Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™

An interactive tool to foster dialogue, facilitate understanding, and engage your community around the complex topic of school finance

WASBO.com/InvestingInSchools

***Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools*™ was collaboratively developed by**

Wisconsin Association of School Business Officials

Wisconsin Association of School Boards

Wisconsin School Public Relations Association

Edventures in Learning, Inc.

Value of the Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™ Map Process

There's no getting around it; Wisconsin public school finance is complex. When key stakeholders – parents, staff, school board members and the community – lack understanding of this difficult topic, the ramifications to our public school districts can be devastating. The ability to provide high quality education experiences for all students in a safe and healthy environment can be jeopardized.

Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™ was developed to help address the challenges of educating stakeholders on public school finance. This comprehensive activity includes large scale visual maps, key data points, and engaging discussion questions, which are designed to be used in small groups facilitated by trained Table Coaches.

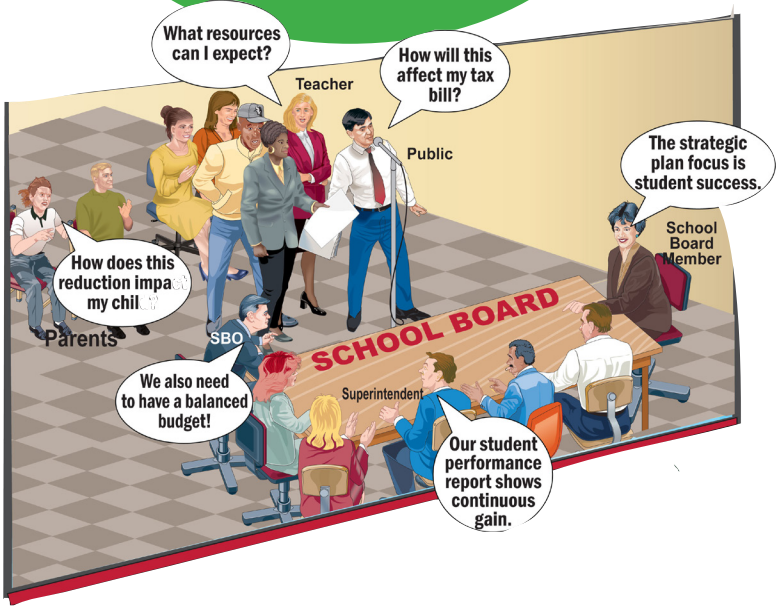
Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™ uses a blended learning and engagement methodology suited for stakeholders at all levels. The learning objectives examine the basic revenue and expense elements of education's financial scorecard, allowing participants to explore the measures of success and how all stakeholders can affect the financial well-being of schools. Key themes include:

1. Who are our stakeholders? What do they contribute to schools and what do they expect of schools?
2. What are the various sources of public school funding (revenues)?
3. What are the various expenses of public schools?
4. What are the ramifications of not having sufficient revenues? What are the methods for dealing with these ramifications?
5. How are stakeholders impacted by the effectiveness of public education?
6. What are the common outcomes of education and how are they impacted by the school funding mechanism?
7. How would you approach balancing a budget?
8. What actions or support can you provide to help ensure our schools provide a quality education amidst balancing a budget?

Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™ presents very targeted and provocative questions on core organization issues, challenging participants to think…often driving each person to address unpleasant but nonetheless vital systemic and environmental realities.

Potential Audiences

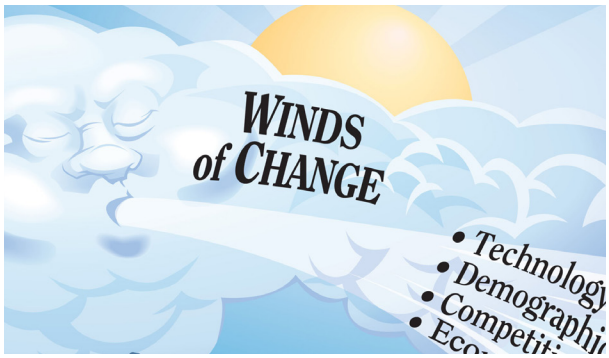
Staff Professional Development
Board Member Orientations
Community Engagement
Parent Groups
Business Community



Sharing Success

"Last school year, we used the Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™ tabletop exercise with the Board, administration and staff and it has been very well received. In fact, it has been so successful that we are now hosting monthly community conversations using it, with community interest still growing. I recently sent invitations to our legislators and received responses that two will be attending our next exercise and two others are interested in attending in the future. I want to commend you and the others involved in developing this tool. It has truly been a valuable investment for our school district and our community."

–Chilton School District Superintendent
Dr. Claire Martin



How the Map Process Works

"People will tolerate the conclusions of others. They will only act on their own conclusions."
- Randy Root

The activity creates conditions in which participants can easily learn from each other. People learn more comprehensively when they are engaged and enjoying themselves in a discussion without being told the answers. Participants can come to their own conclusions guided by a questioning process and information provided on the Map. The process requires participants to summarize key societal issues from their own beliefs and opinions, encourages embracing change and connects these changes to the school district's goals and direction.

The Map Process takes into consideration peoples' different ways of learning and maximizes understanding as well as longer-term retention that leads to action when people return to their daily job responsibilities and activities.

Six Components of the Map Process

1. *Visualization or Storyboarding of the Wisconsin Educational System & Complex Systems*

The Map creates a visual framework which helps participants to discuss the same issues at the same time with the same words. This allows group members to link issues to graphic images and forms common language and understanding.

2. *Data Connections*

Key pieces of data and information are linked within the Map that allow dialogue to occur around facts, not just opinions. Specific Wisconsin school data supports the storyboard metaphors.

3. *Socratic Dialogue & Discovery*

The use of the correct questions at the correct time helps lead groups of people through the process and creates a synergy for exploring issues with all the participants. Titles and status mean nothing. Learning is a matter of asking the right questions, not simply having the right answers. This activity allows the group members to offer opinions, comments and insights in a nonthreatening atmosphere.

4. *Learning Peripherals, Exercises & Simulations*

Exercises and game pieces provide information into the learning process and increasingly encourage the interactive process. The learning peripherals harness one of the most effective ways people learn, by making mistakes. Group members are put into different scenarios to enhance understanding and recognition through sharing.

5. *Interaction in Small Group Settings*

The Map is ideally used with groups of 6 to 10 people in a process that takes two hours. This allows for everyone to be engaged and ensures that everyone gets to introduce their ideas. Participants hear and learn from one another.

6. *Trained Facilitation*

Excellent facilitation is the key to the Map process. The Table Coach does not have to be an expert on the topic, but is a person who encourages understanding through thought provoking questions and listens carefully, with empathy. The Table Coach must avoid providing answers. The Table Coach's role is to keep the process moving proactively, using group discovery methods. When the Table Coach is not talking, the group is working. The expectation is for participants to be actively engaged and be explorers, not "sit and get" learners.

Purchasing Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™

Bring ***Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™*** *to your school district and community by contacting WASBO.*

WASBO.com/investinginschools or 608.249.8588

One Map Kit ~ $750

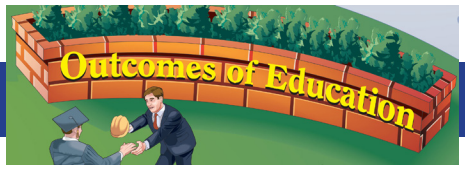
Includes:

- One laminated table top map, Coaches Handbook and Data Cards
- Perpetual use within your School District
- Agenda Design Guidance, Next Steps and Troubleshooting for Professional Development, Community Based Meetings or Board Meetings
- Updates to Materials as Needed (paid by school district at production cost)
- Map Kit purchase requires that at least one district employee be trained as a Table Coach by WASBO.

Additional Map Kits ~ $500 each

The Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™ Map Kit (including the map, questions, peripheral exercise cards and Coach's Guide book) are proprietary and copyrighted materials licensed by WASBO. Terms and conditions for use can be found at WASBO.com/investinginschools.

Trained Facilitation



Successful implementation of the ***Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™*** Map process requires well trained Table Coaches–and this tool may *only* be used by a properly trained Table Coach. Districts may purchase Table Coach Training in conjunction with Map Kits. WASBO schedules Table Coach Training by a Master Coach periodically, based on demand. Training also may be scheduled in conjunction with WASBO Conferences or Regional Meetings.

Experience Map exercise as a participant (2 hours)

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Training on Table Coach Skills (1.5 hours) followed by Q & A (.5 hours) Upon completion may serve as Table Coach

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Facilitate Map exercise as a Table Coach (preferably with a Master Coach). Upon completion, may serve as a Master Coach and train additional Table Coaches in your district.

Table Coach Training ~ $100 per person

(Required with initial Map Kit purchase.)

Training consists of four hours: two hours for participating in the ***Investing In Wisconsin Public Schools™*** Map exercise; 90 minutes of training on the required facilitator skills. Training concludes with an interactive discussion, including questions and answers.

NEW Option for Using Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™

You told us you would like to be able to hold larger events without having to purchase additional kits. To meet that need, the terms and conditions now allow districts to share their Map Kit(s) with other Wisconsin school districts that also own at least one kit and have at least one trained table coach. Lists of districts that own the Investing in Wisconsin Public Schools™ Map Kits and trained table coaches are available at: WASBO.com/InvestingInSchools

Questions? Call WASBO at 608.249.8588 or email wasbo@wasbo.com

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Updated Aug. 8, 2014