



# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BARABOO

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## Resolution in Support of Wisconsin Voucher Transparency Bill (Assembly Bill 299)

WHEREAS, the School District of Baraboo Board of Education is committed in its effort to provide all children with the highest quality educational opportunities available; and

WHEREAS, the School District of Baraboo Board of Education supports local control and the ability of the elected school board members 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 of students in private schools in Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, the former 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, payments to voucher schools under the approved budget will range from \$7,985 to \$8,631 per student in 2019-20. Current state aid for the School District of Baraboo for 2019-20 is \$6,611 per student which is \$1,606 less than what is allocated to the average area voucher school students; and

WHEREAS, many of the students who go to our local voucher schools have qualified for vouchers by attending public schools for as little as one day to be considered public school students. Also, many of the students come from the homeschooled population. This is burdening our local property tax payers; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 299, the "Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill", authored by state Senator Chris Larson (D-Milwaukee) and Representative Jodi Emerson (D-Eau Claire) would require property tax bills to include information from school districts regarding the amount of any net reduction in state aid, if any, to school districts 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 needing to levy to offset lost aid due to the voucher program was only \$3 million in 2013, but had grown to \$25 million in 2016-17, \$37 million in 2017-18, \$47 million in 2018-19; and is estimated to grow to \$55 million in 2019-20. The number of voucher schools has increased from 25 in 2013-14 to an estimated 252 in 2019-20; and

WHEREAS, the School District of Baraboo Board of Education was required to levy \$220,988 in taxpayer dollars to be allocated to the statewide voucher program in 2018-19, and local taxpayers are not provided with information about their tax dollars being spent on voucher schools. When voucher school programs expand in our community, the School District of Baraboo loses state aid to the voucher schools and our school board 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. The following table illustrates the effect that the voucher program has on the school aid deduction for the School District of Baraboo:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Grades K-8</b>	<b>Grades 9-12</b>	<b>Total Voucher Students</b>	<b>School District of Baraboo School Aid Deduction</b>	<b>Community Christian School Total Enrolled Students</b>
2017-18	1.5	0	1.5	\$11,295	68
2018-19	22	6	28	\$220,988	115
* 2019-20	23	7	30	\$244,072	123
* 2020-21	23	7	30	\$252,442	123
<p>* Estimated enrollment numbers as the District does not receive student's grade or any other information.</p> <p>Community Christian School is the only private school in the School District of Baraboo that is recognized by the State of Wisconsin as a voucher school.</p>					

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

WHEREAS, voucher schools are not bound by most state instructional requirements or graduation standards; are not subject to the state's accountability requirements (i.e., no school report cards are issued for voucher schools); are not held to the public accountability requirements in major federal laws, including special education; are not governed by locally elected school board members who must stand for election or re-election; do not have to accept all students; do not have to provide students with the same due process protections as public schools; do not have to afford equal opportunities

School District of Baraboo provides equal opportunities in employment and programming.

to students regardless of race, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other characteristic protected under State or Federal civil rights laws; do not have to employ teachers who have a background or licensure in the subjects they teach; and do not have to adhere to open meetings and public records laws; and

WHEREAS, the voters of Wisconsin have never had an opportunity to vote on whether or not Wisconsin should have a taxpayer-supported voucher schools program; and

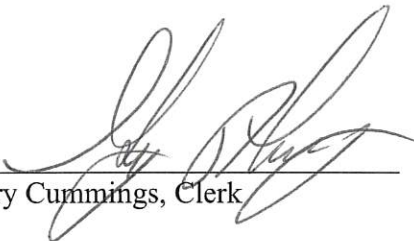
WHEREAS, multiple studies throughout the nation have shown that voucher school students do not perform better in reading and math than students in public schools, and the nonpartisan Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau released a five-year longitudinal study in 2011 which concluded that students in Milwaukee using vouchers to attend private schools perform no better on standardized tests than their counterparts in public schools;

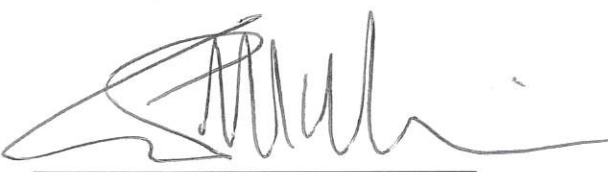
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the School District of Baraboo Board of Education calls on Governor Tony Evers, the Wisconsin Assembly, and the Wisconsin Senate, to support the Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill in an effort to be open, honest, and transparent with the taxpayers of Baraboo and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


IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being all of the members of the School District of Baraboo Board of Education, have executed this resolution this date August 12, 2019.


  
Kevin Vodak, President

  
Doug Merz, Vice-President

  
Gary Cummings, Clerk

  
Sean McNevin, Treasurer

  
Timothy Heilman, Member

  
Mike Kohlman, Member

  
Nancy Thome, Member

