



Wisconsin Alliance
for Excellent Schools

School-finance reform is topic of local discussion

As it is doing in communities all over Wisconsin, the state's school-funding system is limiting the education, security, and opportunities of the children in Wauwatosa School District.

“For over a decade, school districts have been laying off staff, increasing class sizes, and cutting programs and services,” said Tom Beebe, executive director of the Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools (WAES). “Until we change the scheme that makes all this happen, our futures will be compromised. Education drives our economy and anchors our communities. We need to pay attention to how our schools are funded.

A discussion of the school-funding system and how to change it will take place on November 5, 2009. The event will begin at 6:30 p.m. and will be held at Madison Elementary. Madison Elementary PTA will host the presentation.

WAES is a not-for-profit, bi-partisan coalition of school board members, educators, parents, students, taxpayers, businessowners, and voters who came together for one reason and one reason only—to change the way Wisconsin funds its public schools. Beebe's presentation is called “Solving Wisconsin's school-funding problem.”

He said that the way we fund our schools is eroding the quality and quantity of education our children receive. For example, 57 percent of the school districts in the state have eliminated academic courses because they don't have enough revenue (according to *The Effects of Revenue Controls on the Programs and Services Offered by Wisconsin's Public Schools, 2006-07 School Year*; conducted by the Wisconsin Education Association Council and the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators).

Almost 30 percent of the districts answering the survey said they have talked about consolidation or dissolution. “When communities start to talk about closing their schools because they can't give their children quality education, something is wrong with the system,” Beebe said.

The public is encouraged to attend this discussion. Although Beebe will talk about the problem and its solutions, there will be plenty of time for questions, answers, and discussion.

For more information, contact Robyn Grover at 414-837-5623 or Tom Beebe at 920-650-0525 or tbeebe@wisconsinsfuture.org.