

Public Education for All

“As a mother, an employer, and a proud graduate of Wisconsin’s public schools, I care deeply about making sure that every Wisconsinite has access to the best educational opportunities. Wisconsin used to be the education state, before our current governor slashed billions from our K12 schools, colleges, and universities. As governor, I will reinvest in education at all levels so that every child has the opportunity to learn and succeed in Wisconsin.”

- **Prepare kids for success in a modern economy.** Our children need to develop skills needed for the jobs of tomorrow. We ought to emphasize STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) as core areas for learning, in addition to critical thinking, communication, and cooperation skills. All students should have the opportunity to participate in the arts, humanities, and physical education/athletics, regardless of their parents’ income levels.
- **Provide equitable and sufficient funding for urban and rural schools.** I will reverse Walker’s massive cuts to our schools and restore public education as a core priority for Wisconsin. For too long, politicians have focused on affixing blame rather than having the courage to truly commit to funding our schools at a level and in a way that would ensure educational excellence. It’s time for the state government to fulfill its obligation to provide a great education for every child. All kids in low-income areas should be able to have free breakfast and lunch, to ensure they are ready to learn.
- **Invest public dollars in public schools.** As governor, I will invest our taxpayer dollars in public education. Parents should be free to send their children to any school, but our taxpayer dollars should not subsidize private or religious schools at the expense of public education for all. It’s time to bring our failed experiment with private voucher schools to an end, while minimizing disruption to current students as possible. We should reduce and then eliminate voucher funding with minimal disruption to students and families. We must significantly increase our funding commitment to public schools, especially in areas of the state which have been hardest hit by budget cuts. We need smaller class sizes, more experienced teachers, and more resources in schools with higher needs – as governor, I will prioritize equity in our funding formula, rather than exacerbating district-level inequality. All the children of Wisconsin, rural and urban, deserve our immediate and sustained commitment to their public schools. Parents, regardless of their income or zip code should not have to worry that our public schools aren’t meeting the 21st Century needs of their children, and only by investing significant resources in our public education system can we ensure excellent schools for every child.
- **Recruit and retain excellent teachers.** The most important factor in a child’s success is the teacher at the front of the room. We must attract the best and brightest young people to careers in education, and keep them in the classroom with adequate professional development and mentorship, sufficient prep time, and student debt forgiveness for taking on challenging teaching assignments. That means ensuring dedicated young people an affordable college education, wages that support a family and a middle class life, a voice in their workplace, and above all, respect for their profession. One cannot value education and disrespect the educators who provide it.

- **Support innovation within the public school system.** By enabling Wisconsin school districts to be creative within our public education system. Wisconsin has a long tradition of public education – Only schools under the supervision of elected school boards are required by law to teach all students, including students with special needs. As governor, I would end the Independent 2R charter programs that operate outside of their school districts. The best way to unleash innovation within our public school system is to empower excellent teachers to lead their classrooms as the professionals they are, and to provide adequate preparation time, professional development, and teacher mentorship for all teachers.
- **Stop the endless high stakes testing.** We must free our children and our teachers from the tyranny of constant standardized testing. While benchmark testing can be a useful tool, in recent years the corporate testing industry has exploded – teachers are losing valuable instructional time, students and parents are frustrated, and results are used to punish low-income schools and students rather than help them. We should acknowledge and encourage the efforts of those students and schools facing the toughest challenges by emphasizing student growth rather than proficiency in assessments.
- **Free 2 year college.** Wisconsin should make its two-year colleges and technical schools free, increasing access to low- and moderate-income students who don't have family support. Several other states have seen significant increases in the number of students, especially students from low-income households, by utilizing a "last dollar" scholarship that minimizes the cost to the state and greatly increases career and earning prospects of people who otherwise might not be able to afford higher ed.
- **Reduce student loan debt.** A college education is no longer possible for most Wisconsinites without taking on massive debt that impedes their ability to buy a home, start a business, have children, or get on sound financial footing. We must provide more public support to public universities to reduce the massive tuition increases that have priced many Americans out of a college education. We should increase availability of grants and subsidized loans for students who need assistance. We should regulate predatory for-profit schemes that don't deliver results for their students. And we should make it possible to refinance all student loans just like you can refinance a mortgage or auto loan.
- **Offer universal early childhood education.** The more we learn about brain development, the more we've understood how critical the early years are, particularly birth through age 5. Wisconsin should address the high cost of childcare by expanding the availability of early childhood education. We should make 3K and 4K universally available to all children in Wisconsin. This will not only ensure that all kids have a safe environment in which to play and develop emotionally, socially, and intellectually, but it will help prevent racial and economic disparities, and help parents with the huge cost of childcare.
- **Build a culture of lifelong learning.** In today's global economy, it is increasingly difficult to maintain a middle-class life with only a high school education. We should provide more training and employment assistance to displaced workers, and help employees keep their skills up to date. In addition, we ought to expand educational and training opportunities for adult learners – including vocational and technical college and universities – to help workers succeed in a knowledge-based economy. Finally, we must make libraries a priority again – access to the world's knowledge ought to be available for every citizen in our democracy, and in today's interconnected world, libraries are safe, welcoming community spaces for kids and seniors alike.

Healthcare for All

“Healthcare is a right – not a privilege. As governor, my first act will be to accept federal healthcare dollars. I’ll make Badgercare a public option and available to all to buy in. I won’t rest until every single Wisconsinite has access to quality affordable, comprehensive healthcare.”

Every other industrialized nation recognizes the government’s obligation to ensure its citizens have healthcare. While Obamacare established the principle of universal coverage, much work remains to ensure affordable, quality, comprehensive care for all. Our current system still rations healthcare based on ability to pay, employment status, geography, etc. To be competitive, workers and businesses need to be free from the insecurity, inefficiency, cost-shifting, and skyrocketing costs of our current for-profit insurance system.

- **Healthcare access increases individual freedom.** When coverage is determined by employers, people are less free to change jobs, retire, start a business, take time to care for a child or loved one, or pursue education — they can’t risk going without coverage. Making Badgercare available to all would help unleash people’s economic potential and afford them flexibility in caring for their families.
- **Increased access to healthcare will help our businesses compete.** Right now, small businesses like mine have a hard time affording high-quality health insurance, making it difficult to attract and retain employees, and costs are unpredictable. America’s medium and large businesses are at a disadvantage in a global marketplace, because their international counterparts do not pay for health insurance.
- **Build on the protections of the Affordable Care Act, making Badgercare a public option.** I will build a Wisconsin exchange to reign in costs and provide more options than currently available. I also support increasing the medical loss ratio over time, to ensure that insurance companies become

more efficient and use our premiums to provide care rather than line the pockets of executives.

- **Expand successful pilot programs to reduce health care costs and increase quality.** Many successful programs have proven it is possible to both improve patient outcomes and quality of life while decreasing costs. Many of these programs have changed the payment model away from fee-for-service to allow providers to be paid for keeping patients healthy. This is especially important for populations like the elderly and those with chronic diseases, who may require more care and incur higher costs.
- **Accept federal Medicaid expansion dollars.** Rejecting federal healthcare money has cost our state a lot: over \$1 billion in healthcare funds, 10,000 lost healthcare jobs, and nearly 80,000 Wisconsinites lost access to affordable health care.
- **Treat mental and behavioral health needs in the healthcare system, not the criminal justice system.** Too often, people struggling with substance use disorder or mental illness are funneled into jails and prisons, where they don't get the services they need and their challenges are exacerbated. With Wisconsin's opioid crisis continuing to grow, this is even more urgent – we must redouble our focus on prevention, treatment, and harm reduction, using evidence-based public health strategies.
- **Ensure culturally competent, non-discriminatory care for all populations.** We must work to eliminate healthcare disparities based on race, class, national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity, age, or any other factor. Every person deserves access to high quality care. Politicians should never interfere in private medical decisions.
- **Environmental health affects human health.** Pollution can cause or exacerbate human ailments; we must protect clean air, water, and soil for the wellbeing of people and planet.
- **Guarantee reproductive health care access.** I have been a champion for reproductive rights and justice my entire career. Women and men deserve access to comprehensive healthcare, including the full spectrum of reproductive healthcare, from family planning and contraception, to healthy pregnancy and birth, to abortion care, to the right to parent healthy children. Politicians should never interfere with the most personal, private, family healthcare decisions.



Lowering Prescription Drug Prices

“No one should be forced to choose between food and life-saving medicine. It’s time to put people and patients before huge profits of drug corporations. Anyone’s life could be changed by a cancer diagnosis, an accident, a stroke – and that’s why having fair, equal access to prescription drugs is so important for ensuring healthcare for all.”

Drug corporations keep hiking the prices of prescription drugs higher and higher because they want to keep making higher profits than any other industry. Because they often have a monopoly, their price-gouging denies people needed care. Even though public funds often help to create drugs, drug corporations spend millions on lobbying to rig the rules and prevent the government from curbing their excess profits. Access to prescription drugs ensures that everyone can stay healthy, and that’s why as governor, I’ll make sure that everyone can afford the medicines they need.

- **Require transparency in drug pricing.** Drug corporations often justify their price-gouging by saying that drugs are expensive to research and develop. Patients and consumers deserve to know why drug corporations are dramatically increasing prices, and so drug corporations should be required to justify their price increases and disclose how much they spend on research, manufacturing, and marketing. Pricing transparency will allow the public to know what the actual costs are, and will bring accountability to drug corporations’ pricing decisions.
- **Stop pharmacy gag rules.** Pharmacy benefit managers should not be allowed to “gag” pharmacists from discussing lower-priced generic medications with consumers. Doctors must be free to prescribe the appropriate medication for their patients, and pharmacists must be free to talk with their patients about therapeutically equivalent medications and the cost and availability thereof.
- **Allow importation of drugs from Canada.** Wisconsin patients should have access to safe, lower priced drugs from our northern neighbor, Canada. As governor, I would establish a state-administered wholesale operation to

re-import drugs from Canada, which are often available at significantly lower pricing, while seeking a federal waiver to do so.

- **Investigate and punish price-gouging.** Our Attorney General (AG) should have the ability to investigate and take action against abusive pricing practices for prescription drugs. Manufacturers and wholesalers should be required to produce records or documents, upon request of the AG, to investigate claims of price-gouging of essential off-patent or generic drugs. If the AG determines that price-gouging has occurred, they would be able to petition the courts and impose a fine for each instance of price-gouging.
- **Work with federal leaders to lower prices.** I will work with our federal delegation to advocate for significant changes to our laws that will lower drug prices. Sen. Tammy Baldwin has been a national leader on lowering prescription drug prices and ensuring healthcare access for all, and I will support her efforts on these important issues.
 - Government programs like Medicaid and Medicare, and SeniorCare and BadgerCare in Wisconsin, must be able to negotiate prices directly with drug companies, just like private insurers do. Public insurance programs have huge purchasing power, and we should be empowered to exercise that power to lower costs for taxpayers and patients alike.
 - The federal government should also end pay-for-delay practices that let drug corporations pay other drug manufacturers to delay releasing generic versions of highly profitable drugs.
 - We should change the rules of our patent systems drugs developed with publicly funded research are available to everyone.
 - We should allow safe re-importation of lower priced drugs from Canada.

Building a Strong Economy

“For decades, an ever increasing share of the wealth in our country has gone to those at the very top. It’s time to build an economy that works for everyone, based in values of opportunity and fairness. As governor, I will strengthen and expand the middle class, and help those who have been left behind.”

- **Help small businesses and homegrown innovators, because they are the key to a growing economy.** The vast majority of net new jobs come from new businesses – startups and early stage companies. As an entrepreneur and small business owner myself, I understand the challenges of starting a company and will prioritize the needs of small businesses and entrepreneurs willing to take a risk on an idea. Under Gov. Walker, Wisconsin has been dead last in startups for the last three years – I will change this and help build Wisconsin’s economy to finally thrive. My Small Business Plan will help new and existing entrepreneurs to succeed, while leveling the playing field for all workers and employers.
- **Repair and maintain our aging infrastructure.** Too much of our infrastructure, which is our public wealth, needs significant maintenance or to be replaced and updated. While roads and bridges are part of this, we also must upgrade our rail corridors for passengers and freight. Many of our water systems are in desperate need of repair, both drinking water and sanitation/sewage systems. We should retrofit schools and public buildings for energy efficiency and remove toxic or environmental hazards.
- **Invest in the 21st Century infrastructure we need to succeed in a global economy.** We need statewide broadband connectivity, wireless infrastructure, and computing power, just as communities needed electrification and telephone connectivity in the 20th Century.
- **Make Wisconsin a leader in clean energy tech/manufacturing.** Our state has no fossil fuels, so every dollar we spend on dirty energy leaves our state and contributes to climate change. We can become energy independent by fostering local, clean, sustainable energy production, “smart” grids, better power storage, and multimodal transit options for people and goods. Wisconsin already has skilled workers and an advanced manufacturing base, and with a strong state commitment to renewable energy, we could help this burgeoning industry provide thousands of good-paying jobs. Finally, we should employ emerging technologies to increase the efficiency of industrial processes, for instance in waste management, to save energy and money, and to reduce the strain on our environment.

- **Increase our investment in education and training.** No modern economy can thrive without skilled, educated workers. We must ensure that quality public education is available to all Wisconsinites. As governor, I will invest in public education, including universal access to early childhood education, K12 schools, higher education, and workforce development.
- **Ensure workers are treated fairly and have the right to bargain collectively.** Workers deserve a voice in the workplace; I fought for and support collective bargaining rights for workers in the public and private sector. The decline in unions corresponds to the decline in the middle class – that’s because even non-unionized workers see higher wages and better benefits when unions are prominent in their communities.
- **Make sure every worker earns a fair wage and has benefits.** No one who works 40, 50, or 60 hours a week should live in poverty. Our minimum wage should be raised to \$15 an hour (it’s currently set at the federal minimum of \$7.25/hr), and local communities should have the power to set their own standards for workers. Similarly, no one should risk losing her job because she is sick, has a baby, or needs to care for a dying parent or spouse.
- **Provide universal paid family and sick leave to all workers.** I will make sure every full time worker has twelve weeks of paid leave to use when having a baby, caring for a loved one, or dealing with a serious illness. Paid leave is a basic necessity that every other developed nation already provides, and that states are beginning to adopt. Paid leave will help Wisconsin attract and retain younger workers who are leaving our state in droves. Making coverage universal, rather than based on individual companies, will level the playing field, helping small businesses compete for employees and allowing would-be entrepreneurs to take the risk of starting a business. It also disproportionately helps lower income and middle class workers, who are less likely to have the flexibility and financial cushion to take time off for family or medical needs. No one should risk losing his or her job or housing because of illness, a new baby, or caring for a family member.
- **Make the Wisconsin Retirement System open to all workers and companies.** As a state legislator, I paid into to the WRS – one of the strongest and best run public pension programs in the United States. Every worker – public and private – and deserves a secure retirement after a lifetime of work and should have the option of buying in to the program. Every small business should have access to the kinds of pension programs that large employers can provide. Creating a parallel pension fund that private sector and nonprofit workers and employers could buy into will help increase the number of Wisconsinites with a financially secure retirement, while strengthening the WRS by increasing the number of people who benefit from it.
- **Ensure equal pay for women.** Unlike Gov. Walker, who repealed Wisconsin’s Equal Pay laws, I believe that women should be paid equally for the same work, and that no worker should have to face discrimination or harassment at the workplace.