



# Sun Prairie Area School District

Futures depend on us...every child, every day.

## **RESOLUTION in Support of the Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill (Assembly Bill 267 & Senate Bill 183)**

WHEREAS, the Sun Prairie Area School District Board of Education, administrators, educators, staff, parents, and community members of the Sun Prairie Area School District are united in our efforts to provide ALL children with the highest quality educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Sun Prairie Area School District supports local control and the ability of the elected Board of Education to make decisions to support the learning of our students; and

WHEREAS, private school voucher advocates have consistently pushed for expanding the use of taxpayer-funded vouchers to pay tuition for students in private schools in Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, the Governor and members of the Wisconsin Legislature have proposed expanding voucher programs into many more communities and have proposed increasing state payments to voucher schools; and

WHEREAS, a recent memo from the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau demonstrated that payments to voucher schools under the Governor's proposed budget would range from \$7,757 to \$8,403 per student by 2018. Including all of Governor Walker's proposed increases, in some cases public schools might receive as much as \$1,700 less per student at \$6,703; and

WHEREAS, the same memo also shows that tax dollars or voucher operators are increasing 12 times faster than total public school aids and that the voucher payments would more than double over eight years. At the same rate, net general aids that support public schools and reduce property taxes would fall by 1.3%; and

WHEREAS, the voucher amount is \$7,323 for pupils in grades K-8 and \$7,969 for pupils in grades 9-12; and

WHEREAS, under Assembly Bill 267 and Senate Bill 183, the "Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill", authored by state Representative Dana Wachs (D-Eau Claire) would require property tax bills to include information from the school district where the property is located regarding the amount of any net reduction in state aid, if any, to the district as a result of pupils enrolled in the statewide voucher program, the Racine voucher program, or the Milwaukee voucher program; and

WHEREAS, the increase in statewide property taxes due to school boards levying to offset lost aid due to the voucher system was over \$25 million in 2016-17. The statewide property tax impact is estimated to grow to \$37 million in 2017-18 and \$47 million in 2018-19; and

WHEREAS the Sun Prairie Area School District was required to levy \$32,704 in taxpayer dollars to be allocated to the statewide voucher program in 2017-18, and local taxpayers are not provided with information about their tax dollars being spent on private and voucher schools. When private school voucher programs expand in our community, the Sun Prairie Area School District loses state aid (to the voucher schools) and our Board of Education must raise additional property taxes to replace the aid lost to the voucher schools or lose that funding permanently under the state-imposed revenue limits, and

WHEREAS, just as property tax bills show how much money goes to public schools and technical colleges, taxpayers deserve to know the cost of expanding the voucher program, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Sun Prairie Area School District Board of Education calls on Governor Walker, the Wisconsin State Assembly, and the Wisconsin State Senate to support the Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill in an effort to be open, honest, and transparent with the taxpayers of the Sun Prairie Area School District and Wisconsin.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being all of the members of the Board of Education of the Sun Prairie Area School District, have executed this resolution this 12<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2018.

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Tom Weber, President

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Steve Schroeder, Vice President

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Dave Hoekstra, Treasurer

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Carol Sue Albright, Clerk

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Marilyn Ruffin, Deputy Clerk

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Caren Diedrich, Member

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Marta Hansen, Member