Bernier says "It's worse than going to a dentist, going to these meetings" in an interview with the Chippewa Herald. Does not want to hear from local officials about the damage that her votes have caused to our children and schools.

CHIPPEWA, WI – Rep. Kathy Bernier (R-Chippewa Falls) continued her verbal assault on local education leaders Wednesday, saying in an interview with the Chippewa Herald about Monday's regular meeting of the Chippewa Falls, Altoona, and Eau Claire school districts that *"It's worse than going to a dentist, going to these meetings."*
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"Rep. Bernier's continued disrespect to her constituents only compounds the harm she has done to our public schools," said Assembly Democratic Leader **Peter Barca** (D-Kenosha). "Rep. Bernier's unwillingness to engage the community on the very important issue of funding our schools is as troubling as her record of defunding these schools. Rep. Bernier owes her constituents – and frankly, dentists – an apology!"

Rep. Bernier's outburst is out of step with her community and even her Republican colleagues. Other Republican legislators attending these meetings said they actually find them helpful.

Rep. Barca provided the following statistics today in response to Rep. Bernier's urging *"Let's get the facts first and remove partisan politics from the topic of educating our children. Then we can do what's right for children and their families."*
(
source: Wisconsin Radio Network
)

Here are "the facts." Since joining the legislature in 2011, Rep. Bernier has:

- Slashed Funding for K-12 Schools: The nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB) reported that since 2011, K-12 public schools have received more than $1 billion less in state aid (memo).
- Restricted Local Control: Since 2011, Rep. Bernier and Republicans have passed approximately 100 measures that restrict local control or are considered unfunded mandates (memo).

- Diverted Taxpayer Funds Directly to Private Schools: Rep. Bernier stood by silently as her Republican Party voted this year to divert more than $800 million in taxpayer funds from public schools to unaccountable private schools (memo). Last week, Rep. Bernier also voted for a bill (SB 615) that will cause immediate harm to our already-struggling public schools to the tune of $5.3 million this year.

- Accepted Major Donations from Out-of-State Pro-Voucher Special Interests: Rep. Bernier has received nearly $11,000 in campaign contributions from pro-voucher special interests since 2010 (source: OWN report).

“It is shameful that Rep. Bernier is attempting to distract attention from her record of damage to her local schools and community,” Rep. Barca said. “Rep. Bernier simply does not want to hear from local officials about the damage that her votes have caused to our children and schools.”