



July 20, 2021

After an unprecedented pandemic impacted schools, teachers and families alike, states across the country have been passing and implementing major reforms to increase freedom in K-12 education. In the last year, twenty states have implemented some type of education reform initiative, including creating Education Savings Accounts (ESAs). Unfortunately, Wisconsin has fallen behind despite our proud history of leading the nation with the first voucher program over thirty years ago. **It is time for Wisconsin to recapture our momentum and increase education freedom for all families.**

In order for Wisconsin to accomplish this, several important steps must take place. The first reform is to our antiquated school finance system. Under the current system, the state funds systems, not students resulting in large disparities in student funding. **A student's value changes depending on the school door she walks through rather than by her needs.** This means that students with the same backgrounds and from the same regions receive thousands of dollars less than their peers. **It is time to fix this system and fund students, not buildings.**

We, the undersigned, call for supporting a more student-centered system that implements a **weighted student funding model**. This model would require the school finance system to determine the per pupil amount based off students' unique needs and help empower parents, school board members and taxpayers to ensure school funding is effective and efficient. In practice, this means that the district may have to reign in administrative costs and ensure that more money is following students into the classroom.

Every student deserves access to a high-quality education but the school finance system is a barrier for this goal. Reforming the school finance system to a weighted student funding model is a critical step in empowering parents, creating accountability in school finance and getting Wisconsin one step closer to Education Savings Accounts.

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