

# WisDems: Wisconsin students and homeowners abandoned by GOP

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MADISON - Republican lawmakers on the legislature's Joint Finance Committee failed Wisconsin students and homeowners by refusing to take action on Governor Evers' special session that invests millions in rural schools, mental health services and special education. Gov. Evers' proposal restores funds Republicans cut from the 2019-21 biennial budget while also providing \$130 million in property tax relief.

"Republicans put special interests ahead of rural schools by cutting millions of dollars from rural districts compared to the Governor's original budget proposal," said Senator Erpenbach (D-West Point). "Democrats have a plan to invest in our kids while providing property tax relief to Wisconsinites, while Republicans continue to ignore their own promises to the people of Wisconsin. Our schools are the heart of our communities, and should be our priority."

"Last year, Republicans gutted Governor Evers' school mental health budget proposal at a time when nearly 40 percent of the state's public high school students report high levels of anxiety and more than 25 percent have experienced depression," said Senator LaTonya Johnson (D-Milwaukee). "Our kids are crying out for help, and Republicans would rather give businesses another tax break than fund the support and services that our children need."

"After Republicans kept special education funding flat for a decade and then cut the Governor's special education proposal by millions in the budget, it's appalling that they are not seizing the opportunity to help these students now," said Rep. Chris Taylor (D-Madison). "Schools had to transfer more resources that otherwise would have served all students because of the Republicans' failure to fund special education, and this will only get worse if they refuse to act again."

“Legislative Republicans today continued with their game of sleight of hand when it comes to investment in education and our children,” said Rep. Evan Goyke (D-Milwaukee). “Under Governor Evers’ education plan, each Wisconsin public school would receive an increase in per-pupil aid while also providing property tax relief for Wisconsin homeowners. When we have a surplus we should be making investments that are impactful and last for generations. The surplus of our future is our children and their success is dependent on long term investments we can make today.”

The Governor’s K-12 proposal would do the following:

- Invest \$10.1 million for rural sparsity aid
- Invest \$19 million for mental health services
- Invest \$79.1 million for special education
- Provide \$130 million in property tax relief
- Restores the state commitment to 2/3<sup>rd</sup> funding