



Vicki Bayer
Superintendent of Schools and Learning
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June 16, 2025

Dear Senator Andre Jacque, Senator Jamie Wall, Representative Joel Kitchens, Representative Benjamin Franklin, Representative Amaad Rivera-Wagner, and Representative Ryan Spaude:

Today, I am reaching out on behalf of the Green Bay Area Public School District to express our deep disappointment in the budget proposal presented by the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) last week. At a time when the state has an unprecedented state surplus, it is difficult to understand why the state of Wisconsin would not invest in the vast majority of children who attend public schools.

Shifting the \$325 per pupil increase for 2025-26 and 2026-27 to local property taxpayers, rather than funding through state aid, appears contrary to the concerns legislators are raising about school districts seeking community financial support through referendums. This funding should come through state aid rather than passing on the responsibility to our locally elected school boards to raise taxes.

Without making the special education funding sum sufficient, the increase in special education of 35% for 2025-26, and 37.5% for 2026-27 is likely to be less than what is proposed. For the 2024-25 school year, the state approved 33% reimbursement for special education. Because it is *sum certain* rather than *sum sufficient*, we received only 30% reimbursement, leading to a reduction of over \$900,000 for our district.

Please consider modifying the JFC proposal to **include 60% reimbursement for all special education (sum sufficient), and provide state aid for the \$325 per pupil increase for both years.** While this is far less than what is needed to ensure that GBAPS does not need to make cuts that will impact students, it would be a significant improvement over what is currently proposed.

Meaningful, structural investment in schools today will eliminate the need for local tax increases and sustain excellence for future generations. Thank you for your consideration. Our students and staff continue to do amazing things every day. They, and our community, deserve your support.

Sincerely,

Vicki Bayer
Superintendent of Schools and Learning

cc: Board of Education