

One Wisconsin Now: No appreciation for teachers from Republicans on Joint Committee on Finance

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GOP Seeks to Strip Paid Prep Time Proposal From State Budget Plan

MADISON, Wis. — It's National Teacher Appreciation Week, but Republicans are showing anything but as they seek to strip a provision from Gov. Tony Evers' budget to guarantee K-12 public school teachers have a minimum amount of daily, paid "prep time" for classes. One Wisconsin Now Executive Director Analiese Eicher called the Republicans' lack of respect for teaching professionals, "sad, but not surprising."

"It's teacher appreciation week, yet Republicans are showing them anything but respect and appreciation as they strip out a simple budget provision requiring public school teachers get a minimum amount of paid time each day to prepare for their classes," commented Eicher.

As part of his 2019 state budget plan, Gov. Tony Evers included a provision to require school boards across the state ensure that every teacher had at least 45 minutes of paid time every day set aside to prepare for classes. The Republican co-chairs of the Joint Committee on Finance announced the provision was among the over 130 items they would be stripping from the document on the first day of budget deliberations.

Republican leaders have also signaled they intend to reject the significant general and special education aid increases for public schools proposed by Gov. Evers in his budget.

While they had complete control of state government, Wisconsin Republicans conspired to enact the largest funding cuts to public education in state history while also stripping public school teachers of bargaining and workplace rights.

A teaching shortage has subsequently swept across the state leaving urban, suburban and rural school districts alike scrambling to provide one of the most critical components of a successful school, teachers in classrooms.

Eicher concluded, “It seems Republicans haven’t learned the lesson that to have great teachers in classrooms you ought to show them the respect they deserve and treat people who are trained professionals like professionals.”