

Lift Revenue Controls on Wisconsin Public Schools

We urge Wisconsin Legislators to:

- Remove the revenue caps currently placed on the funding of Wisconsin Public Schools and change the revenue laws.

Talking Points:

- In a 2005 study by the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators and the Wisconsin Education Association Council, 278 school district superintendents (65%) responded to a statewide survey on “The Effects of Revenue Controls on the Programs and Services Offered by Wisconsin’s Public Schools”. The study showed the range of opportunity for Wisconsin’s students continues to diminish as districts reduce their curricular offerings in order to comply with the revenue controls and also to prepare students to do well on state tests.
- Revenue caps gravely jeopardize any non-standardized tested area in the curriculum.
- The 2005 report indicated 53% of the districts anticipate making cuts in music, 60% in art.
- 78% of Superintendents indicated that revenue controls have caused a decline in the quality of education in their districts.
- The 2006-07 WASDA/WEAC Report indicated 25% of reporting schools are considering consolidation or closure.
- In the February 2007 Aspen Institute Report on the NCLB Act, it was reported that 7,000 students drop out of school everyday. A lack of funding for music and the other arts will contribute to the drop out rate. The arts keep students involved in a creative and positive way, and provides encouragement and motivation to stay involved in school.
- Music is a means of expression for every child and has been at the heart of every society through history. Music holds the power to nurture and strengthen children’s creative vision and compassion. Our civilization of today, our leaders of tomorrow, need these inner qualities, fostered at a young age in our schools.

Background:

For the past 12 years, the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators and the Wisconsin Education Association Council have worked together to determine the effects of the revenue controls law on the programs and services offered by public schools. Ninety percent of superintendents in the current study said they want the revenue controls law to be changed. Subjects most vulnerable to cuts or elimination include art, music, physical education, foreign languages, business education, family and consumer education, and technology/vocational education. Subjects least likely to be cut or eliminated are English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies – all areas tested by the state of Wisconsin.