



# WISPOLITICS

## 2022 Fall Election Guide



# Battleground Wisconsin

# Private K-12 Schools Serving You



Wisconsin private schools **educate** over 121,000 children; operate over 800 schools; and **employ** over 10,000 staff.



WCRIS contracts with the **DPI** to provide Wisconsin's federally required **Private School Ombudsman**.



We ensure **children's safety** by working with the Wisconsin **DOJ** to help schools access grants.

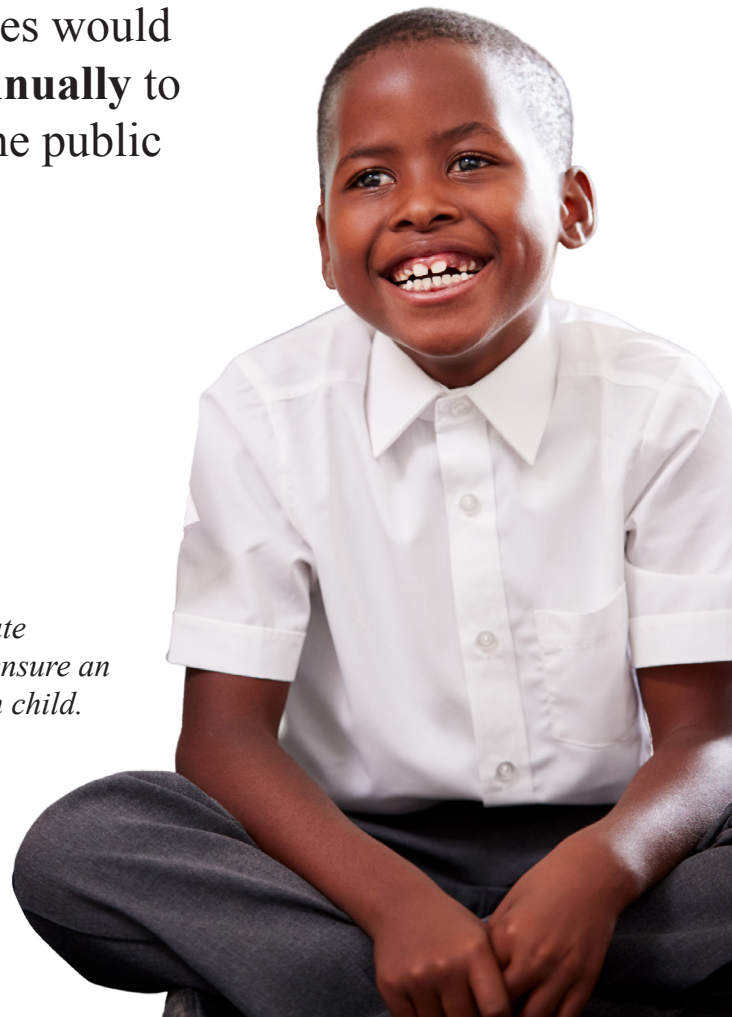


Private schools save taxpayers money. If they closed, state and local taxes would have to increase by **\$1 billion annually** to educate all of those children in the public system.\*

Wisconsin Council  
of Religious &   
Independent Schools  
*Committed to a Higher Standard*

*WCRIS supports the unique missions of member K-12 private schools through advocacy, education and partnerships, to ensure an extraordinary education and equitable opportunity for each child.*

[www.wcris.org](http://www.wcris.org)







# Governor & Lt. Governor

## Democratic Ticket



### Tony Evers

Born Nov. 5, 1951, in Plymouth. Graduated from UW-Madison. Worked as a teacher and then a principal in the Tomah School District until 1984. Served as superintendent in the Oakfield and Verona school districts for four years each, then CESA administrator from

1992-2001. Appointed Department of Public Instruction deputy superintendent from 2001-2009. Elected as DPI head in April 2009, reelected in 2013 and 2017. Elected governor in 2018.



### Sara Rodriguez

Born July 25, 1975, in Milwaukee. Graduated from Illinois Wesleyan University. Volunteered with the Peace Corps in Samoa. Earned a bachelor's and master's degree in nursing from Johns Hopkins University. Served as a registered nurse and health care

administrator. Elected in 2020 to represent the 13th Assembly District. Lives in Brookfield.

## Republican Ticket



### Tim Michels

Born Aug 7, 1962, in Brownsville. Graduated from St. Norbert College. Served in the U.S. Army as an infantry officer for 12 years, attaining the rank of major. Returned to help run Michels Corporation, a Brownsville-based family construction firm with 8,000 employees

that he co-owns. He later earned advanced business degrees. He has twice run unsuccessfully for public office, losing a state Senate primary in 1998 and a U.S. Senate race to Dem Russ Feingold in 2004.



### Roger Roth

Born Feb. 5, 1978, in Appleton. Graduated from UW-Oshkosh. Runs a family construction business. Serves as a captain in the Wisconsin Air National Guard, where he was deployed multiple times in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Elected to the Assembly in 2006, then to the 19th Senate District since 2014. Served as Senate president from 2017-2021. Lives in Appleton.

## Michels runs as outsider in bid to unseat Evers

The 2022 race for governor pits a Democratic incumbent who has been in statewide elected office for more than a decade vs. a GOP outsider and businessman who has twice lost bids for office.

Gov. Tony Evers, finishing out his first four-year gubernatorial term, also served as the elected state schools superintendent and ran the Department of Public Instruction after his election in April 2009.

Republican Tim Michels, who helps run a huge family-owned construction business based in Brownsville, Wis., beat former Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch to get the GOP nomination as he got the endorsement of Donald Trump and poured millions of his own money into the race. Michels lost a 1998 bid for state Senate and a 1994 race for U.S. Senate.

Evers if he wins will have to deal with a GOP-dominated Legislature once again. But an expected \$5 billion state surplus could help make the once-every-two-year budget process easier.

The only gubernatorial debate was scheduled for Oct. 14 before a panel assembled by the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association.

In the run-up to the debate, Evers and Michels tangled through the media and TV ads on the issues of abortion, crime, and education funding.

Michels and his allies have made crime a centerpiece issue,

charging Evers mismanaged the Kenosha unrest following the shooting of Jacob Blake, a Black man, by police. They also accuse him of releasing dangerous criminals through parole. Evers and his allies say the governor has a board that makes parole decisions and that he did everything Kenosha-area law enforcement had asked of him.

The Evers side has blasted Michels for switching his position on abortion – from supporting the 1849 full ban on abortions elevated by the U.S. Supreme Court decision leaving abortion up to the states to saying he would sign a bill allowing abortion exceptions for rape and incest.

And on education funding, Evers and current DPI Secretary Jill Underly proposed a nearly \$2 billion boost for public schools in the next budget.

“Budgets are about priorities, and that’s why building our biennial budget always begins for me with doing what’s best for our kids, and we know our kids, families, and schools need our help now more than ever to get caught up, get more educators and staff in our classrooms, and ensure every kid has the support and resources they need to be successful,” Evers said.

Michels vowed to give parents more options for their kids if elected. He has previously pledged to support universal school choice, regardless of family income.

“The tired, old Evers approach has not worked,” Michels said.



## **Ron Johnson (R)**

Born in Mankato, Minn., April 8, 1955. Lives in Oshkosh. Former plastics manufacturing company owner and CEO. Elected in 2016 to a second six-year term.



## **Mandela Barnes (D)**

Born in Milwaukee, Dec. 1, 1986. Represented Milwaukee's 11th Assembly District from 2013 to 2017. Ran unsuccessfully for state Senate in 2016. Elected lieutenant governor in 2018.

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## **National attention focused on Johnson, Barnes matchup**

This year's race for U.S. Senate is getting a lot of national attention and money.

That's because national Democrats want to prevent GOP incumbent Ron Johnson from being elected to a third six-year term and preserve a tenuous majority in Washington, D.C.

Johnson, a former manufacturer from Oshkosh who twice beat Russ Feingold, again has an advantage of a running in what should be a Republican year given Democrats hold the White House and Congress. But his poll numbers have been stuck under water after months of Dem attack ads. That has led to a mostly negative campaign seeking to beat his challenger, Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, a former lawmaker from Milwaukee.



The contest offers a big contrast on many levels – race, age, background and policy.

Barnes would be the state's first Black U.S. senator and one of the youngest members of the U.S. Senate if elected. He has made his middle-class roots a major part of his pitch; he is the son of a public school teacher and a UAW member.

But Johnson and his allies have gone after Barnes for personal missteps – getting photographed holding an “Abolish ICE” T-shirt, overdue property taxes, unpaid parking tickets and the high price of security as lieutenant governor.

Mostly though, Republicans have been bashing Barnes as soft on crime, saying in one ad that he is “dangerously liberal on crime.”

Barnes in late September said Johnson is trying to “lie and distract” from his own record.

“Ron Johnson could not care less about public safety. If he did, he wouldn't have supported an insurrection that left 140 officers injured,” Barnes told reporters at a campaign stop in Madison. “If he did, he would have supported the American Rescue Plan instead of playing politics.”

Barnes noted the American Rescue Plan Act included provisions to invest in law enforcement and public safety initiatives.

Barnes is for “Medicare for All,” and has been endorsed by U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts.

Johnson suggests putting Social Security and Medicare into the discretionary funding category will better ensure their survival.

Two statewide televised debates were scheduled: Oct. 7, organized by the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association, and Oct. 13 with a media coalition organized by WTMJ-TV and including WisPolitics.com.





# 3rd Congressional District

## State senator vs. former Navy SEAL in swingy 3rd CD

Wisconsin's 3rd Congressional District is a perennial swing district that runs along the Mississippi River from La Crosse to Eau Claire. After a quarter century being represented by longtime moderate Dem Congressman Ron Kind, Republicans think they can finally win it back.

Kind, D-La Crosse, endorsed a one-time aide, state Sen. Brad Pfaff of Onalaska, to be his successor. And the former state agriculture secretary under Gov. Tony Evers won a four-way August primary to take on Derrick Van Orden, an ex-Navy SEAL who narrowly lost to Kind in 2020.

Pfaff grew up in the district, on a dairy farm, and went on to work for Kind, U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl and the Obama administration. Van Orden, since retiring from the military, has written a book, appeared in movies and owned and operated the Butternut Café in the 7th CD. He lives in Prairie du Chien.

Pfaff has run a traditional campaign, while Van Orden rarely does interviews and has rejected participating in media-led debates.

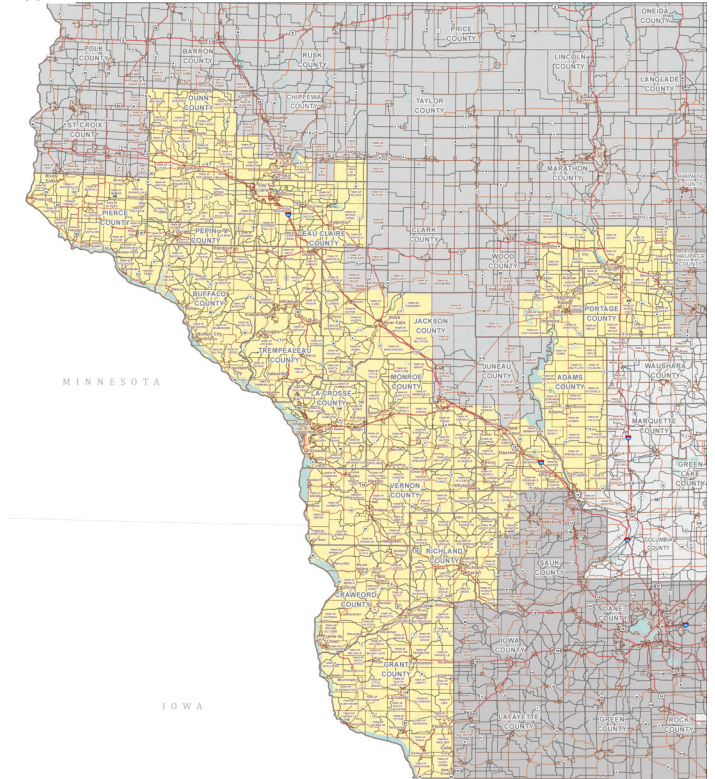
Pfaff has bashed Van Orden for being at the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol riot.

"I heard from Wisconsin veterans today that when Derrick entered the restricted area of the Capitol grounds during the Jan. 6 attack, he crossed a line," said Pfaff at a Bangor event in late September. "No real patriot would willingly participate in the insurrectionist plot to overthrow our free and fair elections. Our active service member and veteran communities deserve a leader who shares their values — I'm running to bring these homegrown values to Washington."

Van Orden in an earlier La Crosse Tribune op-ed wrote that he had traveled to Washington "for meetings and to stand for the integrity of our electoral system as a citizen." He wrote that he "watched what should have



Congressional District 3  
STATE OF WISCONSIN



been an expression of free speech devolve into one of the most tragic incidents in the history of our nation."

"When it became clear that a protest had become a mob, I left the area, as to remain there could be construed as tacitly approving this unlawful conduct," Van Orden said. "At no time did I enter the grounds, let alone the building."

Van Orden has been endorsed by Donald Trump and appeared with Trump at an Aug. 5 rally in Waukesha County, saying: "It is irrefutable that this nation was better under his leadership. It's not a partisan statement. It's reality."



### **Brad Pfaff (D)**

Born Dec. 7, 1967, and raised on a La Crosse County farm. Worked as a staffer for U.S. Rep. Ron Kind and U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl. Served in the Obama administration with the USDA. Served as ag secretary for the Evers administration before the GOP-led Senate rejected his appointment. Elected in 2020 to represent the 32nd Senate District. Lives in Onalaska.



### **Derrick Van Orden (R)**

Born Sept. 15, 1969, in Hennepin County, Minn. Retired Navy SEAL senior chief with five combat deployments and other overseas assignments. Served as a consultant for various Fortune 500 companies before retiring. Acted in three films and is an author. Lost a 2020 challenge to Dem. U.S. Rep Ron Kind, who is retiring. Lives in Prairie du Chien.

# Constitutional Offices



## Attorney General



### **Josh Kaul (D)**

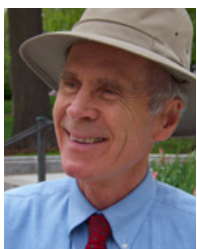
Born Feb. 2, 1981, in Pittsburgh and was raised in Oshkosh and Fond du Lac. Graduated from Yale University and earned a law degree from Stanford Law School. Served as a federal prosecutor in Baltimore and later joined Perkins Coie's Madison office. Elected attorney general in 2018. Lives in Madison.



### **Eric Toney (R)**

Born Jan. 24, 1984, in Fond du Lac. Graduated from St. Norbert College and earned his law degree from Mitchell Hamline School of Law. Worked as an attorney at O'Rourke Law Offices before being elected Fond du Lac County district attorney in 2012. Lives in Fond du Lac.

## Secretary of State



### **Doug La Follette (D)**

Born June 6, 1940, in Des Moines, Iowa. Graduated from Marietta College and earned a master's degree from Stanford University and a Ph.D. from Columbia University. Taught chemistry at UW-Parkside and served as a UW-Madison research associate. Ran unsuccessfully

for Congress in 1970. Elected to the state Senate in 1972 and then was elected secretary of state in 1974, serving until 1979. Elected again as secretary of state in 1983 and reelected since. Lives in Madison.



### **Amy Loudenberg (R)**

Born Sept. 29, 1969, in Midland, Mich. Graduated from UW-Madison. Worked in environmental project management and regulatory compliance and served as a volunteer firefighter. Went on to serve in leadership roles with the Greater Beloit Chamber before being elected

to represent the 31st Assembly District in 2010. Lives in Clinton.

## State Treasurer



### **John Leiber (R)**

Born in Oct. 17, 1977, in Racine. Graduated from UW-Parkside and earned his law degree from UW Law School. Former Assembly staffer. Lost the GOP primary for the open 62nd Assembly District in 2018. Works as an attorney for Klein Law Office in Madison. Lives in

Cottage Grove.



### **Aaron Richardson (D)**

Born July 18, 1976, in Fitchburg. Graduated from UW-Green Bay and earned an MBA from UW-Whitewater. Served on the Fitchburg city council and on the Fitchburg Parks and Recreation Committee before being elected mayor in 2019. He also works as a substitute

teacher in the Oregon and Verona school districts.

## About this publication

The 2022 Fall Election Guide is a product of WisPolitics.com and was compiled from government and campaign sources.

WisPolitics.com, started in 2000, is a nonpartisan online news organization based in Madison that operates an email news service in addition to the free sites WisBusiness.com, WisOpinion.com and Battleground Wisconsin.

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## GOP aims for veto-proof majority in state Legislature

One thing about this year's legislative races that political professionals agree on: Republicans will control the Senate and Assembly come January 2023.

What's in dispute: whether Republicans can achieve a supermajority and override vetoes by Tony Evers if he is reelected governor.

Republicans now hold a 21-12 edge in Senate and held a 61-38 margin (before vacancies) in the Assembly. Republicans need 22 and 66, respectively, for their supermajority.

Republicans need to net just one seat in the Senate to reach a two-thirds majority. Their top targets are the open 25th SD in northern Wisconsin and freshman Sen. Jeff Smith, D-Eau Claire in the 31st SD.

The most likely path to getting to 66 seats for the two-thirds majority in the Assembly would require holding all the districts Republicans have now, while picking up Brookfield freshman Dem Rep. Sara Rodriguez's seat and two open races in northern Wisconsin.

From there, they'd have to beat Rep. Steve Doyle, of Onalaska -- a perpetual target in a district that has a slight GOP lean -- to get to 65.

They'd then need to win a blue seat such as the one represented by Rep. Katrina Shankland, of Stevens Point, or the open Oshkosh seat that has been represented by Dem Rep. Gordon Hintz.

Meanwhile, Democrats have fewer pickup opportunities.

Rep. Don Vruwink, D-Milton, has represented the 43rd AD since 2017, but was drawn into the 33rd and is running for the open GOP seat, where he faces Scott Johnson, a farmer from Jefferson.

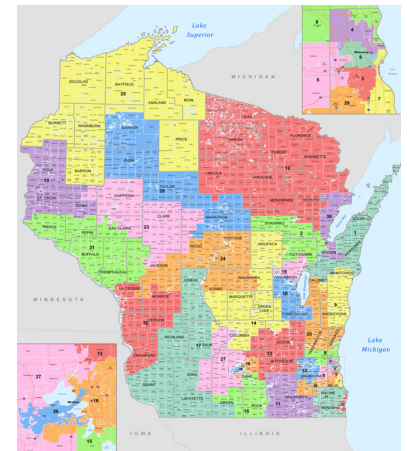
Democrats are also targeting the open 84th in the Milwaukee suburbs, where former Milwaukee Ald. Bob Donovan faces activist LuAnn Bird, of Hales Corners.

So, a handful of seats will determine whether Evers, if reelected, maintains one of the most powerful veto pens in the country.

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### Races to watch in the Senate:

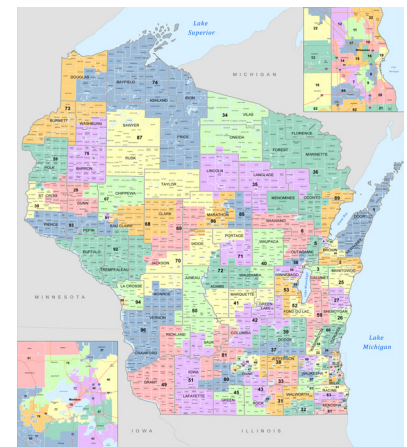
- the 5th Senate District seat of retiring state Sen. Dale Kooyenga, R- Brookfield (former GOP state Rep. Rob Hutton of Brookfield vs. community activist Jessica Katzenmeyer of West Allis);
- the 19th Senate District seat of Republican Roger Roth of Appleton, who's running for lieutenant governor (Rep. Rachael Cabral-Guevara of Appleton vs. Dem Kristin Alfheim, an Appleton alder who works as a retirement adviser);
- SD25, the northern Wisconsin seat of Minority Leader Janet Bewley, who is retiring (former GOP state Rep. Romaine Quinn of Cameron vs. former Tammy Baldwin aide Kelly Westlund of Ashland);
- and SD31, the western Wisconsin seat of freshman Sen. Jeff Smith, of Eau Claire (vs. Dave Estenson, a trucker from Whitehall).



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### Races to watch in the Assembly:

- AD33, where Rep. Don Vruwink, D-Milton, is running for a GOP seat (vs. Scott Johnson, a Fort Atkinson farmer) after he was drawn out of the district he's represented since 2017;
- AD94, Rep. Steve Doyle, D-Onalaska (vs. Ryan Huebsch, a former legislative aide from Onalaska whose father, Mike, held the district before Doyle won a special election in 2011 and was Assembly speaker and DOA secretary);
- the open AD73, being vacated by Dem Rep. Nick Milroy. This race pits Dem Laura Gapske, a legal consultant from Superior, vs. Angie Sapik of Lake Nebagamon, who has worked in sales and logistics;
- and the open AD74, being vacated by Dem Rep. Beth Meyers. Dem John Adams, a farmer and business owner from Washburn, is running against Republican Chanz Green, a Cable bar owner and former utilities manager living in Grand View.





# Know the when, where, and how. Then vote.

Voting is your most important right. It gives you the power to decide what our future looks like. But you have to be in the know to vote. Election laws and voting places can change. That's why AARP Wisconsin has collected all the most up-to-date election information to make sure that the voices of voters 50-plus are heard on November 8. Make sure you know how to register to vote, where to vote in person, what the rules are for absentee or early voting, and all the key voting deadlines. Get the latest voting information for Wisconsin at [aarp.org/WIvotes](http://aarp.org/WIvotes).

