

"Notes From School"

Independent Charter/Voucher Schools impact on Public Schools

Did you know that money to run Independent Charter/Voucher Schools comes from school aid set aside for all public schools? The more money going to Independent Charter/Voucher Schools inversely means that there will be less money going to public schools. For small cash-strapped districts, the expansion of Independent Charter/Voucher Schools could be catastrophic.

Rural schools already face specific challenges, such as:

- Declining enrollment
 - In 2001, 1/3 of districts had declining enrollment. By 2012, over 2/3 of districts had declining enrollment. Today, 75% of all Wisconsin students are located in just 30% of the districts.
- Growing poverty
 - In 2001, the Wisconsin Free/Reduced Lunch rate was 21%. By 2012, the rate had more than doubled to 43%. In many rural districts, more than half the students are eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch.
- Staff shortages
 - Rural districts generally have fewer support staff and administrators, meaning there are fewer staff to implement state and federal initiatives.
 - Rural educators often receive lower compensation and wear many hats, requiring high levels of certification and commitment.
- Insufficient broadband infrastructure
 - Small schools have less economy of scale, making technology and infrastructure investments more expensive (fewer students to absorb costs).
- Higher transportation costs
- Increasing number of English Language Learners (ELL)

The 24 Independent (2r) Charter Schools created by UW-Milwaukee (13), City of Milwaukee (10), UW-Parkside (1), and Milwaukee Area Technical College (0) enroll approximately 8,400 students, but are funded differently. Independent Charter/Voucher Schools are 100% state funded (no property

tax) and receive will receive \$8,403 per pupil in 2018-19. However, this state funding is created by withholding percentage of every public District's general aid and redirecting it to the Independent Charter/Voucher Schools. Since its inception, public taxpayers have contributed over \$2.4 billion for the three Wisconsin Independent/Voucher School programs: \$2.3 billion for Milwaukee, \$79.7 million for Racine, and \$85.3 million for the state-wide expansion.

How does that impact the School District of Mondovi and its surrounding neighbors? The following lists are amounts that each school district's taxpayers will send to the Milwaukee area, during the 2017-2018 school year, instead of to the students in their local district.

Dunn-St. Croix Conference

Boyceville	\$75,495
Colfax	\$78,256
Durand	\$75,417
Elk Mound	\$118,711
Elmwood	\$37,763
Glenwood City	\$80,243
Mondovi	\$84,424
Pepin	\$2,803
Plum City	\$24,525
Spring Valley	<u>\$76,912</u>
Total	\$654,549

CESA 10, Cluster A

Altoona	\$153,735
Augusta	\$54,716
Eleva-Strum	\$63,222
Fall Creek	\$78,364
Gilmanton	\$11,485
Mondovi	\$84,424
Osseo-Fairchild	<u>\$91,979</u>
Total	\$537,925