

League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Network
Statement for GRUMPS* press conference
Madison Senior Center, March 5, 2013

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin opposes any expansion in our state of the private school voucher program, which diverts funding from public school districts while not demanding accountability from the voucher schools.

Studies have failed to show that the voucher system in Milwaukee has provided children a better educational option than they would have received in their public schools. Taking funding from public school budgets – which are already suffering from cuts – and diverting it to private schools that are not publicly accountable is *not* a solution to the challenges our schools and families face. At best it *delays* efforts toward a *real* solution.

It is particularly disturbing that expansion of the voucher program is being proposed as part of the state budget, where it may be overshadowed by other issues. Such a drastic proposal – if it must be considered – should be introduced as free-standing legislation, with well-publicized hearings.

To promote *equal* educational opportunity for *all children* in our state, the League opposes the transfer of public funds to any school that does not meet the *same requirements* as public schools, including:

- accounting for the use of tax dollars;
- performance standards for the students;
- standards for school staffing, including the *special expertise* needed for working with students who have disabilities.

Thank you.

*Grandparents United for Madison Public Schools