

Gronik campaign: Democratic candidates flip-flop on unaccountable private school vouchers

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MILWAUKEE — A recent article by the [Wisconsin State Journal's Molly Beck](#), sought to summarize key points about my plan for the elimination of, and the thoughtful transition from, the expansion of the school voucher plan in Wisconsin.

“The State Journal summarized a couple key points about my plan accurately, however, I was amazed by the responses from my gubernatorial challengers,” said Gronik on Friday. “I’ve consistently called them out at gubernatorial forums across the state for pandering to the Democrats in the room by claiming they’d eliminate vouchers on day one. I’ve called these statements intellectually dishonest and said it’s not reasonable to say you’d transition 30,000+ kids out of voucher schools on day one. And, I’ve said such a plan would be most harmful to our most vulnerable students. However, the reported answers of my challengers suggest that they actually agree with me.”

From day one, Andy Gronik has been consistent with a message to make our public schools the very best choice for our kids. At the same time, Gronik has maintained a practical approach to solving the problem, by always acknowledging the logistical issues with taking children out of unaccountable private schools and immediately placing them in public schools in their neighborhood until these schools have the space, resources, and ability to offer a safe and productive educational experience that is the best choice for the kids in the school.

“I promised myself when I decided to run for Governor that I would not become a

part of the problem. I'm here to tell people exactly who I am and work together with people to find real solutions that work," concluded Gronik. "My plan significantly increases funding to public schools, eliminates vouchers by first stopping their expansion, sunsets the unaccountable voucher school program in five years, measures all schools receiving vouchers using the same metrics or they lose state funding and honors our most vulnerable kids by refusing to send them back to their neighborhood public school until it is the best choice. We're not privatizing our schools or losing another generation of kids on my watch!"

[Read Gronik's full education plan here.](#) Read below for Gronik's detailed and pragmatic approach to ending the private school voucher program below.

School Voucher Program

Andy Gronik believes in public school education and would eliminate the voucher program over five years.

According to the Wisconsin State Journal, there are "more than 35,000 students who attend a private school using a taxpayer subsidy - including 28,000 in the Milwaukee program." Any candidate for governor who says they will immediately discontinue the voucher program without a thoughtful and appropriate transition is period pandering on this divisive topic for political gain; is not being intellectually honest; and is contributing to a system that is horribly broken the consequences of which is the continued loss in life potential of generations of kids.

Andy Gronik will eliminate the school voucher program by first stopping the expansion of the program. His 2019 budget will reflect spending on vouchers comparable to that of 2018 while public school funding will see a substantial increase during this same period so public schools can begin to recover from Gov Walker's eight year starvation diet. During this time period we will implement a one school year plan to substantially improve student outcomes and deploy nationally recognized best practices. We will also restore local control so schools can direct funding to the areas most needed and implement the best practices required to best address the challenges of the kids in their schools.

Spending on voucher schools will sunset over a total of five years with spending projected to decrease proportionally over each of the next four years to zero. At the same time, we will invest additional funds to address the potential needs of students in districts facing the greatest challenges and inequities.

Until we can end the voucher program, we will hold every school receiving any public dollars to the same high standards of accountability and transparency, as well as performance. As a condition of receiving any public funding in years 2 through 5, the performance of all schools in year one will be measured using consistent objective and subjective metrics. Voucher schools disqualified by these test results will not be eligible to receive state funding in future years. Need-based metrics, such as an earnings cap adjusted for number of children enrolled, will also be implemented in years 2 through 5 to determine eligibility to receive voucher benefits.

Parents everywhere in Wisconsin are desperately seeking the kind of quality education for their children that will allow them to go on to live successful lives. Communities of color are disproportionately affected by inequities in our public school system. Andy Gronik will be a governor who will fight for great public school education for all kids. He is not going to remove a child from a safe and productive learning environment and return them to their neighborhood public school until that school is the very best choice.