts to repair and maintain heating, refrigeration and electrical systems is rising dramatically. Other specific needs at WSD include the lease of a color copier for the graphic arts program, the cost of data and video link services to the WSD Distance Learning Center and, in FY03 only, the replacement of eight outdated teletypewriters (TTYs) for public phones in the dormitories to be accessible to pupils. Following is a summary of the department's S&S request for WSD:

Supplies and Services Item	FY02	FY03
Increase in repair and replacement costs—campus physical plant	\$42,500	\$42,500
TTYs for public phones to be accessible to pupils (8 TTYs @ \$2,800)	0	22,400
Data and video link services to WSD Distance Learning Center	19,000	19,000
Lease of color copier for graphic arts program	9,000	9,000
TOTAL	\$70,500	\$92,900

Permanent Property:

The department requests a permanent property increase of \$20,000 GPR annually. The necessity to meet the immediate needs on the LTE and supplies and services lines has all but eliminated permanent property purchases in recent years. Deferring equipment replacement over a period of time has resulted in a long list of capital items in need of replacement, some of which are very costly, i.e. a tractor with accessories for mowing and snow removal. In addition, there is an urgent need to surface four outdoor play areas with rubberized tile to ensure pupil safety.

Statewide Services:

A strategic plan has been developed by the State Superintendent's Advisory Committee on the Education of Pupils who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing to enhance statewide services for deaf and hearing impaired children. The proposal includes the establishment of the Wisconsin Center for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired (WCDHI) and is structured around eight focus areas including technical assistance, media and materials, residential school program, enhanced educational opportunities for pupils, regional service sites, birth to age three program, professional development and services for families. The department supports the advisory committee's recommendation, and an action plan is being developed to implement the provisions of the strategic plan. It is anticipated that these provisions will be addressed over a period of more than one biennium; therefore, the department is not requesting funding increases for 2001-03.

Statutory Language

The department is proposing statutory language related to this request. See Wisconsin Center for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, *Statutory Language Requests*.

PDPI 2001-03 BIENNIAL BUDGET REQUEST

DECISION ITEM 4003 – WISCONSIN CENTER FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

102 – General Program Operations;

School for the Deaf and Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

s. 20.255 (1)(b)

FISCAL SUMMARY	
2001-02 Request	2002-03 Request
\$674,600	\$914,600 4.0 FTE

Request/Objective

The department requests \$674,600 GPR in FY02 and \$914,600 GPR and 4.0 FTE GPR positions in FY03 to fund the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI), including the continued operation of a residential school for blind and visually impaired pupils.

Benefit

The department was directed by 1999 Wisconsin Act 9 to enhance statewide services to blind and visually impaired pupils and to continue the operation of a residential school. Enhanced statewide educational services for children with visual impairments under the newly established WCBVI will include: 1) improved access to high quality information; 2) expanded opportunities for teacher licensing and other professional staff development; 3) expanded availability of specialized curriculum, instructional materials and technology; 4) expanded pupil access to specialized instruction and related services; and 5) improved coordination of services. In addition, the residential school will greatly expand the number of programs and services provided to pupils on a short-term basis. This request represents the department's estimate of additional resources needed to carry out the intent of the legislation to provide the least restrictive environment for blind and visually impaired pupils statewide.

Background

During the 1997 legislative session, the State Superintendent proposed that, because of low and declining enrollment, the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped (WSVH) be eliminated and that state and federal funding for the school be redirected to strengthen statewide services for children with visual disabilities. At the time of this recommendation, the pupil population at WSVH represented only about five percent of the total number of pupils statewide identified with visual disabilities. The Legislature's response to this proposal was the creation of the Joint Legislative Council Special Committee on Services for Visually Handicapped Students which was directed "to study and make recommendations for the improvement in educational and related services provided to visually impaired children and adults in the state by public school districts, the WSVH and other educational agencies."

The committee convened in October 1998 and submitted its recommendations to the Legislature in November 1999. The substance of those recommendations was included in 1999 Wisconsin Act 9.

Key features of the recommendations include that WSVH be renamed the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI), that the functions of WCBVI be refocused as a statewide educational resource center for the benefit of all visually impaired children, that WCBVI operate a school for pupils if their individualized education program (IEP) specifies the school as the appropriate placement and that the State Superintendent prepare a transition plan setting forth specific funding and staffing recommendations for WCBVI and describing the appropriate steps for phasing in appropriate program modifications.

This request reflects the needs identified to implement the State Superintendent's transition plan, including resources needed to meet the needs of a changing population at the residential school. Five regional sites at five Cooperative Educational Services Agencies (CESAs) have been established, and a plan for reallocation of WCBVI staff is being implemented.

Analysis of Need/Internal and External Impact

Staffing:

The role of WCBVI staff, as provided in the transition plan, is to focus on conducting regional and statewide needs assessments, assisting school districts and CESAs in coordinating services and securing appropriate instructional materials (such as Braille or large print books) and technology for teachers in local school districts. The transition plan identifies 36.0 FTE positions that will be specified for providing services to pupils and school districts statewide through the five regional offices and the headquarters office in Janesville. Also, staff members whose primary responsibility is serving pupils enrolled in the residential school will have a secondary responsibility for services to pupils throughout the state. In addition to instructional, child care and support staff needed to operate the residential school in Janesville, WCBVI is implementing a plan to allocate existing vacant positions to the staffing outlined in the transition plan over a period of three school years. Seventeen staff members, supported by both GPR and federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds, are currently assigned to statewide service positions. During the 2000-01 and 2001-02 school years, 11.0 FTE existing vacant GPR and IDEA positions will be filled. In FY03 (2002-03 school year), the department requests 4.0 FTE GPR positions and associated funding which, when combined with existing GPR position authority of 2.12 FTE and federal position authority of 1.88 FTE, will be adequate to allocate the remaining 8.0 FTE needed to fully implement the transition plan. This reallocation of vacant positions demonstrates the department's commitment to implement the legislation using existing resources to the greatest extent possible.

Limited Term Employes (LTEs):

The department requests an increase of \$63,000 annually for LTEs. The amount budgeted for LTE costs at WCBVI during FY00 was less than 68 percent of actual costs. An adequate number of substitutes for teachers, teacher assistants, child care counselors and support staff must be provided to maintain a safe and appropriate learning and living environment at the residential school. In addition, support is needed for a student work-study program which was implemented during the 1999-00 school year. The department also requests additional LTE funding to conduct short evening recreational classes, to provide adequate staffing for the student summer school program and to produce large print and Braille books and tapes in a timely manner during peak periods.

Supplies and Services (S&S):

The new legislation, as detailed in the WCBVI transition plan, calls for a wide range of new and expanded services for blind and visually impaired pupils statewide. Given the scope and responsibilities delegated to the new center, the department is requesting a relatively conservative increase in supplies and services funding for the next biennium. Federal IDEA support will be maintained at the same or greater level as the support that had been provided for the residential school. The department is committed to implementing the transition plan as quickly and efficiently as possible while recognizing that the full complement of services outlined in the plan will be achieved over a period of years. Funds are requested to cover the costs of implementing the first phases of the transition plan during the next biennium. Supplies and services increases requested for FY02 and FY03 are summarized below:

- An increase in S&S funding is requested to cover the increased costs associated with a changing pupil population at the residential school. The S&S budget at WCBVI has been inadequate to meet actual costs. In addition, it has been necessary to pay LTE costs for the pupil work-study program and the adult summer school program from this line. The new enrollment of four pupils who are autistic and two pupils who are deaf and blind make it necessary to contract for consultant services and interpreters. Program consultation and evaluation services are necessary to ensure that the needs of pupils who are diagnosed with attention deficit disorder (ADD) or autism are being met. Contracting is also needed to provide class assistance and full-time interpreters for pupils who are deaf and blind.
- Assistive technology devices and software, for both residential school pupils and those being served in school districts statewide, are in need of upgrades or replacement. An assistive technology device is an item, piece of equipment or product system used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. Devices designed for blind and visually impaired pupils may range from a dark-lined modified paper (low-tech device) to a refreshable Braille device to allow a pupil to read what is on a computer screen (high-tech device). It is very costly to obtain, upgrade and replace these devices. This equipment is used by teachers at the residential school to assist pupils enrolled there as well as by consultants in the regional offices and teachers in local school districts to assist pupils being served throughout the state.
- One of the five major themes of the WCBVI transition plan is to provide access to high quality information and to create, utilize and distribute specialized curriculum and instructional materials. The Educational Services Center (ESC) at WCBVI produces full or partial textbooks in Braille or large print for school districts throughout the state and for the residential school in Janesville. The transition plan calls for a review of the current system for ordering materials through the ESC in an effort to improve efficiency, develop better resource information for teachers and parents and ensure an integrated system to utilize other transcribers and production sites such as the Oshkosh Correctional Facility. Specific funding is not requested for this review. It is anticipated that the implementation of better and more efficient statewide services through the ESC can be accomplished within WCBVI's current budget. However, the department is requesting funding to replace a number of outdated Braille and large print textbooks at the residential school in Janesville.
- Basic S&S support is needed for staff currently employed at the five regional sites as well as for positions that will be filled at these locations during FY02 and FY03. Funding is also necessary

to cover the costs of contracting for services to assess pupil needs, making contacts and arranging consultations with eye specialists, work coordinators and others. Many services exist within the state to support the needs of persons who are blind or visually impaired, but these services are not well coordinated. The department is committed to improving coordination of services for school-age children and youth with visual impairments through WCBVI's web site and toll free number as well as through staff at its headquarters and five regional sites.

- Supplies and services funding is requested for four pupil summer school sessions. WCBVI is directed by the transition plan to coordinate services and increase opportunities for pupils and parents to participate in summer and other activities and to provide access to a variety of short-term programs at the residential school and regional sites. Plans are underway for two-week summer school sessions in Janesville, Wausau and Waukesha.

Following is a summary of the department's annual supplies and services request for WCBVI:

Supplies and Services Items	FY02	FY03
Upgrade/replace assistive technology devices and related software programs (regional centers and residential school)	\$134,000	\$134,000
Two-week summer school (4 sessions @ 3 sites)	125,000	125,000
Supplies and services support for regional sites	75,000	75,000
Pupil assistance for art, physical education and other classes (interpreters/assistants for deaf and blind pupils)	55,000	55,000
Replace outdated Braille and large print textbooks	28,000	28,000
Assessment/consultation/information services	25,000	25,000
Consultation contracts (ADD and autistic pupils)	9,800	9,800
TOTAL	\$451,800	\$451,800

Permanent Property:

The department requests a permanent property increase of \$155,000 GPR annually to cover the ongoing costs of equipment replacement and to complete a project to upgrade information technology at the residential school in Janesville.

The necessity to use permanent property funds to meet the immediate needs on the LTE and S&S lines has deferred equipment replacement over a period of time. This has resulted in a critical situation regarding the need to replace several items on the Janesville campus within the next few years. The department requests \$26,000 GPR annually to remedy this problem. Planned expenditures include two water softeners and two Braille printers in FY02 and three Braille printers and two print-to-voice systems in FY03.

A network upgrade for the residential school campus has been ongoing since May 2000. The total cost of this upgrade is estimated to be approximately \$300,000 and includes PCs, servers, switches, cabling and adaptive software licensing. Benefits of this upgrade include making the PC inventory adequate to: 1) provide all classroom teachers and other staff access to a computer; 2) provide a PC in every dorm room by the 2001-02 school year and to every pupil by the 2002-03 school year as directed in the transition plan; and 3) eliminate reliance on the department's main office surplus PCs which are not adequate to execute adaptive technology required for blind and visually impaired

children. In addition, the project will provide the capability to completely separate academic and administrative data traffic pursuant to the department's technical services standards.

Although the network is located at the Janesville campus, the upgrades will benefit the implementation of the WCBVI transition plan. The new servers will expand current files to include electronic mail services, remote access and web site facilitation, thereby enhancing the ability of WCBVI to serve pupils, parents and staff at all sites and to provide a worldwide presence on the Internet. An increase of \$129,000 GPR annually is requested to provide the additional resources needed to complete the project and to provide sufficient base funding to maintain this standard in subsequent years.

Statutory Language

The department is not proposing any statutory language related to this request.

Presenter: Judith A. Sommer, 723 Russet St. Racine WI 53405, 4YRK teacher at G. Knapp Elementary School Racine Unified School District

I am here today to request an increase in the amount of funds allocated in the state budget for Four-Year-Kindergarten programs for at risk students. There is a great need to service at risk four year old students to assist in lessening the school readiness gap that exists between those children who come to school "ready to learn" and those who do not.

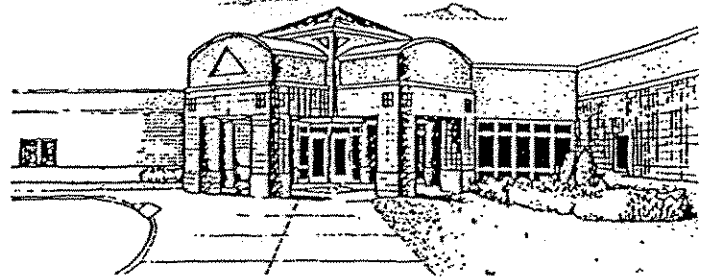
A quality four year kindergarten program works toward the development of each child who is enrolled, in the areas of communication, motor skills, self-help skills, socializing skills, and academic skills. At-risk four year olds need to learn to stay on task, express themselves verbally, recognize authority, share with others, listen to and follow directions prior to entering a five year kindergarten class. Counting, colors, shapes, and letter recognition are important skills also, but these are lost on a child who cannot focus on the classroom task at hand nor transition successfully from one activity to another.

Quality four year kindergarten programs recognize that young children develop at different rates and that the certified teacher's and trained assistant's job is to guide every child through his/her unique developmental growth pattern. Children are taken from where they are when they enter a 4yrk program and they are moved along the educational continuum as far as they can go in the short time they are in the program.

Quality 4yrk programs are child-centered with a major emphasis on language development. Quality programs do not happen by chance. That is why I am asking for you to take a close look at your early end investment in the children of Wisconsin and invest in their success by allocating funds for the development of 4yrk programs at all public schools.

TURTLE CREEK ELEMENTARY

1235 CREEK ROAD
DELAVAN, WI 53115
262-728-2642, EXT. 4399
TIM CLINE, PRINCIPAL



To: Joint Finance Committee
From: Tim Cline, Principal *TTC*
Delavan-Darien School District
Date: April 10, 2001
Re: Four-Year-Old Kindergarten Funding

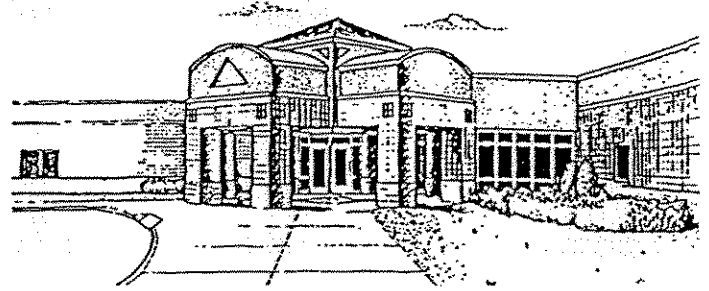
A 52% Free and Reduced Lunch population; one third of the student population is ESL; and a four year average mobility rate of 33% describes the newest and largest elementary school in the Delavan-Darien School District. This school, Turtle Creek, is eight years old and is located in the newest section of the community. The demographic just described are indicative of children with low social skills and limited literacy experiences. However, the four-year-old kindergarten program Delavan-Darien has had in place for the past fourteen years has minimized these factors.

The students of the Delavan-Darien four-year-old kindergarten program have realized benefits in three significant areas. The first area is academic achievement. Recognizing that the majority of the students have been identified as at-risk, there has been little literacy support in their lives since birth. Many of the students enter the four-year-old kindergarten program without being read to; with little exposure to written symbols; without hearing the rhythms and patterns of the written word; and narrow exposure to oral language. However in a recent study of the 1987-88 four-year-old class, those children entered kindergarten scoring fewer than 7 points below the rest of the kindergarten class. By second grade these same children were less than half year behind the rest of the second graders on a nationally normed standardized test. By fifth grade the students averaged 3 months behind on another standardized test. Not only were the students able to receive instruction and experiences in the four-year-old program that promoted their literacy, but students needing Title 1 or Reading Recovery services were identified at an earlier stage. Children with chronic middle-ear infections, a significant factor in the delay of language and reading development, were caught early and appropriate health care was obtained.

The second benefit of the four-year-old kindergarten is found in the area of social development. None of the students in the above study showed any behavioral/social development problems at the kindergarten level. Two of the students started to have difficulties at the first grade level (these students were eventually diagnosed with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder). Positive social interaction has a significant impact on the individual's as well as the total classes learning curve. More and more students are entering school lacking the skills to interact with their peers in socially acceptable ways. The four-year-old kindergarten provided a setting where social skills could be developed and practiced.

TURTLE CREEK ELEMENTARY

1235 CREEK ROAD
DELAVAN, WI 53115
262-728-2642, EXT. 4399
TIM CLINE, PRINCIPAL



A positive home/school relationship is the third benefit from our four-year-old kindergarten program. Many of the children have parents who did not have a positive school experience. Key components to the four-year-old kindergarten program are three family nights per month and home visits by the classroom teacher. These components help to support and nurture families through parenting classes; organized events that promote family interaction; health seminars; helping bilingual families adjust to United States education and expectations; and individual support.

The Delavan-Darien School District has made the four-year-old kindergarten program a priority. The District has recognized the benefits of the program and has cut other areas in its budget to assure continuation. However, if funding were to be reduced or cut completely, the four-year-old program would have to be dropped. Reduced funding would eliminate the ability to maintain a low teacher-to-student ratio so the wide range of individual differences and abilities can be accommodated. Insufficient funding will impact the ability to purchase resources to ensure classrooms have high-quality children's books, computer software, and multimedia resources at various levels of difficulty and reflecting various cultural and family backgrounds. The extended day programs that help parents understand how to support their child's educational development would be eliminated without full funding. The most important period for literacy development is from birth through age 8. Schools need more than three years of that developmental window to deal with the ever-increasing diverse backgrounds, experiences, and abilities of today's children. As educators, we have a special responsibility to engage every child in experiences that make academic content meaningful and to build on prior learning. The standards for basic literacy proficiency are increasing daily. Monies that support the early development of children will provide the foundation for Wisconsin's children to meet these demanding proficiencies. Monies promoting a successful start to a child's educational career will be recouped as the need for remedial, middle and high school at-risk programs and alternative schools become diminished.

On behalf of the students, parents, teachers, administrators, and school board of the Delavan-Darien School District, I thank you for the opportunity to express our support to fund four-year-old kindergarten at the same rate as five-year-old kindergarten. Please do not hesitate to call on me if I can be of further assistance in answering questions or providing you with more information.

**JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE
APRIL 10, 2001**

As a member of the Board of Regents, I would like to talk to the needs of higher education in our wonderful State.

- **The Board of Regents modified its initial requests for the budget to concentrate on the incentives that would provide much needed economic development for Wisconsin.**

We believe these initiatives are a way to provide intellectual capital to the State that would improve salaries by attracting more high tech industries and eventually increase the tax revenue for the State.

Please give careful consideration to these initiatives; Southeast Wisconsin and UW-Parkside would be a recipient of three of the new programs requested enabling increased presence of high tech education on our Campus.

TESTIMONY TO THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE
APRIL 10, 2001, KENOSHA, WISCONSIN

I am Douglas Baker, Director of the Kenosha Public Library and the Kenosha County Library System. I am here today to speak in favor of the Wisconsin Library Association's Legislative Agenda and the 2001 - 2003 Department of Public Instruction's Budget proposal as it pertains to libraries.

I believe that the Governor's budget proposal misses an excellent opportunity to set good public policy for libraries in this state, and I would like to work with you and your colleagues to make a better budget for this coming biennium. It is good to see that some parts of the Wisconsin Library Association's (WLA) 2001 Legislative Agenda have been included in Governor McCallum's budget.

Base level funding for BadgerLink, for example, is included; however, the dollars needed to maintain BadgerLink above last year's base funding are to come from fees charged to each school district. The Universal Service Fund should continue to be the source of all funding for BadgerLink, including the \$223,700 cost-to-continue increase for the 2001-03 biennium.

I am also disappointed that there has been no additional funding for Wisconsin's public library systems, not even funds to cover normal inflationary cost increases. Through the Kenosha County Library System, the Kenosha Public Library and other System members are able to provide a level of service that could never be accomplished on their own.

Through the system's active involvement in developing and maintaining the Kenosha County Library Computer Network, system member libraries are able to steadily improve and enhance the level of service they provide. With tight budgets at home, this failure on the state's part to maintain its funding partnership with localities will have dire consequences for the level of library service local libraries can continue to provide for their customers.

I know the message about this state budget is that money is very tight. After reviewing the budget, though, I can't help but wonder if it's truly necessary to provide an additional \$103,900,400, an 11.4% increase in FY02, to the Department of Corrections.

It seems that, indeed, there is money available. It is short sighted, even upside down thinking, to starve existing worthwhile programs that help people become better citizens while providing millions in increases for prisons.

Utilizing just some of that money will provide forward movement toward achieving WLA's goal of 13% benchmark funding for library systems, as well as take care of the relatively small increases in the four statewide resource contracts (\$222,600) and the increase in the Reference & Loan Library materials budget (\$80,000). As a result, libraries will continue to move forward in achieving their important educational mission, one that effectively reaches all age levels.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns.

Douglas Baker, Director
Kenosha Public Library
and
Kenosha County Library System
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dbaker@kenosha.lib.wi.us

Putting children first



ELIZABETH FLORES / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Rachel Koepke, 3, shows off the tools she used to create a painting at the Pleasant Prairie Renaissance School in Kenosha County. The school uses the Reggio Emilia teaching approach, which emphasizes project-based learning and encourages students to explore subjects that interest them and express their ideas through arts.

PROS AND CONS

Supporters say the teaching approach puts **children in charge** and that students learn that their ideas are valued.

Critics say Reggio **lacks structure** and specific lessons for skills that might appear later on standardized tests.

Reggio Emilia schools gaining favor with freewheeling approach

By **AMY HETZNER**
of the Journal Sentinel staff

Getting a jump-start on their 18-month-old daughter's education, Justine and Ray Gastrow already have selected a junior kindergarten with a unique, freewheeling instructional approach that is taking root in Wisconsin and elsewhere in the country.

"A solid educational foundation for our kids is paramount," said Ray Gastrow of Oconomowoc.

That's why the Gastrows and others like them are signing their kids up, and often plunking \$5,500 to \$8,000 a year down, for early childhood education programs modeled after the world-celebrated preschools of Reggio Emilia, Italy.

Using a free-floating style, teachers — two to a classroom — forgo daily lesson plans and instead take their cues from their young charges, engaging them in art projects and other endeavors intended to spark their interest.

Under Reggio, the children — not teachers — rule.

If students show an interest in one area, teachers immerse them in it, recording nearly everything they say or do in word and photos.

That lack of structure is fine by the Gastrows, who already have sent an application to the exclusive University Lake School in Delafield, even though it will be at least two years before their daughter

Please see **REGGIO, 9A**

Good morning,

I am Joanne Williams, a teacher retired from the Twin Lakes School District. Today, I would like to talk to you about two disturbing aspects of the state budget.

As a retiree, I am concerned about a non-fiscal item in the budget, the changing of a subject of bargaining from mandatory to permissive. The new budget would allow school districts to determine the health insurance carrier without going to the bargaining table. Teachers in Kenosha County gave up retirement benefits and pay-outs for unused sick days in order to obtain health insurance that would cover a wide variety of procedures, have a reasonable drug plan, pay quickly and protect the teacher's privacy. We gave up one kind of possible retirement benefit to get health insurance that would be carried over to our retirement at a reasonable cost.

It is grossly unfair for the governor to now say, go to something that may be comparable. We didn't bargain for comparable, we bargained for a specific plan from a trusted carrier. In the process, we gave up other benefits.

I also want to tell you that the insurance Kenosha County teacher bargained for and got has been significantly cheaper than similar policies by other state carriers. The teachers saved the district a great deal of money for at least twenty years.

My other concern is to maintain the funding for the SAGE program that we expected to continue from the last budget. The program has been a huge success. Educators did just what we were told to do, "Find a program that works. Sage works, smaller class sizes work. We did nothing wrong. Please fund the program in the third and fourth grades.

I recently visited a second grade SAGE classroom of about a dozen students in Drought, in Racine County. In previous years this classroom would have held twenty-five more second and third graders. Some people in education call this situation a split class because it holds two grade levels. In this situation, a teacher has a double load in preparing to teach a subject. Often the school curriculum has not been changed to reflect a split class. Students in a split class for several years may repeat some subjects and never be exposed to others.

At Drought, split classes ended for most of the lower grades when the school was able to enter the SAGE program. SAGE works. The funding must continue.

Thank you.

WILLIAM NEIMAN

8116 43RD AVENUE KENOSHA, WI 53142

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE

Every measurement of the impact that revenue caps have on a school district show the results pointing in the wrong direction, negative instead of positive. Surveys have been done of school board members, school district administrators, educators, parents, and community members about the effect of revenue caps on their school district, their students, their children, and their community. Every indicator is negative. But, you may have already seen these surveys or heard of them in previous testimony, so let me tell you of what is actually happening in classrooms in southeast Wisconsin. I won't even mention the absurd, the 45 students in a class in Racine Unified School District last year. In my school district, Kenosha Unified School District, while class sizes were lowered in Kindergarten through second grade through the SAGE program, upper grade classes were expanded. The school board had no answer as to how I put my class of 30 students into the computer lab of 28 computers. Hoping for some absences was not the solution that I was looking for. Bradford H. S. and Tremper H. S. in Kenosha are ranked in the top three high schools in the state in terms of student population.

The community recently passed a building referendum for a new elementary school and a new middle school. But, no referendum was passed to exceed the revenue caps that will prohibit the school district from fully staffing both buildings. And, Kenosha is lucky. We are a growing district. For that, we get to expand our revenue caps just a bit more. We don't get zapped quickly over decreasing revenues, and the resulting downfall in programs, buildings and staff. We get to dwindle in a slower bleeding. How is that happening?

- + Our district which benefitted from SAGE money will need to cut back and not expand that program due to budget projections from Gov. McCallum's new budget. Here is a highly successful program for children that will not be offered to all the children that could benefit from it.

- + Our district will still use the older Apple computers that cannot even load on some of the new programs because their capacity is too low.

- + Our district will not be expanding successful programs such as those at the Kenosha School of Language because we cannot afford more participants in the program.

- + Our district cannot hire enough teachers (we started last school year with 40 positions not filled and that number should be greater this fall) because people can work as teachers ten miles south of here and earn ten to twenty thousand dollars more per year.

- + Our district uses portable classrooms because we cannot afford to build as quickly as we need to and don't have the money to staff what we need to build anyway.

- + Our district must decide whether to put money into meeting regular education needs or spend money on innovations that might make our educational program better.

- + Our district has put off buying history textbooks for three years. Our U. S. History books do show that Bush is the President. But, that is George Bush Sr., and nothing has been identified as new since 1991.

- + Our district has made cuts in the Gifted and Talented program.

- + Our district has made cuts in at-risk programs.

- + Our district has reduced the opportunities for music and art as teachers must carry all materials to their students as music/art on a cart.

- + Our district has increased the administrative workload, increased the number of students in each class, increased the number of classes for teachers, increased student fees, and raised property taxes to a point where they are again a concern for property taxpayers.

- + Our district has great trouble hiring and keeping teachers, has trouble hiring substitute teachers, has trouble hiring and keeping administrators, has trouble investing in programs that will improve the graduation rate, has trouble keeping its community happy about its schools, and has trouble providing a quality education for all.

This is all because the legislature took it upon themselves to step into the school board's area of responsibility. Yet, the school boards around the state of Wisconsin were the most responsive elected bodies. In our district, there is a school board election every year. Members of the board have to be responsive to the concerns of the citizens or be voted out. And they were. But that responsibility being taken away leaves no one to blame, except the legislature. You sought to take credit for lowering property taxes and instead will be blamed for higher property taxes, higher state taxes, and creating a poorer educational system. There are solutions. End revenue caps and tie the education budget to a fixed percentage of the state budget as California has done. This is turning around a ruined public school system in California and putting much needed money into that state's faltering educational system. There are solutions. End revenue caps and let school boards be responsible again for local property taxes. There are solutions. Allow school boards to exceed revenue caps by voting for spending bills unanimously. There are solutions. Seek them out. Help our school district. Help our students. Help our community. Help our public education system.

Good morning. My name is Ellen Kupfer and I am an educator in Kenosha Unified. I would like to take a few minutes to talk about the benefits of the SAGE funding.

SAGE allows us to provide classrooms that facilitate teachers spending more time with students to make sure they fully understand the lesson. For instance, in our math class which lasts for 50 minutes. A teacher can teach the main lesson or concept for 20 minutes and has 30 to work with students one on one while they practice in small groups. For a class of 15 that allows you 2 minutes per student. In a class of 28-30 you have only a little more than a minute. Have you ever tried to teach something to a seven year old in a minute? Not very realistic! In addition to more personal attention, with fewer students, there are more opportunities to call on kids and there is more time for discussion and indepth learning.

A SAGE classroom is less congested, has more area to move around in and less distractions. Young children are still learning how to screen out noise and what to pay attention. With fewer students teacher can see a behavior starting to happen and stop it before it becomes a severe problem. This makes the environment much more conducive to learning and safer for all.

We all know that the key to improved comprehension and true learning is the student-teacher ratio. When there are fewer kids it is easier to build a positive relationship. As adults we know that when we feel our boss believes in us we will be more motivated to take on tasks that we may not feel we could otherwise accomplish, work harder and make more sacrifices than we normally would. Kids are the same way. One little girl in a third grade SAGE classroom was struggling to learn her math facts. But she needed to practice at home as well as in school. So one weekend the teacher made her a set of flashcards. The next day the little girl came to school and gave her teacher her teddy bear as thanks. Needless to say, math is progressing well.

When teachers can see students making progress and the environment is one where they have a sense of job satisfaction, they are more likely to stay. We are in a teacher shortage and need to consider this. Our students learning conditions are the teachers working conditions. What kind of environment do we want to create?

Kenosha is also a growing community. Students are entering our schools at all levels from all over the world with all kinds of educational background. If a student comes here at grade 2 without the skills how are we to catch them up? Or don't we care? This weekend there was something on the news regarding the fact that if a student isn't reading at or close to the third grade by the time they leave third grade they will struggle the rest of their life with learning. These kids grow up and go on to High School. Then we become concerned that they drop out and don't graduate. School is boring when you have difficulty with the work. Teenagers have developmental tasks that have a strong pull against learning(think about chemistry vs. think about girlfriend or boyfriend). SAGE needs to be funded through grade 3 to allow us to give the most amount of students the best basis for lifetime learning.

I understand that there is only a finite number of dollars. What is given to one is taken from another. These kids are our future in truth as well as finances and need to be prepared to be productive and work. What is our priority? It all has to fit together. Thank you for your time.

2814 Gilson Street
Racine, WI 53403
10 April 2001


Joint Finance Committee
Wisconsin State Legislature

Dear Joint Finance Committee,

I am writing to urge you to reject the proposal in the Governor's 2001-2 Budget which would alter the State Superintendent's current authority to distribute federal funds and GPR Program operation costs. The Superintendent needs to have the authority to distribute federal funds and GPR program operation costs.

Thank you!

Sincerely,


Susan Nigohosian
Racine

2814 Gilson Street
Racine, WI 53403
10 April 2001

Joint Finance Committee
Wisconsin State Legislature

Dear Joint Finance Committee,

I am writing to urge you to retain the proposal for the Wisconsin Geographic Endowment in the Governor's 2001-2 Budget. The Wisconsin Geographic Alliance has worked tirelessly toward educating all Wisconsin citizens in global and local geographic knowledge. The Endowment is especially needed because of the future programs it would provide. Please retain the Wisconsin Geography Endowment in the Governor's Budget.

Thank you!

Sincerely,



Susan Nigohosian
Racine

My name is Michael Carey and I am an 8th grade History teacher at Jerstad-Agerholm Middle School in Racine, Wisconsin. I am here today to speak to how the state imposed revenue caps have had a serious, detrimental effect on public schools in Racine. Governor McCallum's proposed budget will do even more harm to public schools. Revenue caps are slowly squeezing the district's ability to adequately teach its students as well as making it almost impossible to attract quality, trained and licensed staff.

Some examples from Racine are, I'm sure, duplicated throughout the state. However, I would still like to share them with you. Personally, I have had programs cut in which I have worked. Three years ago, RUSD cut its secondary standards staff in half. This program dealt with students who scored in the lowest 20% of the district on standardized reading tests. Not all, but a high percentage of them, were from economically disadvantaged families. This is a group that seems often to take the brunt of the cuts because their parents are not politically affluent. I went from working with 50 to 70 children on a daily basis in one building, to working with approximately 130 who qualified for the program in two buildings. I could not see the children daily and often had very limited time to spend with them due to scheduling difficulties. I left the program in frustration because the district (read revenue caps) was forced to cut the things that made it effective. This year the district is again proposing to cut an additional \$836,000 from the standards reading program.

Last year the district cut out a period from the middle school, going from an eight period, to a seven period day. This eliminated many electives, in programs like technical education, art, and foreign language. It also made cuts into required classes like Physical Education, where we are already under state mandated time limits. The opportunity to explore in middle school is now very limited and in many cases non-existent. Plus the courses business men are screaming for, are the very courses being cut. (tech ed.) This year the district has proposed cutting a period from the high school. The impact there will be as harmful as it was in the middle school.

Keeping qualified staff is also becoming problematic. The revenue caps have restricted the district's ability to make competitive salary offers. People are leaving the district to go places that pay more and offer better benefits. In the last several years Jerstad alone has lost eight good, young teachers who went to other districts where it was more attractive financially. I fully realize that you are not supposed to go into education to get rich. However, if I can teach 25 or 30 miles away from where I currently teach, and make significantly more money, it would be foolish to stay. This has really hit our district hard. In my building of approximately 55 full time teachers, almost 25% of them do not have teaching licenses from a university. They are all working on temporary, or special licenses. This can't be what the state believes is in the best interests of its children.

Finally, tying the fiscal and budgetary workings of the state to often special interest legislation is irresponsible. Whether or not the budget is passed should rely on the collective wisdom of those forming the budget and not on some extreme legislation

proposal thrown in with it. I urge this panel to strip away any non fiscal policy items from this budget. They should be debated and decided on their own merit, and not because some lawmaker wants to try and avoid a vote on it. Many of these items would never pass if they were brought forward honestly. Keep the "stealth " legislation out of the budget. Keep the budget to money items only.

Thank you for your time.

Michael Carey
April 10th, 2001

- Mary Day

Request to Joint Finance Committee
to support Precollege and Gear Up

Program initiatives.

- These programs
1. Work cooperative with area school districts to prepare students to make a smooth transition from high school to college;
 2. Provide middle and high school with an array of academic skill building, Career exploration, leadership, cultural diversity and other enrichment activities;
 3. Create parental support programs to address parental issues as well as to meet the needs of their children;
 4. Provide precollege participants with College student mentoring assistance and tutoring;
 5. Afford participants to work with and be trained by college faculty members;

Over 90% of precollege students continue

their education at various higher education institutions,

Because of Precollege and Hear Up students are able to meet the challenges of college life; attain a career not just a job; and give back positively to their respective communities.

Submitted by

Mary Jay
Director of Precollege Programs
University of Wisconsin - Parkside

April 10, 2001

WISPALS: Wisconsin Project for Automated Libraries

**Testimony to the Joint Finance Committee of the Wisconsin Legislature
April 10, 2000
Kenosha, Wisconsin**

My name is Ellen Pedraza and I am the WISPALS Library Consortium Coordinator. I am here on behalf of the twenty-two campus libraries in seven technical college districts that comprise the WISPALS Library Consortium. Together these Wisconsin college libraries serve 20,114 FTE students and 1,634 teachers in libraries located from here in Kenosha at the Gateway Technical College campus to as far north as the Phillips, Wisconsin campus of Northcentral Technical College.

I am here today to speak in favor the Wisconsin Library Association's 2001 Legislative Agenda. In particular, I want to note our support of the Wisconsin Library Association's request to maintain full funding for the Statewide Resource Contracts and to support complete funding for BadgerLink through the Universal Service Fund.

The technical college libraries utilize the Statewide Resource Contracts through their interlibrary loan programs. When students and faculty of the technical colleges seek library resources outside the scope of occupational or technical materials, the items will be borrowed from one of the Statewide Resource Contracts. The types of materials that are borrowed include such things as industry standards, government publications, patent literature and historical documents. These shared resources allow the technical college libraries to respond to patron requests in a timely manner at a reasonable cost without having to permanently acquire material that may have only a limited application.

Another important issue for us is the continued funding of BadgerLink through the Universal Service Fund. The WISPALS technical college libraries are among the 79 higher education institutions in Wisconsin that offer access to the BadgerLink databases. This statewide contract ensures that a core group of high-quality databases is equally available to our students and faculty in the library, at home, and at work via the Internet. Such an equitable distribution of health, science, education, business and industry news and research could not be reproduced by the WISPALS Consortium alone nor by its member libraries individually.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in favor of the Wisconsin Library Association's 2001 Legislative Agenda. We ask you to listen to the Wisconsin Library Association and work together to make this budget proposal better for the patrons of the technical college libraries in Wisconsin.

Submitted by: Ellen Pedraza
WISPALS Library Consortium Coordinator
Gateway Technical College
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WISPALS WI-JFC Testimony 2001.doc

WISPALS: Wisconsin Project for Automated Libraries						
Gateway Technical College	Lakeshore Technical College	Mid-State Technical College	Moraine Park Technical College	Northcentral Technical College	Northeast Wisconsin Technical College	Waukesha County Technical College
Coordinator: Ellen Pedraza Gateway Technical College 3520 30 th Avenue Kenosha WI 53144-1690						
Fiscal Agent: Rick Anderson Gateway Technical College 3520 30 th Avenue Kenosha WI 53144-1690						
System Manager: Bob Becker Waukesha County Technical College 800 Main Street Pewaukee WI 53072						

Testimony to the Joint Finance Committee
of the Wisconsin State Legislature
April 10, 2001

As president of the Kenosha County Library System and as a public school library media specialist for Kenosha Unified School District, I wish to voice my concern pertaining to the 2001 budget proposal. The Governor's recommendation of zero increase funding of public library systems is very disturbing. Likewise, zero increase funding for the four Statewide Resource Contracts: Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Wisconsin Library Services (WiLS), Milwaukee Public Library/Interlibrary Loan and the Cooperative Children's Book Center, a very valuable resource for public school libraries as well as public libraries, is also disturbing. These resource contracts give citizens throughout the state access to important specialized resources that local libraries might not and most likely are not able to provide. Furthermore, zero increase funding for Reference & Loan Library Materials will have adverse consequences for libraries throughout the state that rely on R & L materials to complement and augment their collections.

As I understand, the funding for BadgerLink has been approved but any increases will be charged to the institutions, that is, public schools and libraries who provide this service to their citizens. This sets a costly precedence that continues to spiral upward. Local governments are already taxed to the limit. The state funding needs to and should continue. BadgerLink provides Wisconsin residents internet access to more than 6,000 magazines, journals and newspapers at their businesses, homes, schools and libraries. No individual library whether school or public could provide that kind of access. Please, continue funding for BadgerLink through the Universal Service Fund with no exceptions.

Finally, maintain the Common School Fund Income for school libraries. Use the full amount of the Common School Fund income for its original purpose, specifically "the purchase of library books and other instructional materials for school libraries..." [Wis.Stat..43.70(2)]

Libraries are the only institutions that every citizen, regardless of age, race, gender, etc. has free access to. Please, don't close the doors because of inadequate funding.


Ms. Noël Sheer

8055 43rd Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53142
262-694-4293
Library Media Specialist
President, Kenosha County Library System
Board of Trustees

**TESTIMONY TO THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE
APRIL 10, 2001, KENOSHA WISCONSIN**

My name is Patricia M. Johnson, vice chair of the Kenosha County Library Board Committee. I have served on many levels of public library committees as a lay person dating way back to Council on Library Development (COLD), Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), Kenosha City Library Board, (Pres. And Vice Pres.) and now on the Kenosha County Library Board. I also was employed as a liaison in 1880-81 to coordinate efforts so that the Kenosha County-wide library system be approved in all the townships in the county.

As you can see I have worked hard to see that Kenosha County moved into the 21st Century in offering library service to all parts of the county. We sold the system on the idea that the state would continue to fund the areas of networking and augmenting their collections. We are very disappointed to see that the Governor has recommended a NO increase almost across the board in all areas, not just these two

The state comes down and encourages new programs which are usually essential to the growth of the library system and helps them build up their foundation. Local systems rely on this support particularly now when prices have gone up in materials and in resources services. In Kenosha, we have built up an excellent city and county wide system using strong local support. But it is the state funding that keeps that commitment at a progressive level. The governor is proposing a step backward in the most basic service available to every citizen in the state....accessible library service.

In today's information age, the library plays a very important role in information retrieval, resource availability and networking. To not let this progress at a reasonable standard of support will be detrimental to all libraries involved. Please don't let this \$0 increase stand. A \$0 increase actually will represent a decrease in the amount of the services any library can offer because of cost of living increases which affects all aspects of library materials and services.. As representatives of the people of Wisconsin where library services are paramount to the intellectual growth of a community, I hope you will reject the Governor's proposal. Keep Wisconsin moving forward these next two years. Thank you.

Patricia M. Johnson
6217 -60th Avenue
Kenosha, Wisconsin 53142

Phone - 262-654-1259 home
262-654-4200 work



WLA 2001 Legislative Agenda

2001 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Meeting Major Challenges and Maintaining Existing Programs

Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) members include more than 2,000 librarians, libraries, library trustees, and friends representing all types of libraries in Wisconsin. All of these interests share a common purpose – to improve and promote library and information services for the people of Wisconsin. We believe library services address essential informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs for Wisconsin citizens and merit strong legislative support.

IMMEDIATE GOALS OF THE 2001-2003 BIENNIUM

General Purpose Revenue (GPR) Fund Requests

Restore the State's 13% Benchmark Funding Commitment to Public Library Systems

WLA strongly supports compliance with § 43.24(6) of the Wisconsin State Statutes, which requires funding for public library systems at 13% of local library expenditures. In 1997, the Legislative Study Council on Public Libraries reviewed this issue and determined that the 13% funding was necessary to make library systems strong and vital partners in the delivery of library services to Wisconsin residents.

However, system funding has now eroded to less than 10%. As a result, library systems are left without adequate resources to carry out the mission for which they were created. Funding at the 13% level is needed to do the following:

Maintain a balanced public library services funding partnership between local & state governments.

Maintain full participation of all public libraries in library systems.

Implement resource sharing technology in public libraries and systems.

Improve statewide delivery of library materials.

Provide improved Internet connections for all public libraries.

Comply with statutory requirement § 43.24(6).

Enable systems to continue and improve services such as support for literacy and children's reading programs, technical and programming consulting, interlibrary loan, cooperative collection and electronic library resource development, and training for local library staff.

Implement an equitable distribution formula for library system aid, which cannot be accomplished until at least an 11.25% funding threshold is reached.

Fiscal impact:

\$20,208,400 in FY 2001-2002, an increase of \$5,458,900 over 2000-2001 base.

\$21,420,900 in FY 2002-2003, an increase of \$6,671,100 over 2000-2001 base.

(FY = Fiscal year, which for the State of Wisconsin runs from July 1 to June 30.)

Maintain Full Funding for the Statewide Resource Contracts

WLA supports full funding for the four statewide service contracts: Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Wisconsin Library Services (WILS), Milwaukee Public Library/Interlibrary Loan, and the Cooperative Children's Book Center.

Fiscal impact:

\$1,144,600 in FY 2001-2002, in increase of \$97,300 over 2000-2001 base.

\$1,334,200 in FY 2002-2003, an increase of \$286,900* over 2000-2001 base.

(*Includes one-time cost of \$161,600 for automated system replacement.)

Increased Funding for Reference & Loan Library Materials Budget

WLA supports additional funding for the Reference & Loan Library materials budget to reverse the long-term decline in buying power. The average annual materials budget has decreased from \$160,000 in the 1980s to \$100,000 in the 1990s to the current \$50,000.

Fiscal impact:

\$90,000 in FY 2001-2002, an increase of \$40,000 over 2000-2001 base.

\$90,000 in FY 2002-2003, an increase of \$40,000 over 2000-2001 base.

Increased Funding for the UW System Libraries

WLA supports the UW System libraries' goals of making available up-to-date, comprehensive library resources and rebuilding each campus's access to current books and periodicals in relevant fields of study. The UW System's libraries are a priceless asset for the state of Wisconsin. They are crucial not only to the university's instruction and research missions, but are also heavily used by Wisconsin businesses, government agencies, the K-12 education community, and other Wisconsin citizens.

WLA recognizes the vital importance of maintaining the specialized information resources that support advanced study and research in Wisconsin.

Fiscal impact:

\$12,000,000 in FY 2001-2002, an increase of \$4,700,000 over 2000-2001 base.

\$12,000,000 in FY 2002-2003, an increase of \$4,700,000 over 2000-2001 base.

Universal Service Fund Requests

Provide Continued Funding for BadgerLink through the Universal Service Fund

WLA members continue to work tirelessly to bring about the vision of a statewide library network where all Wisconsin residents have equitable, convenient and universal access to the information and knowledge resources they need to meet personal, work, educational, and community goals. Currently, via BadgerLink, Wisconsin citizens gain Internet access to more than 6,000 magazines, journals, and newspapers at their businesses, homes, schools, and libraries. Wisconsin residents conducted almost 10,000,000 BadgerLink searches in 1999.

WLA supports continued funding of BadgerLink through the Public Service Commission's Universal Service Fund.

Fiscal impact:

\$1,766,300 in FY 2001-2002, an increase of \$ 73,500 over 2000-2001 base.

\$1,843,000 in FY 2002-2002, an increase of \$150,200 over 2000-2001 base.

Increase BadgerLink Funding to Provide Access to Online Encyclopedias

WLA supports the request for additional funding to provide access to online encyclopedias, which was identified as a top priority in a UW-Milwaukee survey of libraries and schools using BadgerLink.

Fiscal impact:

\$365,100 in FY 2001-2002.

\$365,100 in FY 2002-2003.

Newsline for the Blind

WLA supports the request for additional funding to expand this service statewide and

to support production of two state newspapers. Newsline for the Blind currently provides access through phone lines to three national newspapers. Expanded services will also include job information services.

Fiscal impact:

\$68,500 in FY 2001-2002, an increase of \$23,500 over 2000-2001 base.

\$67,500 in FY 2002-2003, an increase of \$22,000 over 2000-2001 base.

New Legislation

Crossover Borrowing

WLA strongly supports a funding partnership between the state and localities which makes it possible for every Wisconsin resident to freely use all public libraries in the state. Across Wisconsin, our tradition of extensive access to local libraries is currently threatened by inadequate funding for this service. Because this issue has not been adequately addressed, some Wisconsin citizens have been denied access to nearby local libraries. While we support adequate funding to ensure access, an interim step is also proposed.

WLA supports permissive legislation to do the following:

- o Enable public library systems to adopt a compensation plan for intermunicipal lending of library materials and to require participating libraries to agree to the plan, if adopted.
- o Enable a county board of supervisors to adopt a compensation provision for intermunicipal lending of library materials as part of its county-wide plan for public library use.

Trust Fund Loans to Public Library Systems

WLA supports legislation to enable public library systems to borrow from the State Trust Fund. This eligibility is supported by the Trust Fund staff.

Uniform Computer Information Transactions Act (UCITA)

This legislative effort to provide uniform rules to regulate transactions in intangible goods, such as computer software, online databases, and other information products in digital form, threatens to have a chilling effect on access to information. WLA opposes this Act for the following

reasons:

- o It undermines libraries' efforts in the preservation and lending of information products.
- o It undercuts the traditional role of fair use.
- o It replaces public law of copyright with the private law of contract.
- o Its scope is overly broad.
- o It enables mass-market or shrink-wrap/click-on licenses.

Common School Fund

WLA supports legislation that would expand the range of investment options available to the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands for the prudent management of its trust fund assets.

Internet Filtering

It is WLA's position that local governing bodies of educational agencies, such as schools and libraries, are in the best position to determine policies for Internet access. WLA strongly opposes any legislation that mandates the use of Internet filtering software, especially when it is used as a requirement for receiving federal, state, and/or local funds. Requiring schools and libraries to have in place a formal Internet Use Policy is an acceptable compromise to Internet filtering legislation. These policies strike a reasonable balance between federal and local interests.

CONTINUE AND MAINTAIN SUCCESSFUL LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Maintain the Common School Fund Income for School Libraries

WLA endorses the use of the full amount of the Common School Fund income for its original purpose, namely "the purchase of library books and other instructional materials for school libraries..." [Wis. Stat. § 43.70(2)]. WLA strongly opposes the use of interest on the Common School Fund for any other purpose.

Provide Flexibility in School District Revenue Caps for Educational Technology

WLA supports legislation providing for flexibility in revenue controls on school districts for the purpose of purchasing computer technology.

Continue TEACH Wisconsin Support for Libraries

WLA supports the TEACH Board's request to incorporate several important library-related provisions into the state's 2001-2003 budget. These include the following:

- o Allowing public libraries to use the TEACH loan program to borrow funds for communications hardware (servers, routers, hubs, switches) for direct connection to the Internet.

- o Allowing public library branches to be eligible for TEACH subsidized T1 telecommunications lines.
- o Allowing sharing of T-1 lines between public libraries and other municipal or county government offices.

The Legislative Fiscal Bureau has previously determined that no additional funding will need to be appropriated to implement the above provisions. The increased costs can be absorbed within the existing TEACH budget.

WLA also encourages the TEACH Board to consider legislative initiatives that would upgrade the basic technological infrastructure for libraries, including improved connections to the Internet and improved shared automated systems.

ONGOING GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

The Wisconsin Library Association monitors all legislative initiatives as they pertain to library needs and interests. This includes issues related to intellectual freedom, access to information, and privacy in the use of library materials and services.

- o WLA supports DPI's Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning's (DLTCL) leadership, staffing levels, and service responsibilities in administering programs that extend and improve library services throughout the state.
- o WLA supports efforts to broaden the availability of communications technology for educational and informational purposes.
- o WLA recognizes the importance of statewide library resources and their need for statewide support.
- o WLA supports open access to state documents and information.

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Caroline Towns
7930 North Eagle Road
Janesville, WI 53545-9469
Carthage College

When I was growing up on a dairy farm in nearby Janesville, Wisconsin, I had many ideas of what I wanted to be. A teacher, a doctor, or even President all seemed possible. As I grew up and began to realize the reality of life, my ideas slowly changed. I found out that everything took time, effort, and of course, money. My parents worked hard, but I have three brothers, and now I understand why there aren't any Fortune 500 farms. But, I still wanted to go to college and I worked hard during high school to keep that option open for me. I graduated from Edgerton High School with honors in May of 1999. In addition to academics, I stayed involved in school activities, my church, and 4-H. During high school, I discovered history and took all the classes offered in that department at my small school. I knew I wanted to keep studying history, so I decided to make that my college, and possibly career, goal. As I began to look at colleges though, with 2 brothers already enrolled in college and another one soon to be after I was, money was a big issue. The first time I saw Carthage I was sure that that was where I could easily spend four years. I loved the small, intimate campus and the great friendly atmosphere combined with an incredible reputation. It is because of my financial aid, which includes Wisconsin Tuition Grant, that I was able to attend, and now remain at, the school of my choice. I am so satisfied with Carthage and I recommend at least a tour to all the high school students I talk to. I am currently a double major in History and Geography (and have maintained a 4.0 GPA). I am active in politics on campus, youth outreach groups, and the leadership program. I continue to work for my education and I am currently the service fellow for both the History and Geography departments, as well as working at my work-study job about 10 hours a week. Eventually, I would either like to earn my Masters Degree in History or maybe attend Law School. I value my education greatly and I have been so fortunate that I can achieve it through financial assistance like the Wisconsin Tuition Grant. Thank you.

Amber Lamers
1604 Hillcrest Drive
Kaukauna, WI 54130
Carthage College

Hi. I am a freshman at Carthage College. Even before I stated my college search, I knew that money was going to be a large issue in my decision. When choosing a college, my mind was not only on the academics, extracurriculars, and location, but also, of course, the money. As I went through the process of the FAFSA, the fear built up in my mind. My parents and I had discussed the money issue, and we were going to do the best that we could to get me to whichever school I chose. I got a few privately funded scholarships, a couple of scholarships from Carthage itself, and also the Wisconsin Tuition Grant. That was the life-saver for my family. Next year, as I return to Carthage, I am in a not so unique position in that I will not be receiving the Wisconsin Tuition Grant. This largely affects my financial aid package and my school payments. In order to pay for my half of college next year, I will either need to work two jobs this summer, or get a high paying job and work all of the overtime possible. I have also saved money by working during the school year in Carthage's Admissions office as a student Ambassador. Currently, I am the recipient of the Theater scholarship for non-majors, and I try to be involved with them during any free time I have. I have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.68 and I hope to maintain that throughout my college career. Being denied the Wisconsin Tuition Grant next year is a large loss for my family and I. Education has always been very important to my family and I. I hope that through the appeal process, I will be able to regain the Wisconsin Tuition Grant funding for next year so that I can continue working towards my goal of becoming a teacher in Wisconsin someday myself.

THE **IMC** INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTER

RACINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
2220 Northwestern Avenue
Racine, Wisconsin 53404



April 10, 2001

Members of the Joint Finance Committee,

It is very honorable to protect students from the potential misuse of the Internet. However, I have concerns about the use of internet devices to solve this problem. A school district with a district-wide internet system can have only one filter. This means that the same material is filtered for kindergarten use and for senior high school use. This creates further problems. For example, a high school student cannot access material on breast cancer for a health report because the word "breast" is filtered. The site has the picture of a human breast that cannot be seen by the very young. A group of high school students wanted the facts about the affects of the drug "ecstasy". They came to the library. They were denied access to the health information, but the internet filter gave them information about where the drug was available. I ask you, what service did this filter provide? It appears to me that a district policy for internet use, signed by a student, is better than a district-wide filter. When a student signs the usage policy and then misuses it, the student is no longer able to use the internet at school. Period. This policy works and punishes only the ones who misuse the system, not everyone.

Please oppose this legislation, AB 50.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl M. Esch".

Cheryl M. Esch

Director of Libraries

Racine Unified School District

THE **IMC** INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTER

RACINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
2220 Northwestern Avenue
Racine, Wisconsin 53404



April 10, 2001

Members of the Joint Finance Committee,

The Common School Fund was originally designed to fund the purchase of library books and other instructional material for school libraries. This money has allowed schools to purchase materials they could not purchase within a budget controlled by revenue caps. This allows schools to purchase "big ticket" reference items, as well as culturally diverse materials for our increasingly diverse student population. We have been able to support additional materials for all curriculum areas to provide enriching experiences for the gifted and talented, as well as the at-risk student. We have also been able to purchase software for student use in core subject areas such as reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies.

Please continue to fund this at the full level for all our children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl M. Esch".

Cheryl M. Esch

Director of Libraries

Racine Unified School District

THE **IMC** INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTER

RACINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
2220 Northwestern Avenue
Racine, Wisconsin 53404



April 10, 2001

Members of the Joint Finance Committee,

Badgerlink provides access for all Wisconsin residents to over 6,000 magazines, journals, newspapers, and "kid-safe" internet sites whether at work, home, school, library, church, or community center. Having this available allows all our students, teachers, and parents to use the same reference sources whether rich or poor.

The addition of on-line encyclopedias would add an additional resource to Wisconsin families. Most families cannot afford to buy a set of encyclopedias for their home. They rely on schools and libraries. Sometimes a student "forgets" a homework assignment until after schools are closed. Internet access to encyclopedias would help resolve many family conflicts. It would also provide access at places where students are after school -- community centers, libraries, malls.

This past year we had to limit access to videos because we were unable to fund an annual licensing fee to motion picture studios to use their films. I would hate to see us lose access to "kid safe" internet sites because we could not afford the fees for Badgerlink. I would also hate to see my taxes pay for the base fees for districts who can afford these additional fees.

I have a concern about school districts picking up the costs, for other citizens who can continue to use this service for free, while students only have access if their district can afford to pay.

Please fund this program completely through the Universal Service Fund rather than by assessment of user fees on schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl M. Esch".

Cheryl M. Esch

Director of Libraries

Racine Unified School District



Racine Unified School District

2220 Northwestern Avenue, Racine, Wisconsin 53404 262-631 -7064

To: Joint Committee on Finance

From: Warren Baugher, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services

Date: April 10, 2001

Re: 2001-03 Biennial Budget

The Governor's proposed budget supports maintaining two-thirds state funding for school operations and construction. On behalf of Racine Unified School District, please support the Governor's proposal.

However, the Governor's proposed budget does not include any provisions for revenue limit flexibility or any adjustments to the revenue limits for the state mandated exemption of the lane movement from the QEO. On behalf of Racine Unified School District, please provide support to school districts in eliminating the gap between revenue and expenditures.

Racine Unified School District has made a significant commitment to the community in classroom reduction. SAGE has provided our district with the means in which to live up to our commitment. Our district has seen a positive impact on student performance after implementing SAGE. On behalf of Racine Unified School District, please support the current law and fully fund the SAGE program.

Racine Unified School District is very proud of its summer school program. For six weeks during the summer, the District offers credit, remedial and enrichment classes to students. The Governor's proposed reduction in funding would discourage our district in supporting a summer school. On behalf of Racine Unified School District, please support the current law and continue funding summer school at its current level.

The Governor's budget proposal would expand the chartering authority to allow UW System universities and colleges, technical colleges and CESAs to operate or contract to operate a charter school within any school district. On behalf of Racine School District, please support the current law, which maintain the school board as the sole chartering agency for charter schools.



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Joint Finance Committee

April 10, 2001

Honorable Members:

My name is Michael Gelhausen, President of the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA). I present testimony to the Committee today on behalf of WLA, an organization representing the needs and interests of all types of libraries, library staff members and library trustees throughout Wisconsin. Because the primary purpose of the Committee's public hearing today is to listen to comments and concerns regarding the proposed biennium budget and its impact on the residents of the State of Wisconsin, I would like to focus on some crucial library issues that are not addressed in the current budget proposal.

PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM AIDS: For almost thirty years, the seventeen public library systems have been the backbone of cooperative library operations and the sharing of materials in the state of Wisconsin. State financial support for these systems has been eroding for several years now. Three years ago, the Legislative Council Study Committee on Public Libraries reviewed this issue in depth, and concluded that strong public library service is a partnership between the municipalities, the counties and the State. Legislation was passed that mandated counties fund at least 70% of a library's operating cost to serve the rural library users. Legislation was also passed that the State would provide system aid money at a level of 13% of the expenditures of public library municipalities and the counties. Presently, state system aid funds represent only 10% of these expenditures, and that number will shrink to 9% by the end of this biennium with no additional funding. For a partnership to succeed, all entities need to be involved and abide by their commitment. Municipal library support has been increasing. Counties are now mandated to pay their fair share. The public library systems need the statutory index level of 13% to meet their mandated service areas and to continue the strong tradition of supporting resource sharing and cooperative services. The 13% funding level will also go a long way towards preserving Wisconsin's tradition of open access to local libraries. The Wisconsin Library Association asks to you fund library system aids at the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) requested amount of \$20,208,400 for FY 01-02, and \$21,420,900 for FY 02-03.

BADGERLINK: Providing statewide Internet access to over 6,000 magazines, journals and newspapers to every library, school, business and home computer certainly was one of the most popular new services funded through the Universal Service Fund (USF). The proposed budget does contain DPI's requested increase of \$73,500 for FY 01-02 and \$150,200 for FY 02-03 to continue the statewide BadgerLink service. However, these increases do not come from the USF. Instead, the Governor has authorized DPI to assess new fees to school districts to cover the additional funding creating an unfair burden on schools that are already saddled with revenue caps limiting other basic school needs. It has been suggested that the school districts use their Common School Fund money, which is desperately needed for other school library media center services, to pay this new fee. How these fees are to be determined and assessed per school district also puts additional work on a tight DPI staff. Because BadgerLink was developed to be an information and research service for all residents of Wisconsin, it is unfair to single out schools for this added fee. It is the request of the Wisconsin Library Association that all BadgerLink costs continue to come from the Universal Service Fund.

REFERENCE AND LOAN LIBRARY MATERIALS: During the 1980s, the Wisconsin Reference and Loan (R&L) Library had an average materials budget of \$160,000 per year for new titles and information products. With budget reductions throughout the 1990s, the materials budget has now eroded to an annual amount of \$60,000. Libraries throughout the state rely on the R&L Library materials to complement and augment their collections. The additional \$43,000 per year of the biennium for the R&L Library's materials budget requested by DPI is not found in the proposed state budget. The Wisconsin Library Association requests that these additional dollars be added to the Reference and Loan operating budget to enable this library to fulfill one of its main purposes, providing reference backup with current and reliable reference materials and products.

STATEWIDE RESOURCE CONTRACTS: The State of Wisconsin funds four library resource contracts that provide citizens of the state with access to specialized services and materials that their local libraries are unlikely to provide: the Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the Milwaukee Public Library/Interlibrary Loan, the Wisconsin Library Services on the UW-Madison campus, and the Cooperative Children's Book Center, also located on the UW-Madison campus. The requested increase to provide continued access to these specialized resources was \$97,300 for FY 01-02 and \$125,300 for FY 02-03. The Wisconsin Library Association requests that the DPI budget proposal for the four resource contracts be approved to insure current levels of service are retained.

UW SYSTEM LIBRARIES: Wisconsin's university libraries have a great reputation for excellence. To maintain the UW System's goal of making available to students, faculty, the business community and government the most up-to-date and comprehensive collection of various library resources in numerous fields of study, it requires regular incremental increases to the UW library budget. The Board of Regents requested a \$4.7 million increase to base funding during both years of the biennium. However, this increase was not forwarded in the current budget proposal. The Wisconsin Library Association requests that the dollar amount asked for by the Board of Regents be supported by the Legislature to insure that the various UW libraries maintain their standard of excellence for the students, in particular, and additionally, all the citizens of the State of Wisconsin.

GPR FUNDING FOR DPI POSITIONS: Many key DPI consultant positions are currently funded wholly or in part by federal dollars, or are being targeted to be solely federally funded. Various positions go unfilled or are eliminated when incumbents retire or leave, or disappear when federal funds are withdrawn. Without these consultants, schools and public libraries would lack the crucial link needed to access and understand DPI programs, policies and technological information. The Wisconsin Library Association joins with the Wisconsin Educational Media Association in asking the Legislature to carefully review the growing dependence on federal dollars to pay for extremely valuable state employees who work with the library community on a regular basis.

COMMON SCHOOL FUND: In many school districts, the only money being used to purchase new materials comes from the Common School Fund. The Governor has included \$5.3 million for FY 02 and \$6.8 million for FY 03 from the DPI request. This money is critical to the survival of many school library media centers. The Wisconsin Library Association applauds the Governor on his support, and asks the Legislature to retain this funding request in the proposed budget. However, the suggestion that school districts use these funds to offset the proposed fees for Badgerlink is not supported. WLA requests that Common School money continue to be used to support basic school library services and let the Universal Service Fund pay for Badgerlink.

TEACH WISCONSIN CHANGES: The Governor has included three major revisions to the Teach guidelines which will allow public libraries to borrow funds from the Teach loan program for communication hardware to enable direct connections to the Internet, enable public library branches in cities and counties to be eligible for Teach subsidized T-1 telecommunication lines, and, approve the sharing of T-1 lines between public libraries and other municipal or county government offices. The Wisconsin Library Association supports these changes and asks the Legislature to retain these proposals during the budget process.

NEWSLINE FOR THE BLIND: The Governor has requested increased funding of \$23,000 FY 02 and \$22,000 FY 03 to expand this telephone information service statewide. This additional funding will expand the current service from three national newspapers to include two state newspapers and a job information service. The Wisconsin Library Association supports this program and asks the Legislature to retain the proposal during the budget process.

TRUST FUND LOANS: The Governor's budget proposes allowing public library systems in two or more counties to borrow funds from the State Trust Fund. This is an important and affordable way for systems to upgrade various forms of technology and equipment within current budget constraints. This proposal, to expand loan procedures, is supported by the Trust Fund's staff and the Wisconsin Library Association.

I want to thank the members of the Joint Finance Committee for giving me the opportunity to express the views of the Wisconsin Library Association. The members of our organization hope that you will agree that many of these library-funding issues are extremely important in each of your districts and around the State of Wisconsin. Your Committee and the entire Legislature will be faced with many tough financial decisions across the next few months. I want to conclude by stating that of the many requests for additional funding for various programs that you will receive during the budget debate, libraries will be one of the few areas that cover all citizens of this state regardless of age, educational level, financial status, race, creed or gender. Every resident of Wisconsin's 72 counties, and each Senate and Assembly district has access to public and school libraries along with various academic libraries. Because of the greatly expanding amount of information now available in various formats coupled with the personal, professional and recreational needs for this information, citizens rely more and more on their libraries to access these materials. Please consider giving library issues a higher priority in the budget process! An increased state financial investment in all types of libraries is certainly a well-placed investment for the educational needs of the citizens of Wisconsin now and for the future. Thank you!



Michael J. Gelhausen
President
Wisconsin Library Association