

# Wauwatosa PTA Legislative Alert

**ACTION NEEDED NOW!**

## **AGAIN, THE WISCONSIN STATE BUDGET**

As of today, we still have no state budget. School has started. Our children are again in the learning mode, but we have no budget. The legislature has not been able to come together to give the citizens of Wisconsin a budget. The special committee has met 11 times and still, there is no budget. **The budget was due July 1, 2007!**

By law, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) must decide how much state aid each district will receive by **October 15<sup>th</sup>**. Once the state aid is determined, school districts know how much more money they need to raise from local property taxes (while staying within the state mandated budget caps). **If the state budget is not passed by Friday, September 28, 2007**, DPI will have to use last year's state aid calculations in order to calculate school aids. Because of inflationary costs, and the related increase in the budget cap that will likely be passed by the state legislature, that means a **bigger share of the upcoming Wauwatosa School District budget will need to come from the property tax payers**. Assembly Republicans recently cited an estimated **\$589 million in property tax increases** if the budget is not passed by **September 28<sup>th</sup>**.

Right now, there are two basic routes by which a school budget may be approved in the state legislature: 1) As part of the overall state budget. This is how the budget is normally passed. 2) As a stand-alone piece of legislation, as suggested by Assembly Republicans on Thursday, September 13th.

**Please contact your elected State Senator and State Assembly person, now! Ask them to pass the school portion of the state budget, either as a stand-alone measure or as part of the state budget before September 28th! It is not fair to make schools wait and property taxpayers pay an even bigger portion of K-12 school costs because of lawmakers' political disagreements.**



## **SAMPLE LETTER (just 'cut and paste'!)**

Dear Representative/Senator \_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing to urge you to pass legislation for the funding of K-12 schools before September 28<sup>th</sup>. As I'm sure you are aware, this is the deadline that must be met in order for DPI to use the budget you pass as a basis for calculating state aids to K-12 schools. By state law, DPI must calculate those state aids by October 15<sup>th</sup> and if you do not pass the K-12 budget, DPI must assume the aids will remain at last year's levels. Not only does this leave school districts in limbo, but also it will likely mean higher property taxes for me and everyone else in Wisconsin. The ultimate budget is sure to raise the school spending caps to account for inflation which means if state aids remain the same, property taxes will need to increase to make up the difference. Property taxpayers already pay a disproportionate amount of the K-12 costs in Wisconsin. Don't let lack of political cooperation make us pay even more.

Please make sure that the K-12 Schools budget is passed by September 28<sup>th</sup>, either as a stand-alone bill or as part of a comprehensive budget.

Sincerely,

Name

Address

phone