

Teachers' Association Continues to Push For Reduced Class Sizes in Milwaukee

Written by WEAC Media

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MILWAUKEE – Educators, parents, community, and faith leaders will call on the Milwaukee Public School Board today to reject the MPS administration's proposal that would increase class size for grades 1, 2, and 3 in over 60 Milwaukee Public Schools.

In 2015 Scott Walker signed into law Wisconsin Act 53 which phases out the class-size reduction program known as the Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE) program that provides eligible schools per-pupil funding for each low-income grades K5 through 3 student. The new law replaces SAGE with the Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) program.

“There are no significant changes to the state funding under the new program. MPS is predicting a loss of federal funding which is currently used to support SAGE. MPS administration could maintain smaller class sizes in the current SAGE schools through reallocation of dollars, but instead they’ve proposed a plan to create 62 new administrator positions, spend tens of thousands of dollars on classroom furniture, and eliminate well over 150 front-line classroom teacher positions,” said MTEA President Kim Schroeder. “Research shows that increasing class sizes for our earliest learners will have a detrimental, long-term impact on Milwaukee Public School students, their families, and our community.”

“Benefits from class-size reduction programs are greatest for low-income and minority children,” said Kim Schroeder. “It is impossible to understand how the Administration got away with moving this proposal forward without approval from the elected school board or any input from educators, parents, and community members.”

MPS parents and community leaders from groups including Schools and Communities United and the Milwaukee Inner City Congregations Allied for Hope (MICAH) join the MTEA in favor of maintaining smaller class size.

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For over 50 years, the Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association has been a champion for public education in Milwaukee. The Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association represents over 4,500 educators and support personnel who make Milwaukee's public education system possible. MTEA, an affiliate of the National Education Association and is the largest educator local in Wisconsin. Learn more at mtea.weac.org.