



Legislation Text

File #: 30396, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

No appropriation required.

Title

Supporting State investments in our public schools and opposing any attempt by the State to implement a private school voucher program.

Body

WHEREAS, successful public schools have been identified by the National League of Cities as a contributing factor in community quality of life, economic development, and a strong citizenry; and,

WHEREAS, the National League of Cities has also identified strong public schools as contributing to the overall health and well-being of communities; and,

WHEREAS, quality of public schools has a strong impact on property values in a community; and,

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin State Legislature reduced state aids to the Madison Metropolitan School District by 13.5% or \$6.7 million during the 2011-13 biennium; and,

WHEREAS, the Madison Metropolitan School District's state aids have been reduced by nearly one-third over the last six years; and,

WHEREAS, the Governor of Wisconsin's proposed 2013-15 state budget proposes an expansion of private school vouchers to 9 communities statewide, including Madison; and,

WHEREAS, the Governor's proposed budget offers no per-pupil funding increase for public schools, while spending up to \$1400 more per pupil on private school vouchers; and,

WHEREAS, an estimate 1387 vouchers would be used by students already attending private schools at an estimated cost of \$3,842,805 to Madison property taxpayers; and,

WHEREAS, only public schools in Wisconsin require that all teachers be licensed; and,

WHEREAS, only public schools in Wisconsin are required to conduct background checks of all school staff; and,

WHEREAS, only public schools in Wisconsin are required to complete and fulfill Individualized Education Plans (IEP) for special needs students; and,

WHEREAS, only public schools in Wisconsin are required to have rigorous graduation and curriculum standards; and,

WHEREAS, only public schools must accept and educate all students, regardless of academic criteria or special-needs; and,

WHEREAS, there is no clear evidence indicating that students utilizing vouchers to attend private schools have improved academic performance; and,

WHEREAS, there is evidence that students enrolled in private voucher schools in Milwaukee, through Wisconsin's existing voucher program, perform worse than their public school peers on math and reading assessment.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Common Council support investment in our public schools and oppose any expansion of private school vouchers or special needs vouchers into the Madison Metropolitan School District; and call upon the Wisconsin State Legislature to reject any such expansion, redirecting funds to increased investment in our public schools.