

NEWS RELEASE

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Budget vetoes reinforce need for school funding reform

Vetoes spare public education from further cuts, but the future of Wisconsin's great schools rests upon too much uncertainty.

Governor Jim Doyle announced his vetoes to the Legislature's budget adjustment bill today. With the vetoes, the \$527 million budget shortfall will not be filled by delaying school aid or reducing school funding.

WEAC Vice President Guy Costello released the following statement:

"Budgets are always full of tough choices, and that was particularly true with this budget adjustment bill.

"Great schools benefit everyone, and they are the foundation upon which the state's economic future is built. So it is heartening that most of our state's leaders showed they understand that balancing this budget on the backs of public schools would only serve to exacerbate the state's budget difficulties.

"This entire process illustrates the need to address school funding reform as soon as possible. With schools throughout our state considering consolidation or closure, dozens of school districts going to referendum to address basic needs, and 94% of school district administrators saying they were forced to make budget cuts because of revenue caps last year, every decision the government makes starts to seem like a matter of life or death. This instability and uncertainty makes it increasingly difficult for schools to maintain their excellence.

"My hope is that this experience will motivate all of our state's leaders to put school funding reform at the very top of their agendas when the next legislative session starts."

(END)