

# a **CLOSER** **LOOK** at the *2015-17 State Budget*



## **Choice, Charter, and Open Enrollment**

- Creates a phased-in expansion of the Statewide Choice Program:
  - The total number of students enrolled in choice residing in each district, in any year, cannot exceed 1% of the district's prior year enrollment
  - Beginning in 2017-18, the enrollment limit would increase by 1% each year until it reaches 10%, at which time the cap would be removed for the following year
- The per pupil payment for students who attended a Racine or Statewide Choice school in the 2014-15 school year "continuing pupils" will be paid from a sum sufficient GPR appropriation of \$19.8 million in each year
- Provides that Racine or Statewide choice per pupil payments for incoming students will be made by reducing state aid to their resident school district, similar to the open enrollment process
  - Starting in 2015-16, a pupil who enters the Choice Program or any "incoming pupils" will be counted by their resident school district for general aid and revenue limit purposes
  - Pupils who are counted for revenue limits in the first year of their participation in the program are not counted after they leave the program
- Increases per pupil payments for Independent "2R" Charters, the Choice Program, and Open Enrollment by an estimated \$12 in 2015-16 and \$108 in 2016-17.
- Requires DPI to seek a waiver from the federal Department of Education that would allow school districts to use an assessment from an approved list of three to five options
- Modifies the current Open Enrollment Program to protect special-needs students from being denied open enrollment, and establishes a per pupil transfer of \$12,000 per special education pupil in 2016-17

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- Creates a Special Needs Voucher Program to allow a child with disabilities the opportunity to attend a participating private school, if their open enrollment application has already been denied
- Expands the list of Independent Charter School Authorizers to include UW System, the Waukesha County Executive, the Gateway Technical College District Board, and both Wisconsin tribal colleges
- Allows charter schools to automatically replicate if, all of the schools operated by the governing board have received one of the top two ratings on their most recent report card
- Removes restrictions on the location of 2R charters authorized by most authorizers