

Tuition Tax Deduction Protected; Choice Programs Preserved

The Wisconsin K-12 Tuition Tax Deduction was preserved in law by the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) today.

In an 11 to 4 vote, the JFC removed from Governor Evers' proposed state budget a plan to eliminate the tax deduction. The JFC also saved the Choice programs from Gov. Evers' cuts.

The Committee's actions mean the elimination of the tax deduction is off the table for budget discussions going forward. Choice program cuts are also no longer a viable threat.

"This victory comes after advocacy by WCRIS principals. They hosted legislative visits to their schools and attended hearings across the state on the Governor's proposed state budget. They successfully educated lawmakers about the importance of the tax deduction and Choice programs," said WCRIS Executive Director Sharon Schmeling.

The K-12 Tuition Tax Deduction allows Wisconsin parents to deduct private K-12 school tuition on their state taxes. Parents can deduct up to \$4,000 per student in grades K-8 and up to \$10,000 per high school student.

WCRIS advocated for and won the creation of the tax deduction in the 2013 state budget.

"We are grateful for the legislators who listened to our school principals. Their votes today will continue to help Wisconsin families make the best choice for their child's education," Schmeling said.

Choice/Special Needs Scholarship Programs Saved from Gov's Cuts

Proposed cuts to the Choice and Special Needs Scholarship programs were also stopped by the Committee's motion. It removed Gov. Evers' proposals to

require:

- Full Accreditation of private schools participating in a Choice program;
- Every teacher in a Choice school to hold a Wisconsin license;
- Property tax bills to report the cost of Choice programs but not the cost of public school open enrollment, which is the state's largest parental choice program;
- Several other program cuts and changes to participation levels, poverty definitions and enrollment levels.

“When Governor Evers proposed his changes to the Parental Choice Programs for the upcoming state budget, the expectations were very low that they would survive the legislative process,” said Jim Bender, President of School Choice Wisconsin.

Schmeling said the Committee’s motion to remove Governor Evers’ proposed changes to the Parental Choice programs show that legislators are willing to help parents choose the best education for their children.

You can see the JFC motion by clicking “Read More.”

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