



Media Release

*For Immediate Release*  
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**Rep. Shankland: State Budget a Missed Opportunity to Support our Public Schools**

MADISON – Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point) released the following statement in response to today’s legislative action in the Assembly on the biennial state budget:

“When Governor Evers debuted his budget proposal, I was pleased with the vision he laid out. His budget met the moment and reflected the needs of our communities, making meaningful investments that would have made a huge difference for individuals, families, businesses, schools, and communities across Wisconsin. With the welcome news of a \$4.4 billion projected surplus, we also had more money available than any other state budget cycle in recent memory.

“We could have come together to pass a budget that we could all support, addressing our most pressing needs and uplifting communities across our state with critical and strategic investments. Unfortunately, the Joint Finance Committee removed hundreds of provisions in the state budget on their first day of votes, from expanding BadgerCare to raising the minimum wage to reducing prescription drug prices and more.

“This state budget should have funded our public schools with an increase to our classrooms instead of providing our schools with flat budgets and increased costs. The majority of the K-12 school funding in this budget is school funding in name only, meant to meet the federal government’s maintenance of effort requirements. While it’s important that we meet these requirements, this funding to buy down the property tax levy is not money that can be spent in the classroom.

“In the Stevens Point Public School District alone, the flat funding in the state budget coupled with increasing costs will result in a structural deficit and could lead to an operating referendum. Instead of asking voters to fund our schools via referenda, we should fund our schools *through the state budget*. Pushing these decisions to the local level will lead to even more inequity in our public schools.

“I believe we are capable of more than this. I know from experience that bipartisan compromise is possible, and we have urgent issues to address, from affordable healthcare to water quality and economic security. I am disappointed that the budget we voted on today squandered this momentous opportunity to fairly fund our schools, support workers and businesses, invest in infrastructure, and balance the budget.

“Throughout the budget process, I advocated persistently for the inclusion of important issues for our community. While I was hoping to be able to support the budget, this state budget leaves too much to chance for our local public schools, and that’s why I voted no. I look forward to the opportunity to keep advocating for the funding and opportunities we need to strengthen communities across Wisconsin and work with my colleagues in both parties to ensure that our state is on a strong path forward.”

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