

THE VIEW FROM HERE

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The importance of education in the state of Wisconsin does not appear to be at the center of the current debate taking place in our state capitol. What does seem debatable is the level of funding for public schools and whether private and charter schools should be publicly funded. I believe that the answer to these questions will have a significant impact on all of Wisconsin citizens.

The School District of Poynette is scheduled to receive \$4,943,388.00 in equalization aid for the upcoming 2011-12 fiscal year. This compares with the \$5,500,761.00 that the School District received during the 2010-11 fiscal year. The difference totals \$557,373.00 or a 10.13% reduction in state equalization aid.

The Budget Repair Bill recently signed into law by Governor Walker reduces state aid to public schools by \$840 Million Dollars and prevents school districts from increasing property taxes. This same state budget bill does increase the level of taxes for funding vouchers for private and religious schools and independent charter schools.

The Budget Repair Bill also includes what Governor Walker refers to as “tools” that will enable school districts to make up for the loss of equalization aid. These tools essentially will reduce the school district’s contribution to employee benefits: health insurance and the Wisconsin Retirement System (pension).

Parents want their children to be prepared for success upon graduation from high school. School climate and culture are two conditions that I believe greatly influence the probability of student success. School climate within the framework of this article refers to something as fundamental as are the students and staff enjoying school? School culture simply indicates how we do things in school.

Budget issues aside, it is my belief that all of us who have a stake in the success of our students must work to guarantee that our school climate and culture meet our high expectations. Our students deserve nothing less.