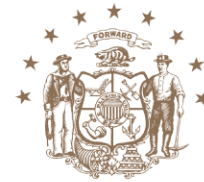




SONDY POPE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
80TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



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COMPARING THE LAST DECADE: PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING VERSUS PRIVATE VOUCHER FUNDING

(MADISON) As the Wisconsin Legislature nears its most important biennial work, completing the state budget, it is important to examine historical budgetary trends. Wisconsin's support of public education has long been the single largest state expenditure. How that money is spent, however, is often the subject of debate among legislators, citizens, advocates and interest groups.

“Over the past decade, Wisconsin has increased total state spending on private school vouchers by 57.5%,” said Rep. Pope. “During the same time period, overall spending on public schools has increased by only 3.8%. While total spending on public schools far exceeds total spending on private school vouchers, this is nonetheless a troubling trend.”

According to the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau, overall spending on private voucher schools increased from \$65.6 million in 2002-03 to \$154.6 million in 2012-13. Public school spending, by contrast increased from \$4,775.2 million to \$4,964.4 million, respectively.

“The budget process is a reflection of priorities,” Rep. Pope said. “Governor Walker’s last budget put the expansion of the private voucher school ahead of public schools. While overall public school spending was reduced by 6.7% during the previous biennium, private voucher spending increased (due to program eligibility expansions) and their per pupil payment was protected from any reduction. It is my hope that given our state’s current surplus, the public schools that are required to educate all students are made whole before any additional expansion of the voucher programs takes place.”