

# Wisconsin Federation for Children: Governor Evers vetoes Assembly Bill 59, denies equal education access for working class families

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**Milwaukee, Wisc. June 21, 2021** — On Friday, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers vetoed Assembly Bill 59, which would have increased the income threshold for parents who want to enroll in Wisconsin's Parental Choice program to 300%.

The bill would have provided equality across the state to the income requirements in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, the Racine Parental Choice Program, and the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program.

"We are disappointed by Evers' decision to veto, which will actively harm working class families," says Wisconsin Federation for Children State Director Justin Moralez. "Evers has shown that he thinks some Wisconsin residents are more deserving of equal education access than their neighbors across the state."

Currently, families living across the street from each other could be unfairly excluded from the program because of invisible, arbitrary boundaries.

At the current income threshold level, 220% of the federal poverty level (only \$56,650 for a family of 4), essential workers such as a single nurse or educator with a stay at home spouse could be excluded from access to the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program based on their income. In his decision, Evers has dismissed the needs of these families.

In a statement released on Friday, Evers said, "I object to diverting resources from

school districts to private schools.” This statement proves that Evers is more concerned with funding systems than the students we need to educate.

Evers’ statement continues, “...participation in the WPCP increased by over 30 percent in the 2019-20 school year and 25 percent in the 2020-21 school...indicating that the current income threshold does not prevent program growth.” However, this growth shows why Assembly Bill 59 was important for Wisconsin families. The WPCP is meeting a demand, especially during the pandemic, and families in the 220%-300% income threshold are looking for the same access rather than unfair exclusion.

In 2018, Evers won his election by less than 30,000 votes. By dismissing thousands of hard-working parents across the state looking for better opportunities for their children, even those who voted for him may be hard pressed to reconsider their options.

Will Governor Evers’ veto of Assembly Bill 59 impact you? We want to hear your story. Email us at [Wicomms@federationforchildren.org](mailto:Wicomms@federationforchildren.org).