

School Administrators Alliance, Southeastern Wisconsin Schools Alliance, Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance: 2017-19 State Budget position

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Memorandum

To: Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature and Governor Walker
From: School Administrators Alliance, Southeastern Wisconsin Schools Alliance,
Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance
Date: June 9, 2017
RE: 2017-19 State Budget Position

Our organizations collectively applaud the attention given to the current K-12 education budget debate regarding proposed increases in per pupil categorical aid and the low revenue ceiling. We believe there are sufficient resources in this budget to fully fund both the \$200/\$204 in per pupil categorical aid and a significant increase in the low revenue ceiling. That is our collective position.

We are pleased that the importance of addressing the low revenue ceiling has been elevated during these budget deliberations. This has been a long-standing equity issue in Wisconsin school finance for nearly 25 years.

As you know, our organizations have supported increasing the low revenue ceiling

on behalf of our members and the children they serve for many years. In fact, this budget session, all of our organizations supported an increase in the low revenue ceiling from the current \$9,100 per pupil to \$9,500 in 2017-18 and to \$9,900 in 2018-19. Suffice to say, we applaud the efforts to advance this important policy objective in the 2017-19 biennial budget.

However, for many months our collective memberships have consistently and overwhelmingly considered per pupil revenue increases of at least \$200 per pupil, per year to be an extremely important priority in this budget. That is why our members voiced such strong support for the Governor's proposed increases in per pupil categorical aid (\$200 per pupil increase in 2017-18 and an additional \$204 per pupil in 2018-19) at the Joint Finance Committee public hearings held this spring.

We know that some are characterizing the current debate surrounding the K-12 education portion of the budget as a choice between fully funding the \$200/\$204 in per pupil categorical aid and increasing the low revenue ceiling. Simply put, we think that is a false choice and we support fully funding both during this budget cycle.

Once again, thank you for your advocacy for public schools and public school children. We urge your support for our position.