

Amendment Would Take \$1 Million from Local Green Bay Schools

Written by GBP Staff

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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/school-bus-kids-s5.jpg>



Last minute amendment introduced by Speaker Robin Vos to program intended to help children with disabilities would result in approximately a \$1 million loss in revenue for Green Bay Area Public Schools for the 2016-17 school year.

MADISON - Today at 1:30 p.m., the Assembly Education Committee will hold an executive session and one of the bills on the agenda is [AB 751](#) intended to make changes to how the state awards special education vouchers under the Special Needs Scholarship Program.

The program was created in the 2015-17 Biennial Budget Act and beginning in the 2016-17 school year, children with disabilities who are enrolled in a public school in this state may apply to the Department of Public Instruction to receive financial assistance from the state to attend a private school.

However, last week Speaker Robin Vos attached an [amendment to the bill](#) (Amendment 2), which would modify how voucher students are funded

. According to the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, Amendment 2 would result in approximately a \$1 million loss in revenue for Green Bay Area Public Schools for the 2016-17 school year.

For the 2015-16 school year, there were 150 Green Bay resident students who received a voucher at the cost of approximately \$7,500 each. Based on information from the Department of Public Instruction, many of those students had never attended Green Bay Area Public Schools.

Prior to this school year, vouchers were funded out of the state's general fund. Legislation was passed as part of the 2015-17 state budget, which requires the resident school district to pay for vouchers out of their state aid. Districts were allowed to cover the cost of vouchers by raising property taxes. The District did levy the full amount, \$1.4 million, which offset the \$1.1 million loss of state aid.

Amendment 2 would remove the District's ability to raise revenue to cover the cost of new voucher students added to the program. Instead the District would receive a third of the funding

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for the first year, but state aid would still be reduced for the full amount of the vouchers.

The Board of Education and District administration sent a [letter](#) to the Assembly Education Committee and local legislators expressing their concerns.

On February 9, the Green Bay Press-Gazette published an [article regarding Amendment 2](#) .

Who to contact:

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