

Rep. Hintz: Wisconsin property taxpayers foot the bill for private schools across the state

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MADISON – This month, families across Wisconsin will be receiving their property tax bill in the mail. As property taxes continue to climb in Wisconsin transparency becomes even more important. While property tax documents generally give a breakdown of what the money is going towards, there is one line item that Wisconsinites will not see: how much money from each homeowner is going to pay for private voucher schools. Earlier this session, Representative Jodi Emerson (D-Eau Claire) introduced Assembly Bill 299, which would allow homeowners to see the impact of private voucher schools on their property tax bill by listing the gross reduction in state aid to their school district caused by resident students enrolling in a voucher school.

Today, Assembly Democratic Leader Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh) [released data](#) showing the statewide impact of the voucher program on taxpayers. Representative Hintz released the following statement on the importance of this data and the legislation that would increase transparency:

“The data from across the state is clear. Whether you live in Dodgeville, Mequon or Burlington, property taxpayers deserve to know how much their school district is losing because of vouchers and the impact that it has on their property tax bill. It is also important to note that a significant number of students were already attending a private school before enrolling in the voucher program. This means that some families who previously paid their own private tuition are now using taxpayer funding.

“For the past two sessions, I have co-authored legislation that would require municipalities to detail on property tax bills how much money is going to support private schools that accept students on taxpayer-funded vouchers. We need this transparency to ensure taxpayers truly understand the impact the voucher program is having on our public schools.

“After looking at the data, it becomes clear that our school districts cannot sustain two school systems competing for the same pot of public dollars.

“As Wisconsinites continue to vote to raise their own taxes in order to ensure that their communities have quality public schools, they are not receiving the full story on how their money is already being spent. This month, as property owners open their tax bills, they deserve to know the whole story about what they’re paying for.”