

Jerry Hanson: What gives?

Posted on Tuesday, Oct 17, 2023

The column below reflects the views of the author, and these opinions are neither endorsed nor supported by WisOpinion.com.

Wisconsin's GOP Senate is proposing to increase the parental tax deduction for private school students from \$4,000 for an elementary school student to \$5,070 and for a secondary student from \$10,000 to \$12,660 with future increases for inflation. Schools in the Wisconsin Parental Choice program scored well below public schools in the most recent proficiency tests.

Choice students had a score in English and language arts of 22.1% proficiency compared to public schools' 38.9%. Choice schools did even worse in math with a proficiency score of 17.9% ; nearly 20 points behind public schools' 37.4% proficiency in math.

The bashing of Wisconsin's public schools began during Gov. Walker's administration when the bar for proficiency scores were raised. Suddenly in 2012, Wisconsin Public School students dropped from a proficiency of around 80% to 50% based on the higher expectations for student performance when applied to 2011 state achievement test results.

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

Not only did the Walker administration tighten standards to the second toughest in the nation; this marked the beginning of budget cuts to public schools. Wisconsin public schools have been expected to do more with less year after year for over a decade.

-Hanson, of Elkhorn, is a member of the Walworth County Democratic Party.