

Wisconsin Association for Equity in Funding: Applauds revenue limit progress

Posted on Monday, Jun 12, 2023

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In 1994, the State Legislature set benchmark funding levels based on what public school districts spent in 1993. No one knew it was coming, and the inequities created then have persisted for 3 decades. AEF member districts have asked for a level playing field.

Our analysis of the proposed budget deal suggests strong progress in closing revenue limit gaps. Low revenue districts will increase their revenues from \$10,000 per student to \$11,000. Instead of 125 public school districts having the same revenues per student, the number increases to 261, almost two-thirds of all districts. The number of districts that are funded within 10% of the minimum will increase to 339 or 81% of the total. This is good news and we applaud the work of the Joint Finance Committee in securing this proposal.

However, there remain 160 districts with much higher revenues than others, all the way to more than \$20,000 per student! Their revenues will increase by \$650 per pupil. It's frustrating to know that millions of dollars continue to flow to the lucky districts at the top. Today's progress is good,

but the education of thousands of students across the state will still be funded at substantially lower levels than others. AEF has documented serious, damaging impacts on class sizes, staffing levels, and college entrance rates in low revenue districts. This budget offered a greater opportunity to help those students realize their potential.

The Wisconsin Association for Equity in Funding (WAEF) is a group of Wisconsin

school districts that seeks financial equity in the state system of school financing. Members include urban, suburban and rural schools, educating almost 100,000 students across Wisconsin.