

A Better Wisconsin Together: Is Rebecca Kleefisch putting campaign cash before kids?

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MADISON, Wis. — During right-wing gubernatorial candidate Rebecca Kleefisch's career, wealthy backers of private school vouchers have doled out big money to fuel her political ambitions. And Kleefisch's latest call to expand the less accountable private school voucher program in Wisconsin looks like another campaign cash grab, according to A Better Wisconsin Together Executive Director Chris Walloch.

"All you have to do is follow the money," noted Walloch. "Rebecca Kleefisch worked to make the largest cuts to public education in Wisconsin history, supported taking money from our public schools and giving it to less accountable private voucher and charter schools and all the while raked in over \$167,000 from the wealthy donors pushing those policies."

According to state campaign finance records, Kleefisch's haul from wealthy voucher school supporters across the country exceeded \$167,000 from her 2010 campaign for Lieutenant Governor and while serving with Scott Walker until their defeat in 2018.

Kleefisch's longtime political advisor, disgraced former Assembly Speaker Scott Jensen, is also deeply entrenched in lobbying for more private school vouchers as top staff at the organization founded by Michigan billionaire Betsy DeVos and her family, the American Federation for Children.

Jensen was most recently advertised as a member of the advisory board of Kleefisch's political organization, the 1848 Project. He was joined advising Kleefisch

there by Rick Graber, head of the Bradley Foundation. The Milwaukee based right-wing mega funder Bradley Foundation has spent huge sums of money to promote the private school voucher program.

Kleefisch has chosen to keep the funders of the 1848 Project secret.

Walloch concluded, “Rebecca Kleefisch has declared she’ll go to extreme lengths to try to win including, in her own words, engaging in tactics that would make her ‘shower with steel wool’ after the vote. Her push for the pet projects of wealthy political donors sure looks like those tactics include putting our kids’ futures on the auction block for campaign cash.”