

The Arc Wisconsin supports people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) over “The Arc” of their lifetime. Since 1960, The Arc Wisconsin has served individuals and their families through our 14 locally affiliated chapters across the state. The Arc Wisconsin works to develop programs and advocate for public policy — giving people with I/DD the opportunity to learn, live, and work inclusively in their communities.



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SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Wisconsin schools educate more than 116,000 students with disabilities annually (14% of the student population). Even though districts report increases in identification of students with disabilities coupled with a 60% increase in education costs over the last ten years, it has been a decade since the state has increased special education funds. Currently the state reimburses districts for just one quarter of all special education costs. Parents reported the impact of this reduced investment in their children in a recent survey: 58% percent of families said they were concerned for their child’s future due to lack of funding; nearly 40% said their child had experienced a reduction in supports. The 2017 National Assessment of Educational Progress results show Wisconsin is 32nd in the nation for 4th grade reading scores for students with disabilities.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:



Support the Governor’s proposal to increase the state’s support of school district special education costs to reach 60% (up from 25%). This state investment will free up local taxpayer dollars to improve overall quality of education for all students. \$600 million over the biennium



Support the Governor’s proposal to cover 100% of the costs of school districts to educate “high cost” students (those whose supports exceed \$30,000/year). There were 1069 high cost students in 2018.



Support the Governor’s proposal to increase funds for mental health services in schools. \$63 million over the biennium.