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Gov. Evers Calls Legislature into Special Session to Do What's Best for Kids

Governor announces special session plan to put more than \$400 million into K-12, more than \$100 million into higher education

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today announced he signed [Executive Order #127](#), calling a special session of the Legislature tomorrow, Tues., July 27, 2021, at 9:01 a.m. to do what's best for our kids and our schools.

Earlier this month, Gov. Evers signed the 2021-23 biennial budget. While the bipartisan bill delivered on the governor's promise to cut taxes by 10 percent for middle-income families with one of the largest tax cuts in Wisconsin state history, the governor also noted in his [veto message](#) there were areas where the budget failed to deliver, including making meaningful investments in our kids and our schools.

In light of the budget's shortcomings, Gov. Evers announced more than \$100 million in new funds for public schools outside of the biennial budget in recognition of the fact that districts had spent funds from their base budgets on pandemic-related expenses. At that time, the governor called on legislators to do more than the bare minimum for our kids and schools and reaffirmed his intent to engage the Legislature in the weeks and months ahead to use these available resources to address the unfinished business left by the budget, including meaningfully investing in our kids and schools.

In addition to the more than \$100 million for public schools announced at the time of signing the budget, the governor used his broad veto authority to issue 50 partial vetoes to improve the budget document, leaving additional state resources readily available to make investments in areas where Republicans failed to make meaningful investments through the budget, including K-12 education. Gov. Evers used his veto pen to stop a \$550 million transfer to the budget stabilization fund—which already holds a record high balance to ensure state resources would be readily available to invest in our kids and our schools.

Using those state funds already available through the governor's vetoes, Gov. Evers is calling the Legislature into a special session to take up his proposal, LRB-4297, which is available [here](#), that would invest more than \$500 million in Wisconsin's kids, schools, and students.

- \$440 million for K-12 schools
 - \$240 million for increasing per-pupil aid by \$146 per student
 - \$200 million into special education aids
- \$110 million for higher education
 - \$90 million for the University of Wisconsin System
 - \$20 million for the Wisconsin Technical College System

Gov. Evers' announcement today comes as late last Friday Republicans in the Legislature quietly indicated the Assembly would likely be meeting in a surprise extraordinary session—a convening called by the Legislature to meet outside of the regular session schedule—tomorrow, July 27, 2021, at 9:01 a.m. The Legislature otherwise isn't scheduled to meet in regular session until late September. Rather than coming in to address the unfinished business left by the budget and ensure our kids and schools have the supports they need heading into another school year during a global pandemic, according to reporting by [WisPolitics.com](#), the Wisconsin State Assembly intends to be in extraordinary session tomorrow, possibly for the purpose of overriding some of the governor's vetoes but Republicans have also signaled they might take up additional bills in the extraordinary session as well. At the time of this release, Republican legislators have yet to provide details about what veto overrides or other legislation will be on the extraordinary session calendar in the Assembly tomorrow. The governor announced his special session call in a message to Wisconsinites available [here](#). A full transcript of the message is available below.

Hey there, Wisconsin. Governor Tony Evers here.

A few weeks ago, I signed the 2021-23 biennial budget. I'm proud of the work we've done to put our state and economy in the best position to recover from this pandemic, which enabled us to sign a bipartisan budget that delivered on my promise to cut taxes by 10 percent with one of the largest tax cuts in Wisconsin state history.

But when I signed this budget, I said it left a lot to be desired.

I'm proud we've worked these past few years to reverse years of massive cuts to education at every level in our state, but this budget's bare minimum wasn't enough for our kids—not after the year they've had and all the work we'll do together to help make sure they're successful this year.

So, while I was able to announce more than \$100 million in new funding for kids and our schools in addition to the investments included in the budget, I also called on the Legislature in my budget veto message to finish the work they started.

And it needs to start with education. That's why today I'm giving Republicans the chance to do the right thing.

Through my broad veto authority, I made sure we had state resources readily available for the Legislature to do the right thing and make meaningful investments in our kids and our schools like they should have done in the budget.

Late last Friday, Republicans in the Legislature quietly indicated they'd be coming into an extraordinary session on Tuesday—tomorrow!—just to try overriding my vetoes.

Now, while I'm glad they aren't taking THIS summer off, it's unfortunate that while Wisconsinites are unified and celebrating a huge win for our state, Republicans are busy trying to play politics and sow division.

If Republicans have time to come into session just to try and override my vetoes, then they sure as heck have time to come into session to do what's best for our kids. So, if they're going to be in Madison, then they have work to do.

That's why I'm calling a special session of the Legislature for tomorrow while they will already be here at the Capitol so they can use that time to also make the meaningful investments in our kids and our schools that they should have made in the budget.

Under my special session plan, we're going to invest \$240 million into per-pupil aid—that's money that can go directly into the classroom to help support kids in every school district in our state. And we're also investing \$200 million in special education aids, which will help ensure our schools won't have to divert funding just to support every kid in the classroom. Finally, we're also calling for investing \$110 million into higher education and our University of Wisconsin System, which is a key economic driver for our state, so they can continue to be a critical asset in helping our state and economy recover from this pandemic.

I always say what's best for our kids is what's best for our state. That's why, if we want our state and our economy to continue to recover, then we have to start with our kids.

So, members of the Legislature, it's time to do the right thing and make the investments that our kids and our schools have deserved all along. See you tomorrow. It's time to get to work.