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After five years of neglect and giveaways to unaccountable voucher schools under Scott Walker, our public school students have seen general aid supporting their education cut by over $200 each. Voucher school students are getting nearly $1000 more.

MADSON - Cutting state general aid for public schools and shifting the money to voucher schools demonstrates the need to restore Wisconsin's public education as a priority, State Senator **Janet Bewley** (D-Delta) said today.



"School's out and once again students and educators in Wisconsin's public schools have given us much to be proud of. Unfortunately current legislative leaders haven't given us much to be proud of in their support of public education," Bewley said. "After five years of neglect and giveaways to unaccountable voucher schools, our public school students have seen general aid supporting their education cut by over $200 each. Our children get cut but voucher school operators are getting nearly $1000 more per student from state taxpayers than in 2011."

Bewley, a member of the Senate Education Committee, pointed out that voucher schools had seen a 14% increase in state aid per student since 2011 while the state's 854,000 public school students took a 4% cut in general and high poverty aid.

"It's outrageous that public school students in a state that values public education have faced these cuts and property taxpayers have too often been asked to make up the difference," Bewley said. "It's even more outrageous that funds that could support our successful but struggling public schools are instead being directed to huge increases for voucher operators that continue to refuse accountability."

General aid appropriations, which also reduce the property tax portion of the school levy, are

nearly $250 million less in the current state budget than 2009-11. The same budget that is shortchanging public school students will give a $221 million increase to voucher operators this biennium compared to the 2009-11 budget.

“State support for public education is our responsibility. My Republican colleagues have made the choice to shortchange public school students while lavishing huge increases on voucher operators and that is simply wrong,” Bewley said.

Bewley noted that even including categorical aids, public schools will likely see virtually no biennial increase compared to the recession-era budget of 2009-10 because of a diversion of state aid to voucher schools.