

OPERATIONAL REFERENDUM

On the Ballot: **November 3, 2026**

<https://www.iola-scandinaviareferendum.org/>





24-25 School Report Card Information

Central Wisconsin Conference Schools

District	District Score 21	22-23	23-24	24-25	Change 23-24 to 24-25	
Shiocton	73.3	70.9	72.4	78.8	6.4	Exceeds
Iola-Scandinavia	67.8	66.7	69.5	78.3	8.8	
Rosholt	69.5	70.7	69.9	74.6	4.7	
Amherst	72	71.6	72.4	74.1	1.7	
Pittsville	66.3	70.1	74.1	73.5	-0.6	
Weyauwega-Fre	67.9	70.3	68.2	72.4	4.2	
Bonduel	69.8	67	69.6	71.6	2	
Gresham	59	62.7	67.7	70.9	3.2	Meets
Port Edwards	66	64.7	64.6	70.2	5.6	
Marion	66.5	67.4	67	68.8	1.8	
Manawa	66.5	63.9	63.4	68.6	5.2	
Wild Rose	72.9	66.5	62.4	67.2	4.8	
White Lake	71.2	73.5	71	66.3	-4.7	
Tigerton	64.8	67.4	64.9	65.4	0.5	
Wittenberg-Birn	67.3	64.5	60.8	65.3	4.5	
Bowler	72.3	63.5	64.4	64.2	-0.2	
Tri County			54.8	61.2	6.4	
Almond-Bancrof	64.7	65.3	60.6	58.8	-1.8	Meets Few
Menominee Indi	48.4	52.2	56.6	57.8	1.2	
			66.01578947	68.84210526	2.826315789	

Waupaca County by District

Waupaca County District	23-24		24-25	
Iola-Scandinavia	69.5	meets	78.3	Exceeds
Weyauwega-Fremont	68.2	meets	72.4	Exceeds
New London	62.8	meets	71.3	Exceeds
Marion	67	meets	68.8	Meets
Manawa	63.4	meets	68.6	Meets
Waupaca	66.9	meets	66.8	Meets
Clintonville	66.2	meets	64.9	Meets

Waupaca County by Elementary School

Waupaca County Elem				
Weyauwega	68.8	meets	77.9	Exceeds
Iola-Scandinavia	66.7	meets	76.3	Exceeds
Clintonville	74.3	exceeds	75.9	Exceeds
New London 3	66	meets	75.2	Exceeds
Fremont	86	exceeds	75	Exceeds
New London 1	74	exceeds	74.8	Exceeds
Waupaca County Elem	77.4	exceeds	73.4	Exceeds
Manawa	62.8	meets	70.1	Meets
New London 2	74.6	exceeds	69.4	Meets
Marion	62.9	meets	65.9	Meets
New London 4	57.4		62.2	Meets

Waupaca County by High School

Waupaca County High School				
Iola-Scandinavia	70.3	exceeds	78	Exceeds
New London	57.8	meets few	70.4	Meets
Marion	69.4	meets	69.9	Meets
Weyauwega-Fremont	54.2	meets few	63.1	Meets
Manawa	63.8	meets	63	Meets
Waupaca	59.4	meets	62.6	Meets
Clintonville	55.9	meets few	56.2	Meets few

CESA 5 Districts

CESA District	Overall Score	
Lodi	87.4	Significantly Exceeds
Poynette	78.6	Exceeds
Columbus	78.5	Exceeds
Iola-Scandinavia	78.3	Exceeds
Nekoosa	76.1	Exceeds
Sauk Prairie	75.7	Exceeds
Montello	75.4	Exceeds
Rio	75	Exceeds
Rosholt	74.6	Exceeds
Tomorrow River	74.1	Exceeds
Pittsville	73.5	Exceeds
Pardeeville	72.7	Exceeds
Fall River	71.2	Exceeds
Marshfield	70.6	Meets
Port Edwards	70.2	Meets
Cambria-Friesland	69.6	Meets
Westfield	69.1	Meets

Wisconsin Dells	69.1	Meets
Reedsburg	69	Meets
Stevens Point	68.8	Meets
Randolph	68.6	Meets
Wild Rose	67.2	Meets
Baraboo	67.1	Meets
Mauston	67.1	Meets
Waupaca	66.8	Meets
Wautoma	66.8	Meets
Adams-Friendship	64.8	Meets
Portage	64.4	Meets
Auburndale	63.8	Meets
Princeton	63.8	Meets
Wisconsin Rapids	63	Meets
Tri-County	61.2	Meets
Necedah	60.9	Meets
New Lisbon	59.9	Meets Few
Almond-Bancroft	58.8	Meets Few

There are 367 K-12 public school districts in Wisconsin. In 24-25 the Iola-Scandinavia School District outperformed 307 of them.

What is an Operational Referendum?

- School districts seek these funding tools to cover the cost of day-to-day operational expenses.
- These expenses can include utilities, maintenance, staff salaries and benefits, insurance, classroom supplies, curriculum, and transportation.
- Referendums are presented as a ballot question for voters to consider.



What Changed?

April 2026 Referendum	November 2026 Referendum
\$1,600,000 for 26-27 school year	\$1,200,000 for 26-27 school year
\$2,000,000 each of next 3 years	\$1,500,000 each of the next 3 years
\$7,600,000 total impact	\$5,700,000 total impact
\$41 per year average increase per \$100k	\$25 per year average increase per \$100k



How does this compare?

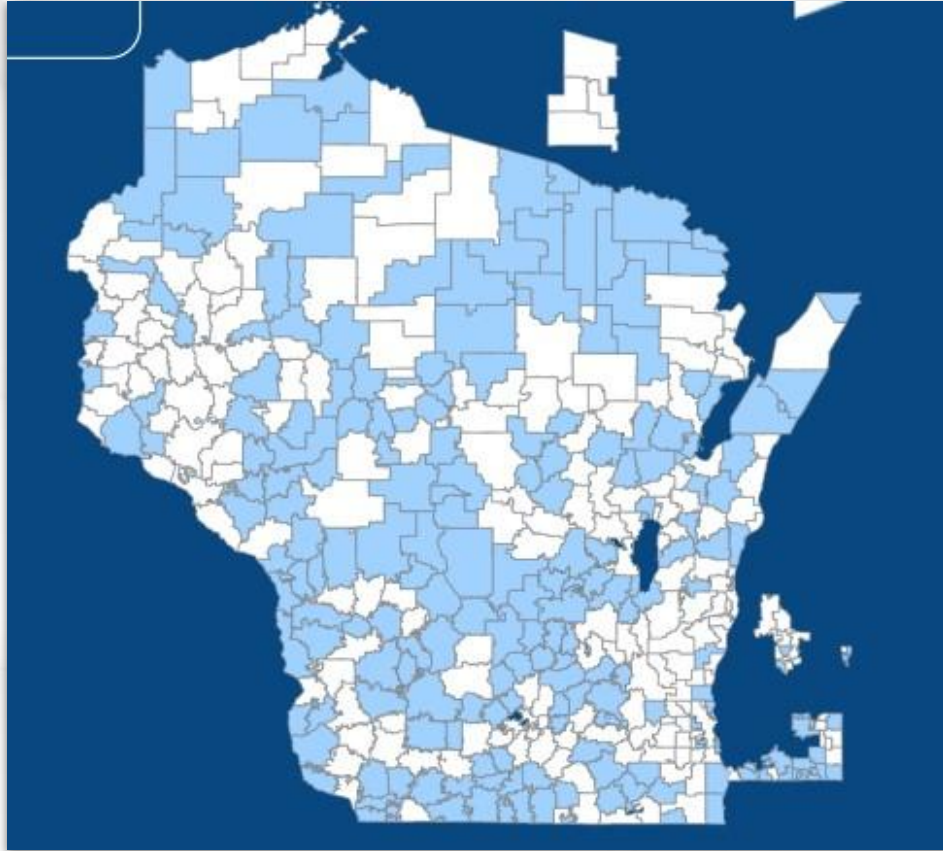
Recent Approved Operational Referendum History

School Year	Voter Approved Operational Referendum
2020-2021	\$1,600,000
2021-2022	\$1,250,000
2022-2023	\$1,250,000
2023-2024	\$1,400,000
2024-2025	\$1,400,000
2025-2026	\$1,500,000

November 2026 Operational Referendum

School year	Requested Amount
2026-2027	\$1,200,000
2027-2028	\$1,500,000
2028-2029	\$1,500,000
2029-2030	\$1,500,000





- Since 2021, 222 districts throughout Wisconsin have asked voters to consider a non-recurring operational referendum question.
- There have been 117 operational referendums on the ballot statewide since January.



WHY IS THIS NECESSARY?

- Wisconsin schools operate under a revenue limit set by the state, restricting the amount of money they can receive in state aid and property taxes.
 - As a result, I-S **does not receive enough revenue** to adequately fund our current programming and services.
- A district's revenue limit is the maximum amount of revenue that may be raised through state general aid and local property tax. The district **does not control the amount of aid** it receives from the state of Wisconsin.



RISING EXPENSES

- Costs continually rise for technology, maintenance, transportation, utilities, food service, and classroom materials, along with other expenses that are beyond our control.
- The needs of our students have increased dramatically, especially in the areas of special education and mental health.
 - These are expenses for state and federal mandated services for which I-S receives inadequate funding.



NOTHING NEW AT I-S

- Our district has relied on this funding tool for **nearly a decade** since it was first approved by voters in 2016 and renewed in 2020.
- The existing referendum expired at the end of the 2025-26.





DID YOU KNOW?

- If state aid *had* kept pace with inflation since 2009, school districts like I-S would receive about \$3,571 more per student each year.
- This would amount to an additional **\$2 million** in the current school year alone.



General school district revenues per pupil lag
inflation by **more than \$3,500** since 2009

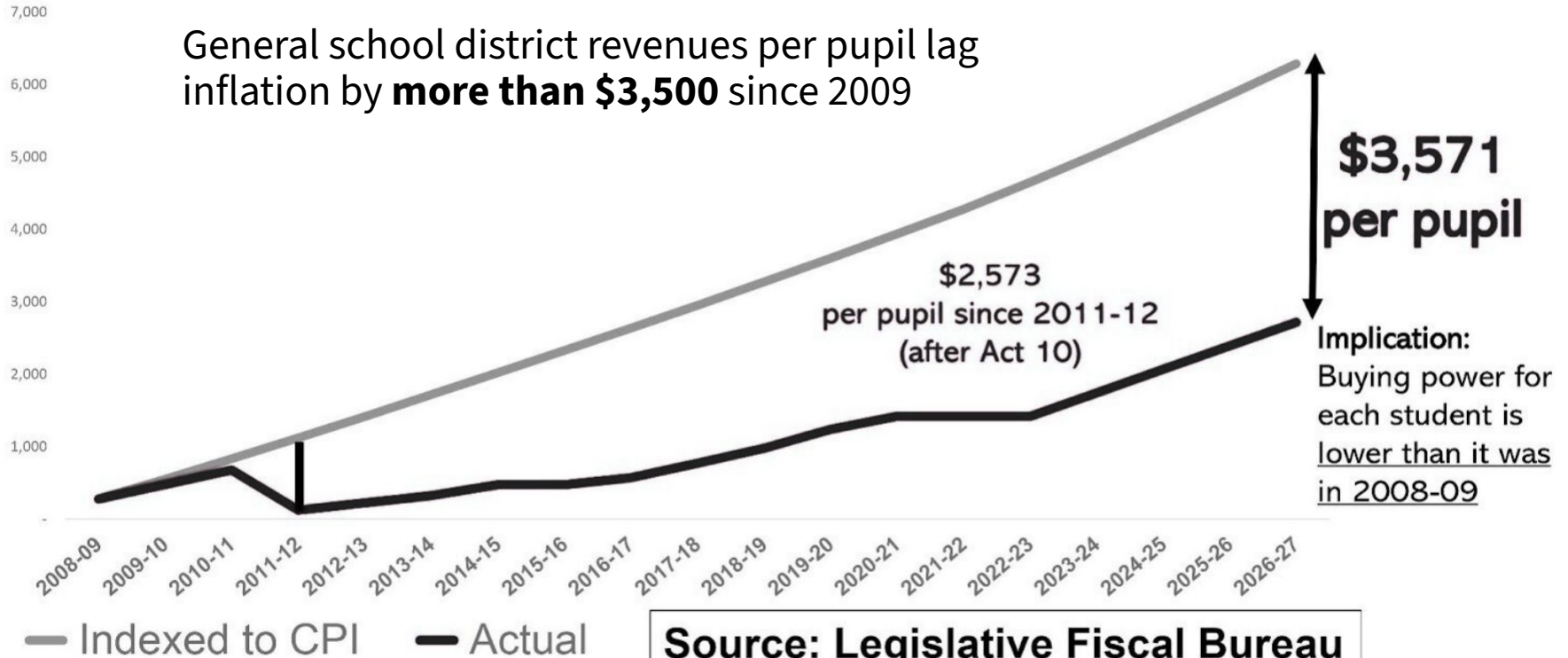


Chart courtesy of WASBO

SPENDING CUTS

- Since our first operational referendum was approved in 2016, we have reduced regular education staff through attrition.
- Consolidated administrative roles following the elimination of our district-owned bus fleet and the retirement of our transportation director.
- Partnered with CESA 5 for shared services and collaborated with RVA for some student services.
- All staff have accepted increased health insurance deductibles to help control healthcare costs.



SPENDING CUTS (Post April)

- Reduced staff by 2 teachers (HS Phy Ed and HS Business)
- Pay freeze for (Teachers, Administrators, and Support Staff)
- Reduction of field trips
- Reduction of some coaches.
- No updates to student technology
- Delay in some maintenance projects



PROPERTY TAX HISTORY

- The total school district levy (mill) rate, which determines the school portion of local property taxes, has **consistently decreased** in recent years.
- **The district's levy (mill) rate fell** from 2019-20 to 2025-2026.
 - From \$11.05 to \$6.98 per \$1,000



PROPERTY TAX IMPACT

- An approved referendum would have an estimated average annual school district property tax increase of **\$25 for every \$100,000** of fair market value.
- This would equate to an average increase of approximately **\$62.50 per year** above the current tax rate for a property valued at \$250,000.



PROPERTY TAX IMPACT

Fair Market Value	Average annual tax increase	Total 4 year tax increase	Total monthly tax increase
\$100,000	\$25	\$99	\$2.08
\$200,000	\$50	\$198	\$4.16
\$300,000	\$75	\$297	\$6.24



OUR PRIORITIES

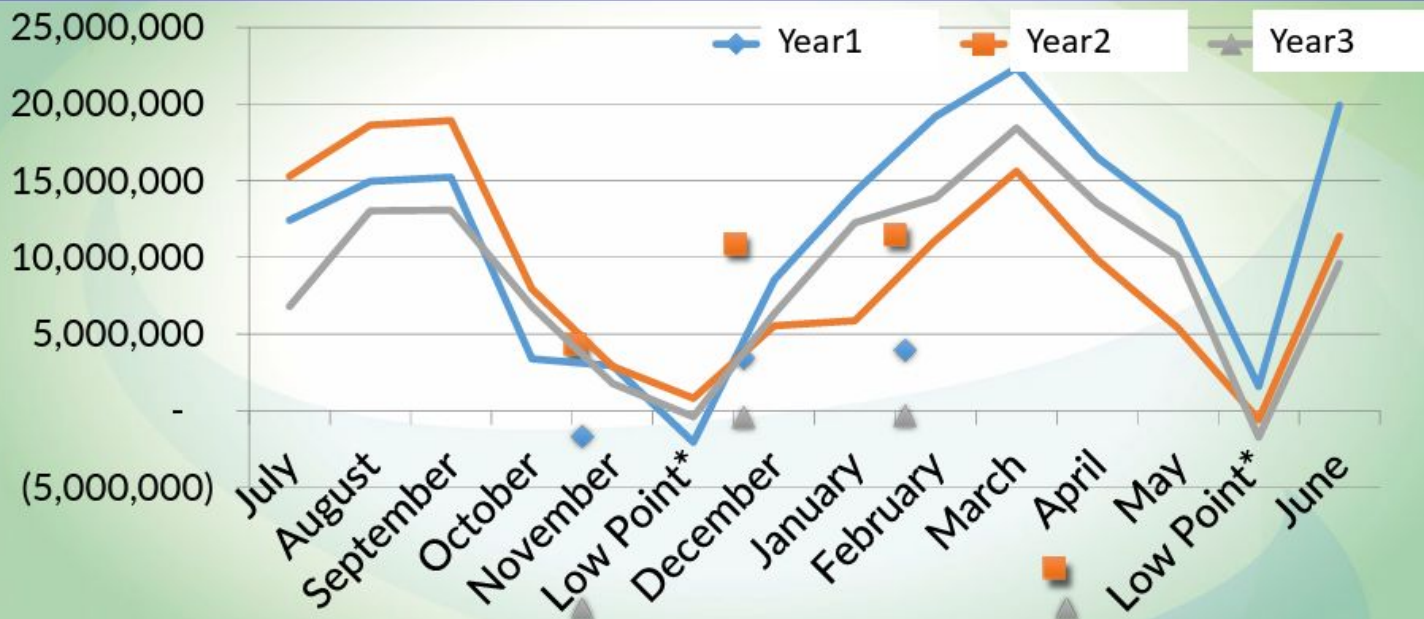
- Continue positive academic momentum
- Continue current academic programming
- Continue support of co-curricular activities
- Retain quality and dedicated staff
- Maintain an excellent bond rating
- Keep a healthy fund balance to pay bills and unexpected expenditures



Fund Balance

- Fund Balance information
- Iola-Scandinavia Fund Balance Policy

Typical Change in Monthly Cash Balance



This is a hypothetical example and for illustrative purposes only.







Selmer Gjertson Memorial
Donated 1958
School Forest 7.78 Acres Hwy 49



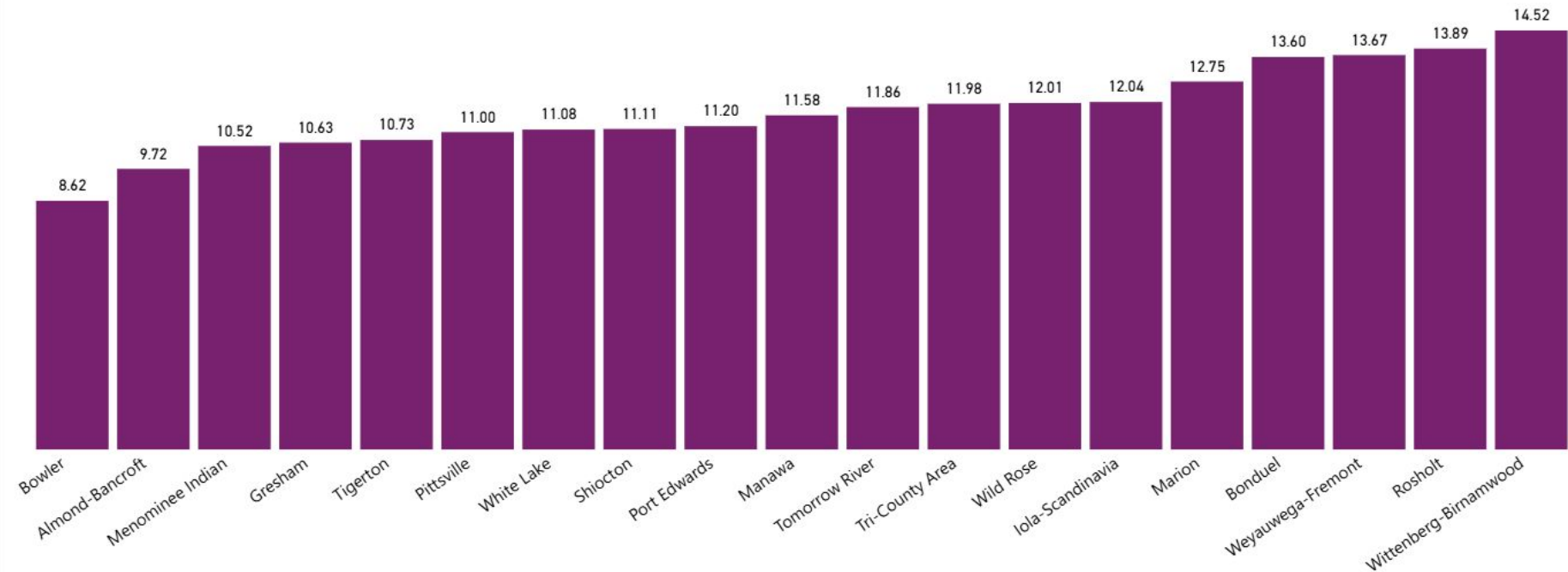
Staffing Comparables for Year:

- 2023
- 2024
- 2025

Teacher Assignment Area

All

Student:Teacher Ratio

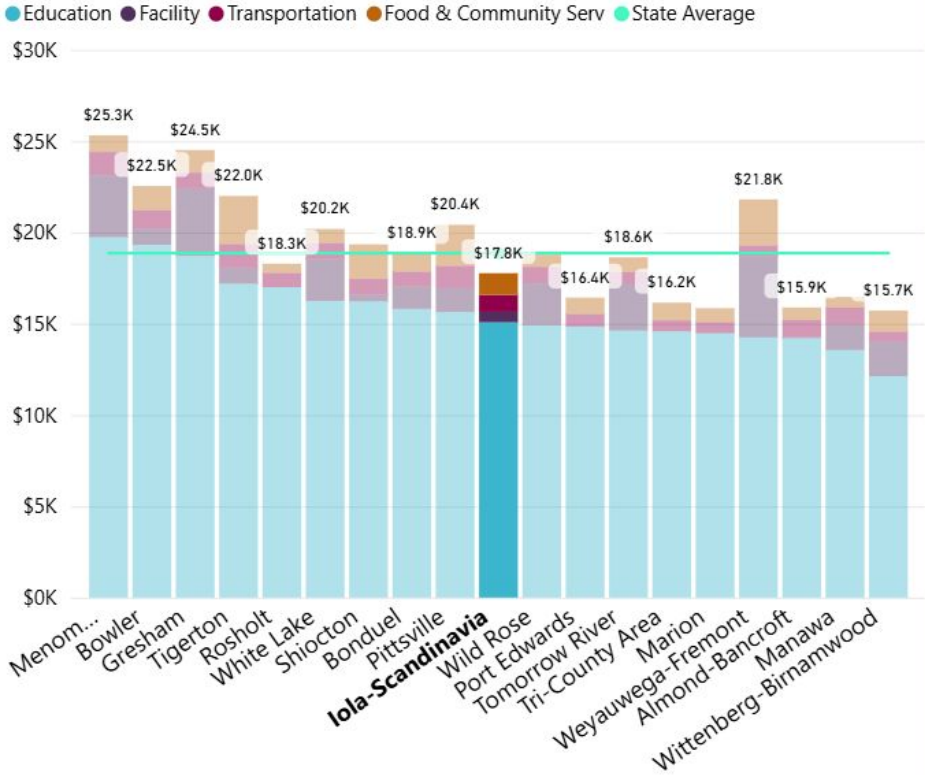


Revenue & Expenditure Comparables for the Year of:

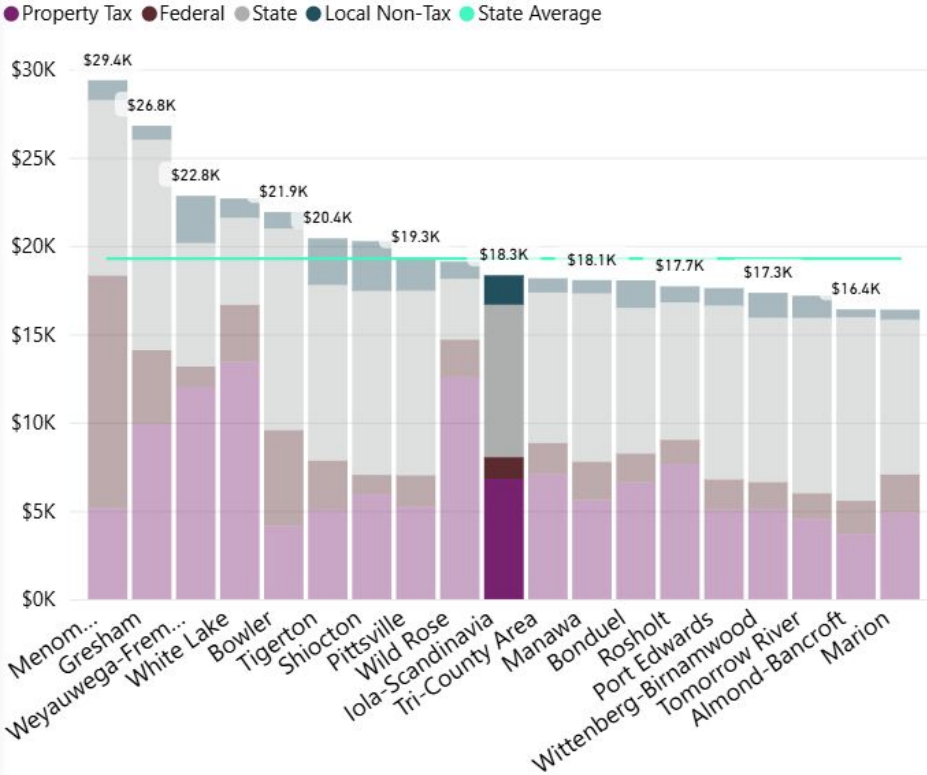
○ 2022
○ 2023
● 2024

BAIRD

Educational Cost Per Member

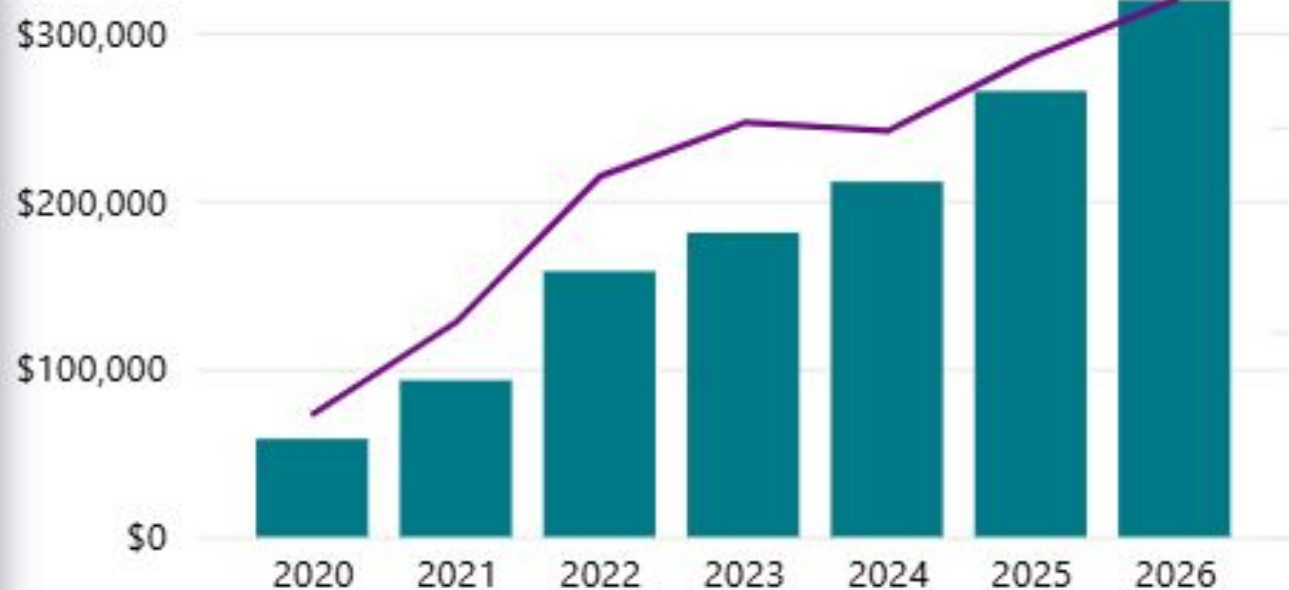


Revenue Per Member



Total Voucher Exemptions

● Voucher Exemptions ● Total Voucher Students



Wisconsin Education Spending Falls

Referendum Information Schedule

September 1	Town of Helvetia Meeting -- Helvetia Town Hall 7:00pm
September 8	Village of Scandinavia Meeting -- Scandinavia Municipal Building 5:00pm
September 9	Town of Scandinavia Meeting -- Scandinavia Municipal Building 5:30pm
September 22	Iola-Scandinavia High School Auditorium 6:00pm
October 13	Village of Iola Meeting -- Iola Village Hall 5:30pm
October 19	Iola Lions Meeting 6:00 pm
October 21	Iola-Scandinavia High School Auditorium 6:00pm

LEARN MORE!

Find answers to FAQs and more information about the operational referendum for I-S at **Iola-ScandinaviaReferendum.org**.



Thank You!!

Questions?

























