

**James E. Huismann, Board of Education President**  
**JoAnn Sternke, Ed.D.**  
**Superintendent of Schools**

404 Lake Street ♦ Pewaukee, Wisconsin 53072

Phone: (262) 691-2100 ♦ Fax: (262) 691-1052

Website: <http://pewaukeeschools.schoolfusion.us>/Email: [sterjoa@pewaukeeschools.org](mailto:sterjoa@pewaukeeschools.org)

February 25, 2015

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Constituents,

Following the release of the Governor's biennial budget earlier this month, many questions have arisen regarding how this budget proposal would impact education in the Pewaukee School District. This message provides *brief* information concerning the fiscal impact of this proposed budget. We have not contacted you directly before with a message regarding state funding of public schools. We are contacting you now because we have concerns about our long term ability to continue to provide the high quality education we offer our Pewaukee students given the proposed budgetary constraints. Your family deserves a high quality education, one where all students reach our mission and are prepared for their future upon high school graduation. We want this for your child and all children in the Pewaukee School District. Our Pewaukee community, our economy, and our state benefit when our students are prepared for college and career.

*Revenue Limits. Per Pupil Aid. General Aid.* One thing is clear - school funding is complicated. We certainly can't explain it all in this short letter. While we risk being overly simplistic in delivering this message, the 2015-16 proposed budget contains a \$150 decrease per student in public school funding for 2015-16. While \$150 doesn't sound like much, this reduction in projected revenue comes close to \$400,000 for the Pewaukee School District. \$400,000 is a large amount of money for us to work without. \$400,000 cannot be found with simple "belt tightening." This is just one of the provisions in the proposed budget which concern us.

In the Pewaukee School District we have historically been fiscally prudent, and we use a strategic process to plan for both short-term and long-term needs. We respect the financial investment you make to the success of our schools and students. We respect the commitment you make with the tax dollars you pay to support our schools. Last year our Board of Education elected not to levy to the maximum; we tightened our belt and did more with less. We did this to lower the tax impact for all our taxpayers. As we look to the next year, this "belt tightening" is getting more and more challenging. And as we look to the future, the economic challenges fostered in this budget will compound requiring larger cuts to the district budget and create challenges far beyond the 2015-16 school year. That is the largest concern.

Additionally, the Governor proposed removing the 1000-student cap on private school vouchers. These vouchers, as proposed, would be funded from public school dollars in which the voucher student resides. Voucher schools use your tax dollars, taken from your local public schools and are not accountable to the taxpayers or for their academic performance. Although the financial impact is impossible to calculate at this time, the net result will be less state funding for K-12 public schools in Wisconsin.

As is always the case, however, our State Assembly and Senate legislators are required to vote to approve a budget prior to it becoming official. We encourage you to share your concerns and address your questions to your legislators:

Governor Scott Walker  
115 East Capitol  
Madison, WI 53702  
  
(608) 266-1212  
[govgeneral@wisconsin.gov](mailto:govgeneral@wisconsin.gov)

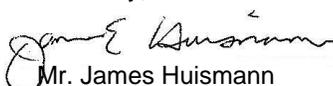
Senator Paul Farrow  
323 South, State Capitol Room  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53708  
(608) 266-9174  
[sen.farrow@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:sen.farrow@legis.wisconsin.gov)

Representative Adam Neylon  
125 West State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8953  
Madison WI 53708  
(608) 266-5120  
[Rep.Neylon@legis.wi.gov](mailto:Rep.Neylon@legis.wi.gov)

For those of you who wish for more information, we have included some links for your convenience. This [link](#) from the Wisconsin Taxpayer Alliance gives a concise explanation of the bigger picture of the proposed budget on K-12 education. This [link](#) to the DPI shows the 127 million dollar statewide impact on all school districts. Also know you can contact us should you have further questions or concerns. There is no question that should the budget proposal remain unchanged, the financial impact on the Pewaukee School District will be significant and have ramifications for both short- and long-term planning.

Please let your legislators know your thoughts on this issue.

Sincerely,

  
Mr. James Huismann  
President of the Board of Education

  
Dr. JoAnn Sternke  
Superintendent of Schools