

Treasurer Godlewski: Wisconsin Public Schools to receive \$52 million from the Common School Fund in 2023, over \$11 million more than 2022

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MADISON, Wis. – As Chair of the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL), State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski today announced that a record \$52 million will be disbursed to public schools across Wisconsin, which represents a notable 27% increase from the 2022 distribution. These funds will be used by librarians and media specialists to expand opportunities for students by purchasing new technology and educational materials.

“Despite economic hardship, we built a resilient Common School Fund that will make a difference for years to come. As Chair, I am proud of our work to diversify our investments and prioritize Wisconsin communities which has led to a record-breaking distribution to our public schools. We know when our schools do well, our communities do well, and this \$52 million will help ensure our schools continue to thrive,” said **State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski**.

Joining Treasurer Godlewski in announcing the distribution at the press conference was State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly, Wisconsin Educational and Media Technology Association (WEMTA) President Tina Birkett, American Federation of Teachers-WI President Kim Kohlhaas, public school librarians, and representatives from the Wisconsin Education Association Council and the Wisconsin Public Education Network.

“School libraries have always been important to me. I always felt at home in my school library – from the time I was a middle school student as a library helper, to the time I spent with my friends and teachers after the high school day working on my forensics assignments. I am who I am today literally because of my school library. The Common School Fund provides critical funding to our public school libraries and allows amazing librarians to make great books and engaging programming available to students,” said **State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly**. “I’m so grateful to the BCPL for their work, and I’m excited to see the creative and innovative ways our schools put this funding to good use.”

The Common School Fund is as old as the State of Wisconsin and provides crucial funding to Wisconsin’s public school libraries. Under Treasurer Godlewski’s leadership, the Common School Fund actively diversified hundreds millions of dollars and invested in Wisconsin communities, which is already paying off with consistently record-breaking distributions from the fund for public schools. Since the Treasurer was elected Chair in 2019, the fund has provided a total of nearly \$160 million in distributions. These funds are essential to our public schools as this funding is often the sole source for public school libraries and media centers.

“We are grateful for the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands’ commitment to our public school libraries. The funding provided by the Common School Fund ensures that Wisconsin school librarians and media specialists can provide the resources necessary to deepen student learning, strengthen reading comprehension and foster information and digital literacy,” said **Tina Birkett, WEMTA President**.

Background

As Chair of the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL), State Treasurer Godlewski oversees over \$1.3 billion in state trust funds, including the Common School Fund, which makes annual distributions that fund books and technology for every school district in the state. As part of her role as board chair, the State Treasurer has prioritized community investment and has integrated Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) considerations into the investment policy. One of her first actions as board chair was to roll back a climate change gag rule which prevented staff from discussing climate at how it impacted investments.

In today’s volatile and uncertain financial markets, the current level of distribution would not be possible if the Trust Fund remained invested solely in loans and bonds,

as required under statute from 1848 through 2015. The updated investment strategy has led to the diversification of the Common School Fund which will continue to pay dividends to Wisconsin schoolchildren for generations to come. To learn more about the BCPL, see [here](#).