

"Notes From School"

Independent Charter Schools impact on Public Schools

Did you know that money to run Independent Charter Schools comes from school aid set aside for all public schools? The more money going to Independent Charter Schools inversely means that there will be less money going to public schools. For small cash-strapped districts, the expansion of Independent Charter 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 doubled to 42%. 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 Schools are 100% state funded (no property tax) and receive \$8,079 per pupil. However, this state funding is created by

withholding 1.6064% of every District's general aid and redirecting it to the Independent Charter Schools.

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

Dunn-St. Croix Conference

Boyceville	\$90,807
Colfax	\$83,418
Durand	\$82,973
Elk Mound	\$131,229
Elmwood	\$39,451
Glenwood City	\$89,990
Mondovi	\$98,464
Pepin	\$2,263
Plum City	\$27,076
Spring Valley	<u>\$80,872</u>
Total	\$726,543

CESA 10, Cluster A

Altoona	\$152,339
Augusta	\$59,538
Eleva-Strum	\$69,014
Fall Creek	\$88,941
Gilmanton	\$14,931
Mondovi	\$98,464
Osseo-Fairchild	<u>\$102,086</u>
Total	\$585,313