

Save Our School
Madeline Island
La Pointe WI 54850
January 15, 2007

Governor James Doyle
115 East
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Doyle,

Save Our School (SOS) is a civic group from Madeline Island. Our mission is to keep LaPointe Elementary School open and to help keep the Bayfield School District financially viable. We are in partnership with WAES, the Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools.

We have a K-6, two-classroom school that provides an exemplary education, and is in constant threat of closure due to financial strains in our district.

When you visited in the summer, you might not have realized that having a school keeps a year-round population that makes this a "real" community. With the young families we are able to provide emergency health care and fire protection, along with all the other services that a local workforce is able to provide.

Without our school, due to our unique geography and winter transportation issues, we would lose our young families and all that they do to help to sustain the community.. Madeline Island would become a summer-only community and Wisconsin would lose a jewel.

S.O.S has done many things in the past year at the local level. We have worked with the Bayfield District School Board and their administrators, who are wrestling with difficult financial issues. We have assisted with the major maintenance of the LaPointe School. Last summer community volunteers painted the exterior and re-roofed the gym. Both were badly needed. These are not enough. The financial situation is dire. We need your help!

The Bayfield District is caught between unreliable Federal Impact Aid and State Aid that decrease 15% every year. We cannot keep up with mandates for special education. We charge students to play sports and other extra -curricular activities, and our Foreign Language program has been dropped. Seventeen teachers received pink slips last year. We are not alone. Many of the districts in our area have similar issues. Wisconsin is at a tipping point in its status as a "great education state".

Governor, please approve Superintendent Burmister's budget without cuts. As a partner in WAES, S.O.S is committed to fighting for increased categorical aid to address the critical

short team needs in all school districts. At the same time, we urge you to work with us, the Legislature and other education stakeholders to begin comprehensive reform of the school-funding system in 2007.

Thank-you
Michael North
Chair Save Our School.
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