



Tony Evers

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

March 27, 2026

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing Assembly Bill 457 in its entirety.

Under current law, school boards may choose to adopt a resolution to initiate a referendum question that is for non-recurring operational, recurring operational, or debt or capital purposes at least 70 days before the date of the referendum vote. This bill creates a new certification requirement for the Department of Public Instruction before any school board can initiate a referendum. This bill prohibits a school board from adopting a resolution to initiate an operating or debt referendum to increase property tax levy authority unless the Department of Public Instruction certifies compliance with certain reporting school districts complete annually.

I am vetoing this bill because I object to the Wisconsin State Legislature once again attempting to encroach on the decisions of local government partners and local communities. Further, I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating additional barriers to school districts initiating a referendum. Wisconsin already restricts the dates and frequency of when a school district may place a referendum on the ballot. Additionally, school districts may not access increases to the per pupil "revenue ceiling" provided by the state for three years after a failed referendum, which appears to be the Legislature's way to disincentivize a school district from proposing a referendum.

Finally, as I noted during my 2026 State of the State address, the Legislature has rejected over \$7 billion for K-12 schools that I requested over the last four state budgets. Funding our schools is a responsibility that the state and local partners share; local property taxes go up when the state fails to do its part to meet its obligation. If the Legislature is purportedly concerned about the rate at which communities across our state are going to referendum and families are being forced to raise their own property taxes to keep their school doors open, it should start by approving the investments in our schools that our kids need and deserve.

Respectfully submitted,


Tony Evers
Governor