

Increased Funding for Schools

Governor Scott Walker praises state budget and touts historically high education funding

Speaking at the State Education Convention, Governor Scott Walker thanked school board members and administrators for their leadership and praised the recently passed state budget, which he said, provides a historically high investment for K-12 education.

“We increased funding by \$200 per student for every school in the state this year, and we’re adding another \$204 per student on top of that next year,” said Gov. Walker. “Under our budget, we invested more in K-12 education than ever before in state history in actual dollars.”

The governor also laid out his plan to use a portion of the state budget surplus towards increasing funding for

Wisconsin’s schools. Specifically, Gov. Walker said he will use the surplus to increase sparsity aid in the 2018-19 school year by \$100 per pupil (from \$300 to \$400). The governor also said he will back legislation authored by Rep. John Nygren (R-Marinette) that would raise the low-revenue ceiling from \$9,100 per pupil to \$9,400 per pupil next year and eventually to \$9,800 per pupil by the 2022-23 school year.

Gov. Walker said the sparsity aid increase will help small, rural school districts cover expenses such as transportation costs.

“There are unique costs attributed to living in small school districts across the state,” he said. “We need to



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The state budget also includes increased funding for mental health programs and support in schools. The governor said people across the state asked for mental health support for their schools at budget listening sessions.

“We included additional funding for mental health services in our schools, additional money for bullying issues and the opioid crisis,” he said. “All of this is interconnected.”

Overall, Gov. Walker said he was pleased with the outcomes of the state budget and he thanked school board members and administrators for their advocacy efforts.

“We were worried that in the JFC (Joint Finance Committee) there would be a reduction in what we proposed,” Gov. Walker said. “We made the case that this wouldn’t be acceptable. So many of you reached out to lawmakers to make the case for K-12 education.”

The governor also praised work taking place in the state’s schools including: the increase in Fab Labs, improved internet access, more students earning early college credit, and continued growth in youth apprenticeships. ■

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