

LAKE MILLS AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

120 E. Lake Park Place, Lake Mills, WI 53551 * (920) 648-2215 * (920) 648-5795 (FAX)

PREPARING ALL OF TODAY'S STUDENTS FOR TOMORROW'S OPPORTUNITIES

DEAN SANDERS
SUPERINTENDENT

ROBERT CHADY
BUSINESS MANAGER

JAMIE SYVRUD
DIRECTOR OF LEARNING
& STUDENT SERVICES

May 28, 2015

Dear Lake Mills Parents and Residents,

As many of you are aware, Education and the funding of Education have been in the news lately with the debate of the budget bill in Madison. As I read the budget and many of the things that are in the thirty page document dealing with education, there is an item that seems to be missing: Wisconsin Schools do Succeed. Wisconsin has some of the highest graduation rates in the nation, with high school graduation rates exceeding 90% and Wisconsin consistently scores in the top four states in the nation in the ACT College Entrance Exam.

Even though the Education System continues to graduate some of the top students in the nation, schools in Wisconsin will contend with the following facts:

- For the first time, Wisconsin will fall below the national average in per pupil spending.
- Since 2008, Wisconsin has seen a 15% decrease in per pupil spending for public education.
- In the coming budget, public schools will have less state general aid than in 2010
- Wisconsin is one of only 5 states that have been keeping spending on public education close to flat. All other states have been increasing spending on public education at an average of 4%.
- Under current statute, public schools students can open enroll to other public school districts. A total of \$6,635.00 follows that student to their new school. Under the legislation on the floor in Madison, public school students can also enroll in a voucher school (a non-public school approved by the state and which are currently all religious schools). A voucher of \$7,210.00 for K-8 students and \$7,856.00 for high school students follows that student to their voucher school. Therefore, non-public students are eligible for 18% more funding than public school students.
- Other items in the budget bill deal with special education vouchers, home school students participating on high school sports teams, "learning portfolios" for graduation credit, licensing teachers without an education degree and a new civics test a student must take and pass before they can graduate.

The School System in Lake Mills is at the very heart of the community. My hope is that our schools can continue to be. If you agree that maintaining our public schools is important, please become educated on what is in the current budget bill and how it will affect our school system. Get in contact with your local legislator as soon as possible and ask them to fully fund our public schools and continue to provide a quality education for all children. Also, please feel free to contact me at the District Office to discuss what you have read in the budget bill.

Thank you for your support of Public Education and the Citizens of our future!

Dean E. Sanders
District Administrator – Lake Mills Schools