



LEAH VUKMIR

STATE SENATOR

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Contact: [Sen. Vukmir](#)
(608) 266-2512

Democrats mislead Wisconsinites on education funding

MADISON, Wis. — Contrary to what Democrats are saying, when all state and local funding sources are considered, combined revenue is up \$30 million or \$65 per student since 2010-11, according to a more expansive Legislative Fiscal Bureau memo requested by Sen. Leah Vukmir (R-Brookfield).

In a recent flurry of press releases, Democrats have intentionally misled their constituents by conveniently sharing only half of the financial story. The recent memo requested by Senator Bewley (D-Mason) only includes state aid dispersed to school districts. By ignoring additional funding sources, savings derived from enacted reforms, and per pupil funding figures, Democrats can further perpetuate the tale that state Republicans are not serious about education in Wisconsin.

Senator Shilling (D- LaCrosse) and the Democrat caucus fail to acknowledge that spending reductions in state aid were paired with Act 10 reforms. “Of course district funding declined; decreases were offset by accrued savings from Republican led initiatives, which allowed districts to more effectively manage their budgets,” Vukmir said.

“My Republican colleagues in the Legislature and I are committed to funding students whose parents choose public schools. Since 2012 we have increased state aids to public education, and we will continue to budget with students’ best interests in mind. Thanks to state Republicans, students in Wisconsin are getting a quality education, and they’re doing it with expanded opportunities that weren’t available before.

“Here’s my advice to my Democrat colleagues unhappy with education in Wisconsin: perhaps aim to improve education policy by diversifying educational opportunity, as opposed to showing more interest in employee-protectionist policies. Recent primary results indicate that Wisconsinites overwhelmingly support educational alternatives. It is becoming rather tiresome that some Democrats continue to criticize effective policy initiatives while simultaneously turning a blind eye to schools failing our youth.

“Senator Shilling is absolutely correct. You’re damn right, we can do better. And we will continue to under Republican leadership. I’m interested in continuing along a path of educational improvement and expansion in opportunity. Why doesn’t she? Taxpayer dollars should follow students and their educational needs.”

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. Box 7882 • MADISON, WISCONSIN 53707-7882
(608) 266- 2512 • FAX (608) 267-0367