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One Wisconsin Now: John Humphries Takes All Sides on School Funding Issue

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MADISON, Wis. — John Humphries, candidate for Superintendent of Public Instruction, is at it again, this time taking all sides of the issue of public school funding. According to media reports and his public statements he agrees, disagrees and is a firm maybe to questions of whether funding for K-12 public schools, cut by records amounts in recent years by Gov. Scott Walker and the GOP-controlled legislature, ought to be increased.

“John Humphries will take three sides of a two-sided issue if he thinks it could help advance his political ambitions,” commented One Wisconsin Now Executive Director Scot Ross. “When it comes to the question of increased support for our public schools, Humphries answer is no, yes and maybe.”

As a candidate for Superintendent of Public Instruction, Humphries often has occasion to state his position on the issue of K-12 school funding, and often his answers differ. Most recently, in response to a state budget proposal to increase state funds for K-12 public education, Humphries signalled his opposition, commenting via Twitter that “More money doesn’t equal better outcomes.” And in a response to a questionnaire Humphries wrote, “I don’t think we’re likely to get the funding we want from the legislature nor do I think we should ask.”

But opposing more school funding is not always the position of candidate

Humphries. In another questionnaire response he wrote, “I would love more funding for our schools. Who wouldn’t?” He was also previously quoted supporting a school funding proposal by Gov. Walker saying, “I applaud Governor Walker’s commitment to ensuring children in rural areas have access to the resources they need.”

Ross noted that Humphries’ flip flops are not restricted to the issue of school funding. He recently held an online event to denounce Wisconsin using nationwide academic standards known as “Common Core.” But at a legislative committee hearing and in a letter to Gov. Walker, state legislators and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Humphries in no uncertain terms endorsed Wisconsin using the same standards he now takes to the internet to denounce.

In 2011 Humphries also signed a petition to recall Scott Walker and in 2012 he used the Democratic super conduit ActBlue Wisconsin to funnel a financial contribution to Walker’s recall election opponent. More recently, as a candidate, Humphries has backtracked, now claiming he supports Walker’s initiatives to strip employees like teacher of rights and input in their workplaces.

He concluded, “The ease with which John Humphries changes his positions on major education issues like funding and academic standards is disturbing. He’s shown himself to be more interested in pandering to whomever he thinks can help him win election than being committed to doing what’s needed to help our kids succeed in school.”