

Sen. Larson: Republicans again shortchanging our kids, betraying our values

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MADISON – The following is a statement from Senator Chris Larson regarding yesterday's Joint Finance Committee executive session.

“After talking with neighbors, teachers, and parents, it is clear we are in desperate need of common sense solutions that provide each Wisconsin child an opportunity to receive a quality education.

“Our neighbors deserve transparency and to know exactly how much of their money is going to fund private vouchers. Our kids with special needs deserve a quality education, making it imperative that special education rates to school districts be reimbursed at 33%. Our teaching professionals and schools need adequate resources to focus on improving student learning, strengthening families, and working with community partners to provide additional services to families.

“With the budget now on pace to be over two months late, our neighborhood schools are facing a fiscal crisis created entirely by Republican malfeasance. Now, they are choosing to shortchange our kids in favor of tax breaks for a multi-billion dollar corporation.

“The funds cut through the largest cut to education in state history have yet to be restored and this budget continues to get us further away from ever getting back to a proper balance. For the first time in modern history, our state's investment in our children's future has fallen below the national average. Yesterday, the Republican-

controlled Joint Finance Committee chose to ignore the will of the people and needs of our communities by passing another K-12 budget proposal that fails to fully invest in the future of our children. To make it worse, they also approved a massive expansion of the unaccountable voucher program and stripped over \$18 million from school sparsity aid.

“We can and must do better for our kids. Under a plan by Senate Democrats, every single one of our Wisconsin school districts would see a stronger investment, allowing them to ensure our kids reach their full potential and have a shot at the American Dream.”

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