



Wisconsin Educators for Fair Maps

As teachers, and educators in our state, we write about the urgent need to bring fairness into the redistricting process. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike regard gerrymandering as a serious issue in our democracy, and that when executed in a partisan fashion, it undermines the integrity of elections.

The current maps manipulate election districts for unfair partisan gain, entrenching political power rather than allowing voters a choice in representation. To put it in teachers' terms, the maps received a grade of an F from The Princeton Gerrymandering Project. If our state politics were a classroom, it seems it would be an out of control kindergarten class where compromise and collaboration are out of the question.

We believe that a well-functioning democracy makes our nation stronger. Our community is best served by a system where all people can speak and be heard, and where no one loses an opportunity to make a meaningful choice. In 2020, policies such as voting absentee, ballot drop boxes, and early voting, pushed Wisconsin's voter turnout to one of the highest levels in our state's history. When a larger demographic was able to choose their form of access, more of our neighbors and fellow Wisconsinites participated in our electoral process.

Our democratic process is how we solve some of our biggest challenges and disagreements. Just as in the classroom, having consensus and thoughtful dialogue allows for the best outcome for everyone. When you have a super majority of one party and maps that are drawn in a way where they keep that majority, you lose the fundamental building block of legislating. Moreover, when we see no movement on expanding Medicaid, early childhood education and funding of our public schools, our state legislature has made it very clear that they are not behind the majority of Wisconsinites on those popular issues and our children and marginalized communities will be further affected. Stand with us, and ensure Wisconsin can uphold our shared American values of legislative compromise.

A broken democracy has detrimental impacts for both our nation and our children. It is heartbreaking to hear our bright students in civics class say, "But nothing ever seems to change. Why should I vote?" Of course we tell them being involved in your democracy is your duty as an American, and getting involved is how things will change. But alas, they are not entirely wrong when we have a state legislature that has all but guaranteed their reelection.

At this critical juncture in our state's history, and in the redistricting process, decision makers have an imperative role to play in ensuring we are all treated with the same fidelity. To restore trust, the maps that will be implemented must be more competitive so either party has a relatively equal chance of winning an election. You deserve it, your constituents and community deserve it, and your state deserves it. More importantly, we are watching, and our youth are watching – the young minds of the future of Wisconsin. Let's do right by them and make them proud!

Sincerely,
Concerned Teachers of Wisconsin

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