



Dane County SOS Senior Council

122 State Street, Room 401, Madison, WI 53703 / (608) 256-7626

January 14, 2007

The Honorable James E. Doyle
Governor, State of Wisconsin
119 East, State Capitol
Madison WI 53702

DRAFT

Dear Governor Doyle:

The Dane County SOS Senior Council has for many years advocated on behalf of seniors in Dane and nearby Counties. We are an organization with a membership of over 500 that meets ten times per year; our Executive Committee meets almost every month.

As a member for many years of the Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools, we join it in in developing a funding plan to assure that public schools will be enabled to focus on educational needs of all children. The current formula is such that school districts receive state funds according to county property valuations. It assumes that property tax payers in counties with higher valuations can afford to pay more in taxes on their homes than those in counties with lower assessments. That assumption is not always true. Also, the current system does not take into account the fact that some districts have more children with special educational needs than others.

In Dane County, especially in the Madison Metropolitan School District, the level of teaching in elementary and high schools is high. We are proud of the accomplishments because our future lies with our grandchildren. As tax-payers and renters (therefore, also tax-payers) we want to see continued academic excellence, but we cannot afford the increases in property taxes that occurs each year. A change must be made in the way we are taxed for academic and vocational education.

With your leadership, the State Legislature must change the state funding allocation formula so that enough state monies are used to enable school districts to provide adequate budgets to meet individualized student needs while simultaneously allowing for continued local control of public education. As noted above, the redesigned formula must not result in increased property taxes.

Thank you for considering our request. We understand that public education is costly; we want to see our property taxes level off or even reduced (perhaps by using some other taxing method); and we want our public schools to continue to provide the best opportunities for education of our grandchildren. Our state's future is in their hands.

Sincerely yours,

President
Dane County SOS Senior Council

