



To: Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos
From: Paula Phillips, School Board Director for Milwaukee, WI
CC: Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wisc.), Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisc.)
Subject: America's teachers deserve more than a \$1.50 per week raise

Friday, February 9, 2018

Dear Secretary DeVos,

The Trump Administration's reckless, irresponsible and out-of-touch approach toward both education and the economy is epitomized by Speaker Paul Ryan's recent tweet touting a savings of [\\$1.50 per week](#) for a school secretary, while public schools are under assault from the policies of your Department of Education.

"It's deeply offensive," an eight-year educator from Milwaukee, WI said of Ryan's comment, "especially considering the number of hours that school staff work that go unpaid and the fact that we haven't had cost of living increases. My friends with families can't make it on teachers' salaries."

As [Secretary of Education](#) for [America's Cabinet](#) – a group of young elected officials from across the country who came together to offer an alternative vision for the nation – I call on you, Secretary DeVos, to enact education policies that invest in America's public schools, including teachers and other hard-working school employees. America's educators need more support from their leaders than an extra \$1.50 per week.

The mission of the Department of Education is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access. Education is key to upward economic mobility, and your education policies, Secretary DeVos, hurt the promise of education as the path to advancement for all Americans.

You have advocated for the privatization of our schools, [insulted](#) Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and [removed protections](#) for students from predatory for-profit college loans, causing 18 state attorneys general to [file suit](#) against you. No wonder [86 percent](#) of educators report feeling disrespected by you. Where is your leadership, Secretary DeVos?

America's Cabinet has a [different vision](#) for education in America. We must invest in public education through funding that benefits students, pay quality teachers what they deserve, hold lenders accountable when they prey on students and rebuild our schools' physical and technological infrastructure. In short, we must undo this administration's harmful education policies and re-empower students, teachers and schools so that they can thrive.

This is the promise of America's Cabinet. As Secretary of Education for America's Cabinet, I propose a new direction for America's education policy, one that includes protections for students and respectable wages for educators. Secretary DeVos, it's time for you to lead. If you don't, we will.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula Phillips". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paula Phillips
School Board Director for Milwaukee, WI
Secretary of Education, America's Cabinet