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Survival Coalition: Supports new report findings that WI underfunds special education

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The Survival Coalition of more than 20 statewide disability organizations agrees with a new report from the Education Law Center concluding that "Wisconsin's low reimbursement rate for special education will leave school districts on the hook for **$1.25 billion,** forcing them to divert funds intended for general education for all students."

Findings from the report showed that in the 2019-2020 school year:

· Wisconsin schools reported their special education costs were $1.82 billion to support the state's 120,000 students with disabilities.

· After factoring in the state special education reimbursement and funds available through the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), **schools were facing a $1.25 billion shortfall** from unfunded special education costs.

· Wisconsin special education programs are underfunded, with the impact being greatest on districts with high-poverty rates and often concurrent higher enrollments in special education.

Survival Coalition supports additional special education investment in the 2023-2025 biennial budget, specifically to increase state support to 90% to provide relief to local districts and ensure that they can invest adequate local resources for all students.