



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. Box 7882 • Madison, WI 53707-7882

March 1, 2021

Governor Tony Evers
115 East, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707

Governor Evers,

The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) of 2021 provided over \$20.8 million in additional Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funds. These funds are in addition to the original \$46.6 million in GEER funds included in the CARES Act. Wisconsin's additional CRRSA allocation must be awarded by January 2022.

In the first GEER round of awards, you allowed a significant portion of these funds to go to districts that have provided little, to no in-person instruction during the 2020-21 school year. Don't make the same mistake twice.

We are asking you to direct these funds to districts that have been providing full-time, in-person instruction since the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. These districts have been spending more to keep their schools open for the betterment of their students. They know that this is the best for the students and families of their districts.

Federal K-12 education funding from COVID relief legislation has predominantly been run through the Title I formula. This formula results in an overwhelming amount going to large districts that have shown little interest in getting students back into the classroom. For example, Milwaukee received \$3,174 per student and Madison \$729 per student from the latest round of funding. These districts had little, to no in-person instruction so far this year. This is compared to \$329 for a district like Lomira or \$77 for Kettle Moraine under the Title I formula. These are districts that have been in person since the beginning of the school year.

Not only are districts like Milwaukee and Madison receiving a disproportionate amount of the federal funds, but also they are incurring significant utility and transportation savings by not having students in the classroom. According to a survey of districts, Milwaukee and Madison saved millions in the 2019-20 school year because of shutting down due to COVID. This doesn't include the savings they are accruing from not having to modify and clean classrooms like the schools that are open to in-person instruction.

We as a state should be encouraging schools to open in person. The CDC says it is safe. We have studies showing it is safe. We have a bipartisan consensus supporting reopening to in-person instruction. We have the case studies of districts that have been open during the 2020-21 school year showing it can be done safely.

The science is clear; the best place for our kids is in the classroom. If you care about science, if you care about closing achievement gaps and if you care about equity, then you will get our kids back to school in person.

We request on behalf of the students and families of this state that you use what funds you have at your discretion to award funds to districts that are teaching our students in person. Schools should be rewarded for doing the right thing for their students and families.

Sincerely,



Robin Vos
Assembly Speaker



Jim Steineke
Majority Leader



Tyler August
Speaker Pro-Tempore



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Joint Finance, Co-Chair



Jessie Rodriguez
21st Assembly District



Howard Marklein
Joint Finance, Co-Chair



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Majority Caucus Chair



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Majority Caucus Vice-Chair



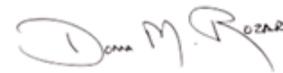
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38th Assembly District



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83rd Assembly District



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35th Assembly District



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Shannon Zimmerman
30th Assembly District



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55th Assembly District



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84th Assembly District



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59th Assembly District



Terry Katsma
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