



# WAUSAU SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Longfellow Administration Center

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*Dr. Kathleen Williams, Superintendent of Schools*

February 16, 2015

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Constituents,

Following the Governor's biennial budget address on Tuesday, February 3, many questions have arisen regarding how the Governor's proposals, specifically and financially, would impact the Wausau School District. This message is intended to provide that information to you albeit briefly.

Within the televised context of the Governor's budget address, Governor Walker stated the new budget would provide public schools with roughly the same amount of funding as during the previous year; thus, suggesting that the per pupil revenue limit increase most recently set at \$75.00 would be reduced to zero. This reduction in projected revenue, along with other baseline assumptions, would result in a necessary Wausau School District 2015-2016 budget reduction of \$1,250,000. However, contained within the actual 900+ page executive budget report, verbiage indicates that the same amount of funding will *not* be forthcoming. In fact the budget report clarifies that in addition to the per pupil revenue limit remaining at \$0, the proposal also calls for a categorical aid reduction from \$150.00 per pupil to \$0 thereby increasing necessary budget reductions to a total of \$2,500,000. The Governor also proposed adding approximately \$165 per pupil in categorical aid during the second year of the biennium, but the net effect is a *loss* of approximately \$135 per pupil over the biennium. Further, the \$165 would be a one-time payment which does not add funding to the base.

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. Although the financial impact is impossible to calculate at this time, the net result will certainly 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. Should you have questions specific to this budget, you may wish to contact one or more of your legislators:

Representative David Heaton  
Room 9 West  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8952  
Madison WI 53708  
608-266-0654  
[Rep.Heaton@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Rep.Heaton@legis.wisconsin.gov)

Representative John Spiros  
Room 15 North  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8953  
Madison WI 53708  
608-266-1182  
[Rep.Spiros@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Rep.Spiros@legis.wisconsin.gov)

Senator Jerry Petrowski  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison WI 53707-7882  
[Sen.Petrowski@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sen.Petrowski@legis.wisconsin.gov)

There is no question that should the budget proposal remain unchanged, the financial impact on the Wausau School District will be significant and have ramifications for both short- and long-term planning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Kathleen Williams". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Kathleen Williams  
Superintendent of Schools