

Challenges to Success

Rod Goldhahn

I hope you all had an enjoyable Labor Day weekend! Fall is beginning to rear its head and the kids are back to school. While parents should be aware of data about the schools their children attend, many of us may be left unaware. The Wisconsin Institute of Law and Liberty (WILL) provides a current and historic summary of Wisconsin school district data on their website. The information is gleaned from Department of Public Instruction information as well as other government sources. For each block of data, WILL documents and provides links to the information sources. I encourage anyone interested to visit their website (<https://will-law.org>) and take a more detailed view of the information provided for every district in WI as well as a statewide summary.

We’ve spoken a lot in the past about education outcomes, funding, staffing, etc. So, I compared some information from WILL about the 8 school districts in Brown County and threw in Appleton as a neighbor. The table 1 shows results in Math and English Language Arts (as percentages), per pupil revenue (\$1000’s), administration ratio, poverty,

and chronic absenteeism (as percentages). There are also three charts to test relationships. To the “we need better teachers” crowd, I’ll challenge that our educators fall into a normal distribution, just like other fields. We have some exceptional teachers, some that shouldn’t be in the profession, and most falling in between and wanting to do a good job. To the “we need to provide more funding” group, the lower per pupil revenue districts produced the higher outcomes last year. Not surprising, the strongest correlation to education results is income and absenteeism. Kids cannot learn if they are not in school and financial insecurity puts stress on the entire family, and consequentially, the school. Many may be surprised to see more than half the students in Green Bay are classified as low income (less than 185% of the federal poverty limit).

There are no simple solutions, nor singular approaches. What is clear is that simply increasing funding, without a more holistic approach, and expecting that will make schools overcome societal issues is not the answer.

Rod

June Meeting Notes

Today's speaker was Adam Pfost, Vice President of Finance and Administration for Northeast WI Technical College (NWTC).

Adam reviewed the recently completed Strategic Plan for the college. Within that plan are the core values of Sustainability, Accountability, Excellence, Collaboration, and Community. They have a framework entitled NWTC 3.0 which focused on student access, completion of their degree, and post college success. This leads to the goal areas of Student Success, College Excellence, and Community Vibrancy. NWTC offers over 200 associate degree, technical diploma, certificate, and apprenticeship programs across a wide variety of career fields. While the full-time equivalent student count is just under 5200, nearly 21,200 students took one or more classes and over 7500 workers received training through their Corporate Training & Economic Development department. Over 40 colleges and universities give NWTC graduates credit towards a bachelor's degree as well as individual course transfer credits. They have 3 main campuses, 5 regional centers, and additional specialty locations. There have been financial challenges since Covid, with a nearly \$1.5M loss in FY24. Staff reductions should enable them to break even this year, but more reductions will be necessary going forward. Recent legislative changes in the technical college funding model have moved more of the budget

funding from local property taxes to state funding for operational budgets, but capital expenditures will continue to utilize local funding. In FY25 NWTC's mill rate was 13% below the median for WI technical colleges.

Business items: Our July speaker is Jim Skulstad of the Menominee County Taxpayers Association, and Dan Nemke of BC Organics has been invited to speak at the August meeting. The Executive Committee will discuss the meeting time/location issue at their July 9th meeting. Treasurer Sladek reported that 11 names have been submitted by Directors for trial memberships, which will begin in July.

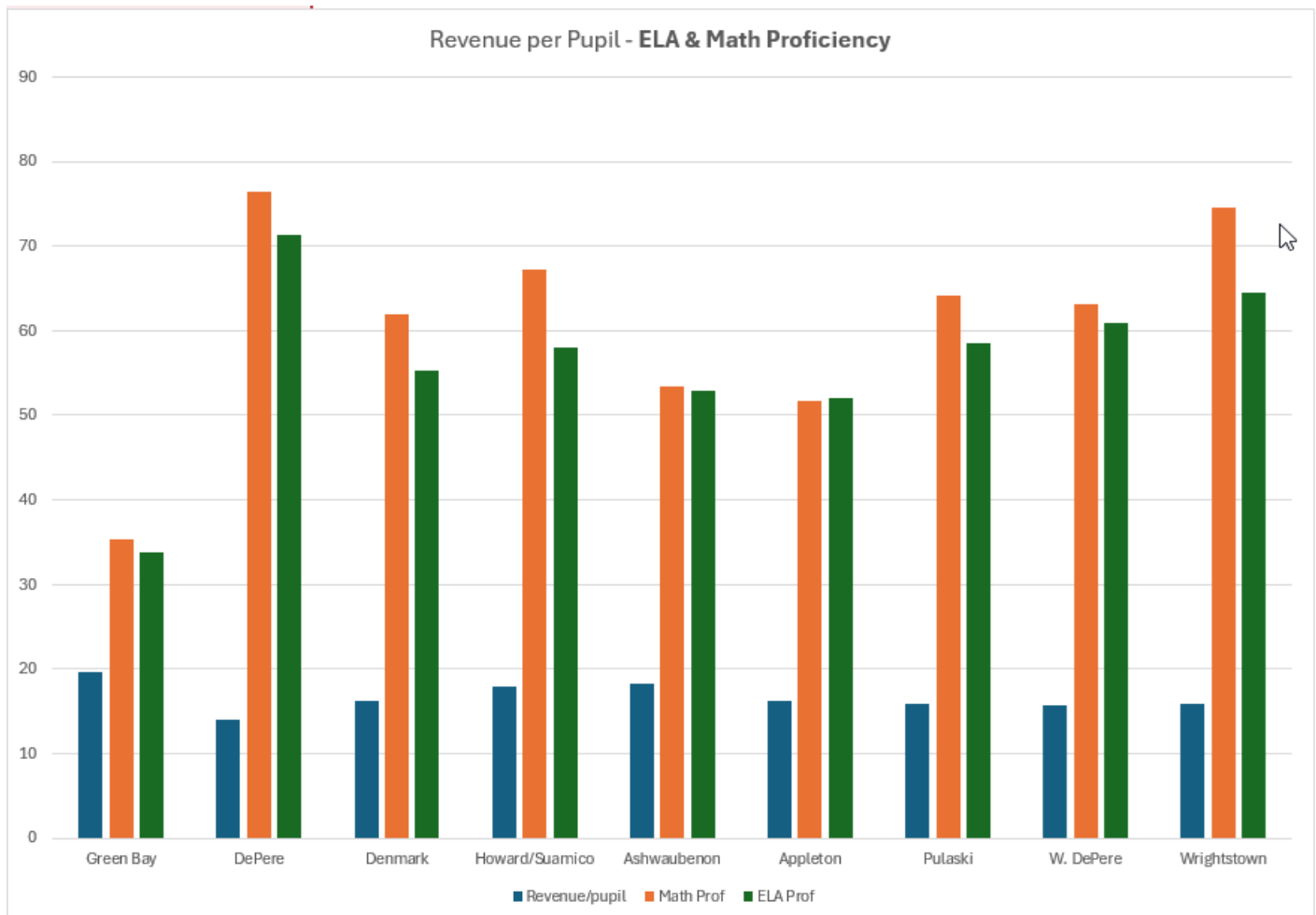
Committee/other reports: President Schwalbach reported that the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) has completed their public hearings and will now be debating final decisions on the state budget. The Committee is recommending 7 additional Assistant District Attorneys for Brown County. The report by the Audit Committee on DEI in the UW system is complete and available from your legislator. Only seven laws have been passed and signed by the Governor to date with five more in the queue for the Governor's review.

Meeting Notes by Rod Goldhahn, Secretary

Local School District Comparisons will-law.org/school-scorecard

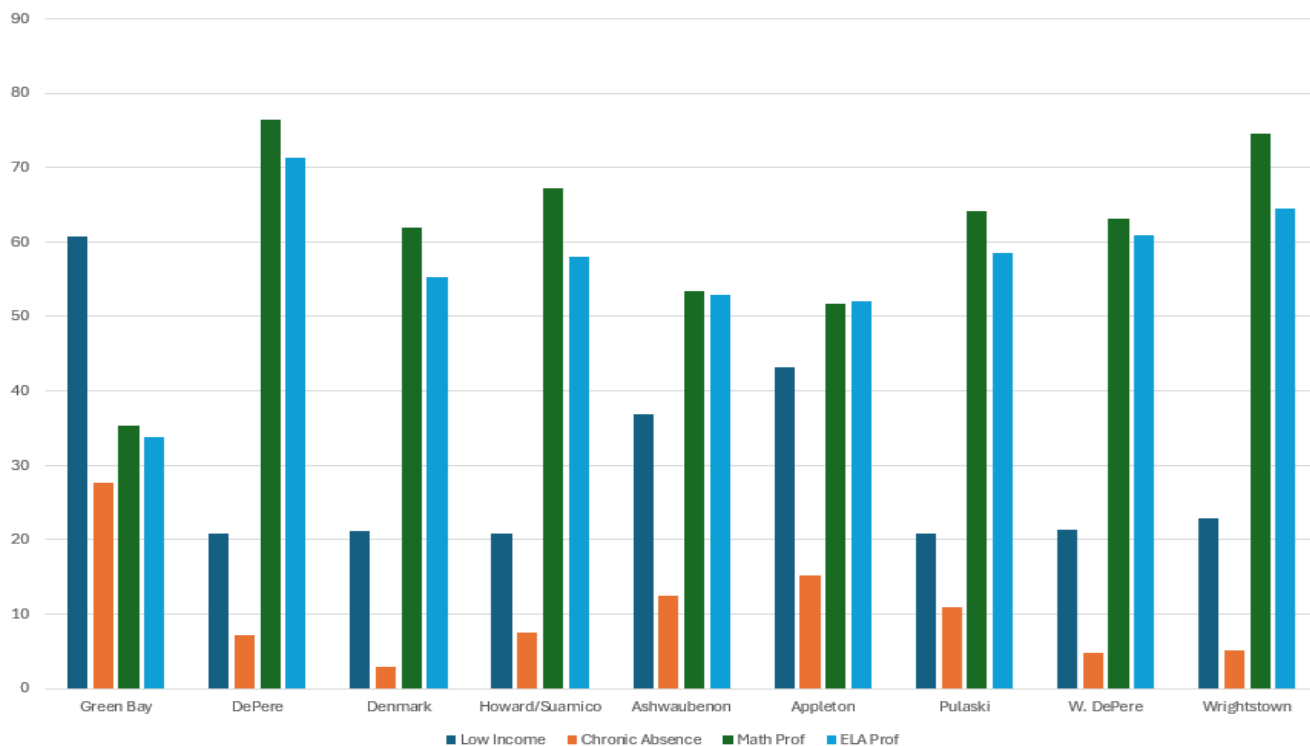
	Revenue per	Math Prof	ELA Prof	Pupil to Admin	Low Income	Chronic Absence
Green Bay	19,624	35.4	33.8	25.7	60.7	27.6
DePere	14,029	76.5	71.4	31	20.9	7.1
Denmark	16,304	62	55.2	35.7	21.2	2.9
Howard/Suamico	17,881	67.3	58	30.5	20.9	7.5
Ashwaubenon	18,270	53.4	52.9	42.3	36.8	12.4
Appleton	16,207	51.7	52.1	36.5	43.2	15.2
Pulaski	15,963	64.1	58.6	25.9	20.8	11
W. DePere	15,753	63.2	60.9	32.5	21.3	4.8
Wrightstown	15,968	74.5	64.5	25.4	22.9	5.1

Table 1

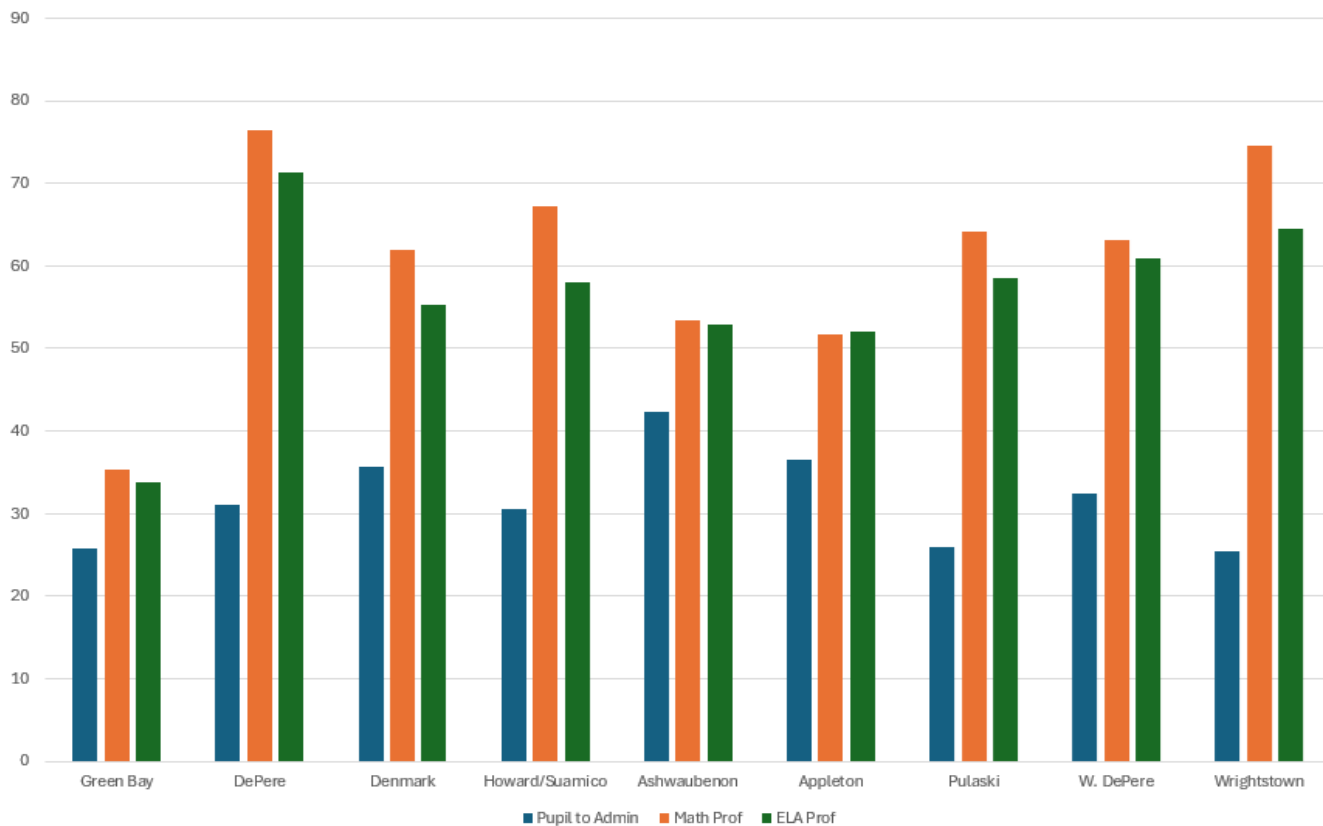


Source: <https://will-law.org/school-scorecard/>

Low Income, Chronic Absence - ELA & Math Proficiency



Pupil per Admin Staff - ELA & Math Proficiency



Source: <https://will-law.org/school-scorecard/>

July Meeting Notes

Today's speakers were Jim Skulstad and Gregg Malmstrom of the Menominee County Taxpayers Association (MCTA).

The MCTA has grown from a 50 member to a 1400 member organization whose mission is to serve and protect the rights and interests of all taxpayers in Menominee County, regardless of their ethnic, economic, political, or religious background. They are currently facing 5 key challenges in their relationship with the Menominee tribe. The first is taxable property. They state only about 1% of the taxable land in the county is paying property taxes. The rest is in non-taxable tribal trust, with more being added to the trust each year. Due to this disparity, Tax-rates.org ranks Menominee County as having the highest property tax as a percentage of property value in the nation. Yet the county has few services, amenities, or paved roads. The second challenge is a conflict between the rights of tribal members versus non-tribal members, and tribal sovereignty. The third is that congressional treaties never anticipated current realities, such as gaming, energy, and mineral right incomes and associated investments of those incomes. Based on 2014 to 2023 annual reports, the speakers estimate the Menominee tribe has generated nearly \$1 billion in income in the last 10 years.

The fourth challenge is limited legislative support to address these disparate tax issues. The final challenge is national sympathy towards tribal issues. In an effort to overcome these challenges and the economic and organizational power of the tribes, the MCTA is forming a coalition of communities and citizens facing similar issues. They hope to garner support to mount court challenges at the Circuit, Federal, and WI Supreme Court levels addressing these key issues as well as continuing to seek legislative support through lobbying efforts.

Business items: Our August speaker will be WI Senator Eric Wimberger. Dan Nemke of BC Organics has been invited to speak in September. Glenn informed members that anyone interested in submitting editorials or items of interest for the Tax Times should send them to Treasurer Tom Sladek or Secretary Rod Goldhahn for review and inclusion.

Committee/other reports: Due to time restrictions, Glenn gave an abbreviated update on legislative activities in Madison. Senator Wimberger can provide further depth at the August meeting.

Meeting Notes by Rod Goldhahn, Secretary

Monthly Meetings @ The Village Grille

Monthly meetings are held at **The Village Grille, corner of Hoffman and East River Drive**, Allouez. The location has no stairs or steps, convenient parking, and a room to better accommodate speakers and conversation. There will be three selections from which to choose lunch - each one will be priced at **\$15 (includes tax and tip)**. Lunch is at 1:00 pm with monthly speakers presenting.

SUPPORT THE BCTA

New Members Welcome

www.BCTaxpayers.com

The Brown County Taxpayers Association is a local group working to bring information and awareness to issues that affect tax policy or impose regulatory burdens.

The TAX TIMES

Brown County Taxpayers Association
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June Meeting Notes

July Meeting Notes

Meeting Location

The Village Grille, Allouez

1:00 pm Meeting

BCTA Meeting and Events Schedule – MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

Thursday - Sept 18, 2025 BCTA Monthly Meeting.
1:00pm at The Village Grille, Allouez

Thursday - Oct 16, 2025 BCTA Monthly Meeting.
1:00pm at The Village Grille, Allouez

BCTA monthly meetings are held the Third Thursday of each month, 1:00 pm, at , at The Village Grille, Allouez.

Meetings are open to the public. BCTA Members, their guests and other interested parties are cordially invited to attend and participate in our open discussions.

**COST: \$15.00, Payable at meeting. Includes lunch, tax & tip.
Call Tom Sladek – 499-7701 for information or to leave message.**

Sep-Oct 2025



www.BCTAxpayers.com