

One Wisconsin Now: Private school voucher backers top \$7.5 million in donations to Wisconsin politicians

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MADISON, Wis. — With the latest round of state campaign finance reports in, backers of the private school voucher program have larded the campaign accounts of politicians willing to do their bidding with \$7.5 million in campaign contributions since 2008. Leading the pack, and hauling in more than 1 of every 4 dollars donated, is Gov. Scott Walker with a total take in excess of \$2.165 million.

“The people writing these checks want to see more private school vouchers,” said One Wisconsin Now Executive Director Scot Ross. “Scott Walker has more than delivered, draining resources away from public K-12 schools and sending them to the less accountable private voucher schools favored by the donors who’ve dumped over \$2 million into his campaign coffers.”

Under Walker and the GOP controlled legislature there has been a dramatic, statewide expansion of the less accountable private school voucher program. Vouchers take resources directly away from public schools to help pay for it even though the majority of students who enrolled in the expanded program were already attending private schools.

On top of the contributions sent directly to candidates, the American Federation for Children (AFC), a pro-voucher special interest group closely associated with Donald

Trump's Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, has spent over \$5 million to help its favored politicians in Wisconsin.

In addition, as uncovered by One Wisconsin Now, the Milwaukee based Bradley Foundation, which was overseen by Walker's campaign chair Michael Grebe, spent over \$108 million in support of groups helping to advance the education privatization agenda Walker favors between 2005 and 2014.