

# Republicans, taxpayer groups slam Evers' move to allow 400 years of school spending increases

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Assembly Speaker Robin Vos and taxpayer groups warned homeowners will see higher property taxes after Gov. Tony Evers used his veto pen to allow school districts to annually increase per pupil spending limits for the next four centuries.

The move was among the 51 partial vetoes Evers issued Wednesday to the roughly \$98.7 billion two-year spending plan GOP lawmakers sent him last week.

Evers' veto extends an annual increase of \$325 per pupil from two years to through 2425, though future legislatures and guvs will still have the opportunity to change that number — up or down — in coming budgets. The original two-year increase was part of a deal GOP lawmakers reached with the gov on state aid to local governments that also increased the size of state-funded vouchers for private schools.

Vos predicted the burden of the increased resources for schools would fall on homeowners.

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“By allowing this level into the future, homeowners will experience massive property tax increases in the coming years,” the Rochester Republican said in a [statement](#).

Evers wrote in his [veto message](#) that he has repeatedly recommended restoring inflationary increases to the per pupil revenue limit, which was in place before the 2009-10 fiscal year.

In the years since, districts saw a 5.5 percent cut in the 2011-12 school year and six years in which there was no increase. The other years ranged from \$50 to \$179.

Wisconsin Property Taxpayer Association Public Affairs Director John Jacobson told WisPolitics the move will bring “massive property tax increases across the state.”

“It’s critical to fund our local schools,” Jacobson said. “But we need to find a more reasonable solution, or potentially even a new structure for taxation, in Wisconsin that takes the burden off of property taxpayers.”

He added his group is pushing to have the state cover a larger portion of the increase, shifting the burden away from property owners.

The state is again covering two-thirds of the costs of K-12 education in Wisconsin, and Evers said today the budget he signed would continue that.

“There has to be a better way,” Jacobson said.

Department of Public Instruction Secretary Jill Underly in a [statement](#) applauded the decision.

“Any increase in spending authority for public schools is better than none, especially given that past budgets failed to provide that investment,” she said.

Assembly Majority Leader Tyler August accused Evers of breaking a deal on school funding with his veto on the per pupil spending limit.

“After months of good faith negotiations on major budget items, it is unacceptable that he went back on his word and broke our agreement,” August, R-Lake Geneva, said. “It will be difficult, if not impossible, to ever negotiate with this governor again in the future.”

But Evers spokesperson Britt Cudaback countered August was “never part of any conversation the governor had with Republican leaders. If he had been, he’d know that the governor upheld every part of the bipartisan compromise reached with” Assembly Speaker Robin Vos and Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu.