RE-2 Employee Post Travel Disclosure of Travel Expenses

Date/Time Stamp

RECEIVED
SECRETARY OF THE SENATE
PUBLIC RECORDS
2026 MAY 19 PM 5:50

Post Travel Filing Instructions: Complete this form within **30 days** of returning from travel. Submit all forms to the Office of Public Records in 144 Hart Building. **This form is a public disclosure. The form and all attachments will be made publicly available.**

Certification: *In compliance with the Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel, Senate Rule 35, and the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007, I certify that I accepted the following gift of privately sponsored travel:*

Private Sponsor(s):
Aspen Institute Education and Society Program

Travel Dates:
04/07/2026 to 04/09/2026

Name of accompanying family member (if any):

Relationship to Traveler:

Expenses

Transportation Expenses	Lodging Expenses	Meals Expenses	Other Expenses (Amount & Description)
$907.80	$220.00	$200.00	$150.00

I also certify that attached to this form are all required documents for post travel disclosure, including:

- **The final Employee Pre-Travel Authorization** (Form RE-1)
- The final **Private Sponsor Travel Certification Form** with all attachments
- The final invitation
- The final approved itinerary

Finally, I certify that all trip information reflected in the attachments above accurately reflects the travel that I accepted. If there were any changes to the trip after I received approval from the Committee, the changes are described in ATTACHMENT 1.

5/19/26
Date

LEILA SCHOCHET
Printed Name of Traveler

Leila Schochet
Signature of Traveler

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISING MEMBER/OFFICER

I have made a determination that the expenses set out above in connections with travel described in the Employee Pre-Travel Authorization form, are necessary transportation, lodging, and related expenses as defined in Rule 35.

5/19/2026
Date

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
Signature of Supervising Senator/Officer

ATTACHMENT 1 – CHANGES FROM APPROVED PRE-TRAVEL

Note: Material changes to a trip that occur after the Committee has issued an approval letter may invalidate the Committee's approval. Please contact the Committee with any questions regarding changes to an approved trip.

Were there any changes to the pre-approved travel expenses? (Transportation, Meals, Lodging, Other)?

☑ Yes ○ No

Expense Change	Revised Amount	Explanation
Transportation	$907.80	flight cost rose between initial search and when travel was booked

Were there any changes to the pre-approved itinerary?

○ Yes ☑ No

Explanation: There were no changes to the pre-approved itinerary.

Were there any additional changes to the pre-approved trip?

○ Yes ☑ No

Explanation: There were no additional changes to the pre-approved trip.

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February 16, 2026

Dear Senate Colleague,

We are writing to invite you to participate in an upcoming site visit – *"Exploring Options: A Site Visit on Wisconsin School Choice"* – for the Aspen Senior Congressional Education Staff Network from **Tuesday, April 7, 2026, to Thursday, April 9, 2026** in **Milwaukee and Madison, Wisconsin**.

At this convening, staffers will meet with expert faculty, school leaders, policymakers, and community organizations to understand how Wisconsin's education ecosystem—including public schools, independent charters, private schools, and choice programs—interact to shape student experiences and outcomes. Staffers will get the chance to:

- Understand the landscape of schools in Wisconsin by gaining a grounded understanding of Wisconsin's education ecosystem—including public schools, independent charters, private schools, and choice programs—and how these options interact to shape student experiences and outcomes.
- Explore policy and governance structures by engaging with state and local leaders to learn how Wisconsin's policy environment, governance systems, and funding mechanisms for public schools, school choice programs, including short and long-term changes in implementation and outcomes.
- Identify any implications for federal policymaking by surfacing insights from educators, policymakers, and community organizations about the implications and impacts of school choice that may inform federal policy discussions and Congressional staff's work on education and workforce issues.
- Engage in discussions about the federal government's role in shaping education in Wisconsin, with a specific focus on policy impacts, funding levels, and changes, as well as the balancing of state and federal priorities.

We are committed to working with you and the Senate Ethics Committee to ensure compliance with the Senate rules regarding privately funded sponsored travel. Enclosed, you will find all the forms necessary for filing the trip with the Ethics Committee:

- A detailed agenda listing discussion sessions and school visits
- A completed Primary Trip Sponsor Form
- A list of invited Senate staffers
- A Traveler Form [must be filled out by Staffer]
- Completed Grantmaking Organization Additional Trip Sponsor Form from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

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You must complete the Traveler Form and submit it with the enclosed agenda, list of invited staffers, and Primary Trip Sponsor Form directly via the Privately Sponsored Travel Portal by **Friday, March 6, 2026**. After receiving the completed travel package, the Ethics Committee will review and issue an approval to you or your sponsoring Member. After the trip, you will need to complete a post-travel form that we will email to you after the site visit.

Attendance is by invitation only, with no outside observers or lobbyists. Funding is provided solely by grants from established foundations – no government, individual, foreign, corporate, or special interest money is accepted. The Network is supported by The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The Aspen Education & Society Program maintains autonomy over invitations, materials, and the agenda for the site visit.

The site visit will begin the morning of **Tuesday, April 7, 2026, in Milwaukee** and will conclude the afternoon of **Thursday, April 9, 2026, in Madison**. Please plan your travel accordingly in order to be present for the duration of the convening. Participants should arrive in Milwaukee no later than the morning of April 7, 2026, and plan return travel no earlier than late afternoon on April 9, 2026. Dress is business casual for all meetings.

The site visit promises to be productive and informative. We look forward to seeing you there.

Warm regards,

Brittany Mauney Megan Bennett Hilton Etienne Tay Moore

RE-1 Employee Pre-Travel Authorization

Date/Time Stamp

Pre-Travel Filing Instructions: Complete and submit this form at least 30 days prior to the travel departure date to the **Select Committee on Ethics in SH-220.** Incomplete and late travel submissions will **not** be considered or approved.

Name of Traveler:
Leila Schochet

Employing Office/Committee:
Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (DEM)

Private Sponsor(s):
Aspen Institute Education and Society Program

Destination(s):
Milwaukee WI, Madison WI

Travel Dates:
4/7/2026-4/9/2026

NOTE: If you plan to extend the trip for any reason you **must** notify the Committee.

Explain how this trip is specifically connected to the traveler's official or representational duties.

I am the Education Policy Director and this trip will focus on visiting schools, talking with education stakeholders, and meeting with state and local policymakers about Wisconsin's education system

Do you have an accompanying family member or spouse on this trip? ☐ (signify "yes" by checking box)

Name and Relationship to Traveler:

I certify that the information contained in this form is true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge.

3/23/26
Date

Leila Schochet
Signature of Employee

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISING MEMBER/OFFICER
(President of the Senate, Secretary of the Senate, Sergeant at Arms, Secretary for the Majority, Secretary for the Minority, and Chaplain)

I Senator Bill Cassidy (Print Senator's/Officer's Name) hereby authorize Leila Schochet (Print Traveler's Name)

an employee under my direct supervision, to accept payment or reimbursement for necessary transportation, lodging, and related expenses for travel to the event described above. I have determined that this travel is in connection with his or her duties as a Senate employee or an officeholder, and will not create the appearance that he or she is using public office for private gain.

I have also determined that the attendance of the employee's spouse or child is appropriate to assist in the representation of the Senate.

☐ (signify "yes" by checking box)

3/23/2026
Date

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
Signature of Supervising Senator/Officer

Aspen Institute Education and Society Program: Aspen Education Senior Congressional Staff Network Site Visit to Wisconsin

LEILA SCHOCHET

Title:
Aspen Education Senior Congressional Staff Network Site Visit to Wisconsin

Employing Office/Committee:
HEALTH, EDUC, LAB, AND PENSIONS - DEM

Duty Station:
WASHINGTON,DC

Destination(s):

Madison, Wisconsin

Explain how this trip is specifically connected to the traveler's official or representational duties:

I am the Education Policy Director and this trip will focus on visiting schools, talking with education stakeholders, and meeting with state and local policymakers about Wisconsin's education system.

Name of accompanying family member (if any):
Not Entered

Name and Relationship to Traveler:
None

Organization Information

Organization Name
Aspen Institute Education and Society Program

§501(c)(3) Organization Type
Public Charity

Address 2 (Optional)
Suite 700

Phone Number
5085969774

Is your organization classified as a §501(c)(3)?
(●) Yes ( ) No

Address
2300 N St. NW

City, State Zip
Washington, District Of Columbia 20037 United States

Organization URL

History of Congressional Travel

The Aspen Institute is a nonpartisan educational organization whose mission is to foster leadership grounded in enduring values and provide an inclusive forum for the exchange of ideas. Across policy domains including health, economic opportunity, and technology, the Institute has a long history of engaging congressional staff through convenings and professional development. For over 20 years, the Education & Society Program has operated the Senior Education Congressional Staff Network, a bicameral and bipartisan network designed to deepen staff knowledge of federal education policy implementation and build lasting, cross-partisan relationships on Capitol Hill. Programming includes topic-specific retreats, off-the-record expert webinars, and site visits. For example, in Spring 2024, the Network brought congressional staff to Birmingham and Montgomery, Alabama to examine the impact of the state's Science of Reading and Numeracy laws on districts, schools, and students firsthand.

Educational Activities

The Aspen Institute's Education & Society Program holds numerous educational activities — including briefings, roundtables, forums, conferences, and site visits — for a diverse range of attendees including federal and state policymakers, business and organizational leaders, and the general public. The program convenes the Cross-Partisan Policy Network, bringing together 80+ education leaders across the ideological spectrum on school choice, career-connected learning, civics, and student engagement; the Urban District Leaders Network, supporting urban school leaders navigating complex policy environments; the Rising Generations Strategy Group, convening emerging field leaders; and the Youth Advisory Partnership, centering youth voices in education policy. Across all programming, the Education & Society Program is committed to cross-partisan dialogue and equipping leaders at every level to make informed decisions for students and families.

Lobbyist and Foreign Agent Registration Information

Lobbyist Registration Status: *I certify that the sponsor is not a federally registered lobbyist and does not retain or employ a federally registered lobbyists.*

Foreign Agent Registration Status: *I certify that the sponsor is not an agent of a foreign principal and do not retain or employ an agent of a foreign principal.*

Foreign Government Involvement

Foreign Agent Registration Status:

- ☑ I certify that the sponsor is not a foreign government.
- ☑ I certify that the sponsor is not an entity that is owned or operated by a foreign government.
- ☑ I certify that the sponsor does not receive funding from a foreign government.

Comments

Signature Page

The signature page is below.

Purpose and Details

Provide a brief description of the trip.

The Aspen Institute's Education & Society Program has a 20-year history of providing nonpartisan educational programming for congressional staff. This site visit to Wisconsin offers participants an immersive learning experience focused on how states are implementing federal education policy under the Every Student Succeeds Act, with particular emphasis on school choice programs operating at the state and local level. Participants will engage directly with district leaders, school administrators, and students across Milwaukee and Madison to observe school choice models in practice and understand their impact on families and communities. This on-the-ground learning is designed to deepen congressional staff knowledge and build cross-partisan relationships that inform evidence-based federal policymaking. The Aspen Institute's Education & Society Program is solely responsible for the organization and conduct of this trip.

Explain how the purpose of the trip relates to your organization's mission.

The Aspen Institute is a nonpartisan educational and policy studies organization whose mission is to foster leadership grounded in enduring values and provide an inclusive forum for the exchange of ideas. This site visit to Wisconsin directly embodies that mission — bringing together bicameral, bipartisan congressional staff for an immersive, on-the-ground learning experience centered on school choice policy implementation under the Every Student Succeeds Act. For over 20 years, the Education & Society Program has convened senior congressional education staff to bridge the gap between federal policymaking and state and local realities. This trip continues that tradition, equipping participants with firsthand knowledge of how school choice programs are shaping outcomes for districts, schools, and families in Milwaukee and Madison — and fostering the cross-partisan relationships needed to translate that learning into informed, evidence-based federal education policy.

Is your organization the only sponsor for this trip?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Grantmaking Organizations (Optional)

1. Gates Foundation

With or Without Regard for Congressional Participation

The trip is arranged or organized specifically with regard to congressional participation.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Involvement in Planning, Organizing, Requesting or Arranging

- [x] The trip will not in any part be planned, organized, requested, or arranged by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal, other than de minimis involvement.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Financing

- [x] The trip will not be financed in any part by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal.
- [x] No funds or in-kind contributions were earmarked directly or indirectly for the purpose of financing this specific trip from a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal or from a private entity that retains or employs one or more registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Accompaniment

Complete if all sponsors are §501(c)(3) organizations

- [x] The trip is limited to three days (for trips inside the continental United States) or seven days (for trips outside the continental United States), and no lobbyist or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee at any point throughout the trip
- [ ] The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **one** overnight stay) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip
- [ ] The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **two** overnight stays) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

Complete if any of the sponsors is not a §501(c)(3) organizations.

- [ ] The trip is limited to three days (for trips inside the continental United States) or seven days (for trips outside the continental United States), and no lobbyist or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee at any point throughout the trip
- [ ] The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **one** overnight stay) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip
- [ ] The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **two** overnight stays) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

Certification of No Recreational Activity and No Alcohol

- Travel expenses paid for will not include expenditures for recreational activities.
- Travel expenses paid for will not include expenditures for alcohol, except as permitted by the Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel.

Invitees

Members and staff from the House of Representatives **will** receive invitations.

The list of invitees is below.

Travel Details

Trip Start Date/Time:
04/07/2026 @ 06:55 AM

Trip End Date/Time:
04/09/2026 @ 07:29 PM

Will the traveler be accompanied by a family member for whom the sponsor will pay travel expenses?

○ Yes ● No

Itinerary

The itinerary is below.

Transportation (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $645.00 | Accompanying Family Member: $0.00)

Transportation Type	Class	Amount
Airfare	Coach	$310.00

Note
Round trip, flying from DC to Milwaukee, then from Madison to DC.

Transportation Type	Class	Amount
Ground Transportation	Coach	$335.00

Note
Covers Shuttle travel between locations as well as transportation to and from airport

Lodging (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $220.00)

Check-In	Check-Out	Facility	City	State	Country	Nights	Cost/Night	Cost Exceed Per Diem
04/07/2026	04/09/2026	Embassy Suites Madison Downtown	Madison	Wisconsin	United States	2	$110.00	No

Meals (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $200.00)

Date	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidentals	Total	City	State	Country	Cost Exceeds Per Diem
04/07/2026	$0.00	$22.00	$0.00	$5.00	**$27.00**	Milwakee	Wisconsin	United States	No
04/07/2026	$0.00	$0.00	$33.00	$0.00	**$33.00**	Madison	Wisconsin	United States	No
04/08/2026	$20.00	$22.00	$33.00	$5.00	**$80.00**	Madison	Wisconsin	United States	No
04/09/2026	$20.00	$22.00	$0.00	$18.00	**$60.00**	Madison	Wisconsin	United States	No

Reasonable Miscellaneous Expenses (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $150.00)

Expense Type	Amount	Notes
Other (Meeting Facilities and Materials Feed)	$150.00	This includes access to meeting spaces, cleaning fees, and meeting materials (nametags and table tents)

Additional Attachments

Document Name

There are no additional attachments.

PRIVATELY SPONSORED TRAVEL

SPONSOR SIGNATURE PAGE

I hereby certify that the information submitted in connection with the trip listed below is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Trip Name: Aspen Education Senior Congressional Site Visit to Wiscons

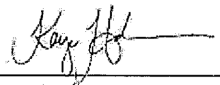
Travel Date(s): April 7, 2026 to April 9, 2026

Travel Destination(s): Milwaukee and Madison Wisconsin

Sponsor: The Aspen Institute, Inc (Education and Society Program)

Kaya Henderson — *(printed name of sponsor representative)*

EVP Rising Generations — *(title)*



(signature of sponsor representative)

2/20/26 — *(date)*

Grantmaking Organization Certification Form

Instructions: If a sponsor receives funds from a grantmaking organization, the sponsor must disclose this on the *Private Sponsor Travel Certification Form*, and the grantmaking organization must complete the *Grantmaking Organization Certification Form.* The completed *Grantmaking Organization Certification Form* must be submitted to the Senate Select Committee on Ethics by the trip sponsor at least 30 days prior to the travel departure date.

Grantmaking Organization: Gates Foundation

Private Sponsor: The Aspen Institute, Inc. (Education and Society Program)

Trip Name: Aspen Education Senior Congressional Staff Network Site Visit to Wisconsin

Travel Date(s): April 7-9, 2026

Destination(s): Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Madison, Wisconsin

In compliance with the *Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel*, I certify the following:

- ☑ The grantmaking organization is a § 501(c)(3) organization.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization is not a lobbyist, lobbying firm, or foreign agent, nor an entity that retains or employs a lobbyist or foreign agent.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization provides funds under an established grant program, or in a manner that is otherwise consistent with the mission and practices of the organization.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization is not involved, directly or indirectly, in organizing and conducting the trip. This includes selecting participants for a trip.
- ☑ The grantmaking organization does not directly pay or reimburse travel expenses for any Senate Member, officer, or employee.

Kathryn Young — *(Printed name of grantmaking organization representative)*

Senior Program Officer — *(Title)*

Kathryn Young — *(Signature of grantmaking organization representative)*

02/20/26 — *(Date)*

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Aspen Senior Education Congressional Network Site Visit to Wisconsin

Exploring Options: A Site Visit on Wisconsin School Choice
Milwaukee & Madison, WI
April 7 -9, 2026

The Senate employees invited (listed below) are senior staff responsible for committees that oversee issues affecting K-12 education; they are invited specifically because of their portfolio to meet with leaders and experts from states, municipalities, research, and support organizations to engage in non-partisan dialogue on the impact of federal policy on K-12 education.

SENATE CONGRESSIONAL STAFF

Amanda Beaumont
Professional Staff Member
Senate Appropriations Committee

Manuel Contreras
Senior Education Policy Advisor, K-12
Senate HELP Committee

Alaura Ervin
Education Policy Director
Senate HELP Committee

Mike Gentile
Clerk
Senate Appropriations Committee

Cecily Hahn
Senior Counsel
Sen. Tammy Baldwin

Jackson Hern
Education Research Assistant
Senate HELP Committee

Iris Hinh
Professional Staff Member
Senate HELP Committee

Mark Laisch
Professional Staff Member
Senate Appropriations Committee

Julia Mikota
Legislative Counsel
Sen. Ron Johnson

Sarah Mueller
Professional Staff Member
Senate HELP Committee

Leila Schochet
Education Policy Director
Senate HELP Committee

Emily Slack
Clerk/Staff Director
Senate Appropriations Committee

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AGENDA

Exploring Options: A Site Visit on Wisconsin School Choice

Site Visit Goals:

- Understand the landscape of school choice in Wisconsin by gaining a grounded understanding of Wisconsin's education ecosystem—including public schools, independent charters, private schools, and choice programs—and how these options interact to shape student experiences and outcomes.
- Explore policy and governance structures by engaging with state and local leaders to learn how Wisconsin's policy environment, governance systems, and funding mechanisms influence school choice and program implementation.
- Identify implications for federal policymaking by surfacing insights from educators, policymakers, and community organizations about the opportunities and challenges of school choice that may inform federal policy debates and Congressional staff's work on education and workforce issues.
- Engage in discussions about the federal government's role in shaping education in Wisconsin, with a specific focus on federalism implications, policy impacts, and the balancing of state and federal priorities.

Tuesday, April 7, 2026

6:55 AM	**Wheels Up from DCA** DCA to MKE: Southwest (6:55 AM - 8:10 AM arrival)
9:00 AM	**Arrival at Milwaukee Airport**
9:00 - 9:45 AM	**Airport Transport to Site Visit to Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy** Transportation via chartered bus from the airport to Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy, 2212 N. Vel R. Phillips Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212
9:45 - 10:15 AM	**School Visit: Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy** Participants will explore Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy through a student-led tour, offering an on-the-ground look at the school's learning

environment, classrooms, and culture — providing firsthand insight into the experience of students attending an independent charter school in Milwaukee. Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy's conversion from a private school to an independent charter makes it a compelling example of the diverse school choice models at the center of this site visit, illustrating how different governance and funding structures shape the options available to Milwaukee families.

10:15 - 11:15 AM **Howard Fuller & School Leadership Discussion**

Location: ThriveOn King

Participants will sit down with Dr. Howard Fuller, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Education at Marquette University and one of the most influential figures in the Milwaukee school choice movement, alongside school leadership from Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy. Dr. Fuller will provide historical context on the origins and evolution of school choice in Milwaukee, one of the nation's longest-running and most closely watched school choice landscapes. Middle School Principal LaQuasha Logan and High School Principal Philip Smith will then discuss the school's conversion from a private school to an independent charter, sharing insights into how that transition has shaped governance, funding, student outcomes, and attendance, grounding federal policy debates in the realities faced by school leaders on the ground.

Dr. Howard Fuller, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Education, Marquette University, Retired
LaQuasha Logan, Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy Middle School Principal (invited)
Philip Smith, Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy High School Principal (invited)

11:15 - 12:15 PM **Expanding the Landscape: Panel with Community Members**

Location: ThriveOn King

This panel broadens the school choice conversation beyond school walls, bringing together community and civic leaders to explore how school choice is experienced and understood across Milwaukee's broader ecosystem. Participants will hear from Dale Kooyenga, President of the Milwaukee Metro Chamber of Commerce, on the intersection of school choice and workforce development; Colleston Morgan, Jr., Executive Director of City Forward Collective, on how choice programs are shaping educational equity and community outcomes; and Kole Knueppel, Executive Director of St. Marcus Ministries, on the role faith-based institutions play in Milwaukee's choice landscape. Together, these perspectives offer congressional staff a multidimensional view of school choice — moving beyond policy mechanics to examine how families, businesses, and community organizations experience and engage with the options available to them.

Dale Kooyenga, President, Milwaukee Metro Chamber of Commerce
Colleston Morgan, Jr., Executive Director, City Forward Collective

Kole Knueppel, Executive Director at St. Marcus Ministries

12:15 - 1:00 PM **Working Lunch at ThriveOn King**

Aspen facilitators will guide congressional staff through a structured reflection on the morning's visits and conversations, drawing connections between the student experience at Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy and the broader community perspectives shared by Milwaukee's civic and business leaders. Participants will be encouraged to surface early observations, identify points of tension or alignment across what they've heard, and begin connecting on-the-ground realities to the federal policy questions most relevant to their work.

1:00 – 1:15 PM **Travel to Milwaukee Public Schools**

Transportation via chartered bus from Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy to Academia de Lenguaje y Bellas Artes (ALBA School).

1:15 – 1:45 PM **Milwaukee Public Schools Visit, ALBA School**

Academia de Lenguaje y Bellas Artes (ALBA) is a Milwaukee Public School serving students in grades K3–8 through an innovative dual-language model that delivers rigorous instruction in both English and Spanish. Founded on the belief that bilingual students reach their full potential when challenged academically in both languages, ALBA integrates culturally relevant curriculum, fine arts, and bilingual education to build academic excellence and cultural identity. As a charter school operating within the Milwaukee Public Schools district, ALBA represents an important dimension of Milwaukee's broader school choice landscape — illustrating how charter designation can enable a district school to innovate and specialize while remaining anchored in the public system. Congressional staff will tour the school to see this model in action, observing classrooms and interacting with students and staff firsthand.

1:45 – 2:45 PM **Milwaukee Public Schools Panel**

Following the school tour, participants will engage in a roundtable discussion with Milwaukee Public Schools leadership and ALBA's principal to unpack what they observed and connect it to the broader policy landscape. The conversation will explore how Milwaukee Public Schools is innovating and adapting in the context of one of the nation's most expansive school choice environments — examining the implications of choice programs on district enrollment, funding, and resource allocation. Panelists will discuss how district and charter schools like ALBA are finding ways to differentiate and serve their communities, while also addressing the federal policy and funding questions that shape the choices available to Milwaukee families. This discussion offers congressional staff a candid, ground-level perspective on the opportunities and challenges facing a large urban district navigating the intersection of local innovation and federal policy.

Dr. Brenda Casellius, Superintendent, Milwaukee Public Schools
Bridget Schock, Director, Contracted School Services, Milwaukee Public Schools
Regina Navejar, ALBA Principal

2:45 – 3:00 PM **Transfer to United Community Center Charter School**

Transportation via chartered bus from MPS school to United Community Center Charter, 1028 S 9th St, Milwaukee, WI 53204

3:00 – 3:30 PM **United Community Center Charter School Tour**

30 Minute School Tour - visit classrooms and talk with teachers, staff, and students

3:30 – 4:15 PM **United Community Center Panel**

United Community Centers' mission is to transform the lives of Hispanics, families, and individuals of all ages by providing the highest quality comprehensive services in education, human services, health, community development, and cultural arts. As part of their work in South Milwaukee, they operate a network of charter schools, supporting students from 6 weeks old to college-aged. This visit will feature a panel of their school leaders and dive into the unique services provided to their students and families.

Laura Gutierrez, Chief Executive Officer, UCC Schools
Shaba Martinez, Chief Academic Officer, UCC Schools

4:15 – 5:30 PM **Diverse Voices in School Choice Panel**

This panel brings together practitioners and advocates representing communities whose experiences are often overlooked in school choice debates, including rural families, students with disabilities, and parents navigating complex choice systems. Panelists will share frontline perspectives on the opportunities and barriers these populations encounter, grounding the broader policy conversation in the diverse realities of the school choice landscape.

Topics:

- Rural School Choice Implementation (Panelist TBD)
- Students with Disabilities in Choice Environments (Panelist TBD)
- Parent Navigation of Choice Systems (Panelist TBD)

5:30 – 5:45 PM **Travel to Dinner**

Transportation via chartered bus from United Community Center Charter to Cafe Hollander

6:00 – 7:30 PM **Working Dinner**

Location: Cafe Hollander - Tosa Village
7677 W State St, Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Panelists from the day are invited to join for dinner to continue the conversation around school choice in Milwaukee

7:30 – 9:00 PM **Transfer to Madison & check into hotel**

Transportation via chartered bus from dinner to Embassy Suites By Hilton Madison Downtown

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

7:30 – 9:00 AM **Breakfast**

Embassy Suites By Hilton Madison Downtown
231 S. Pinckney Street, Madison, Wisconsin, 53709

9:00 – 9:30 AM **Travel to State Capitol**

2 East Main St., Madison, Wisconsin

9:30 - 11:30 AM **Policymaker Perspectives on School Choice in Wisconsin with State Legislators**

330SW Conference Room in the State Capitol Building.

Discussion with members of the Wisconsin State Senate and Assembly members about the state of education policy and funding in Wisconsin, with a focus on school choice programs, and an examination of the role of federal policy and funding.

Senator John Jagler (R-Watertown), Chair, Wisconsin Senate Education Committee
Senator Chris Larson (D-Milwaukee), Member, Wisconsin Senate Education Committee
Representative Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay), Chair, Wisconsin Assembly Education Committee
Representative Francesca Hong (D-Madison), Member, Wisconsin Assembly Education Committee (invited)
Representative Angelina Cruz (D-Racine), Member, Wisconsin Assembly Education Committee (invited)

11:30 – 12:00 PM **Discussion with Gov. Tony Evers**

Governor's 8th Floor Conference Room in the State Capitol Building.

Conversation with the governor about the state of education policy and funding in Wisconsin, with a focus on importance of funding public schools

and the critical role public schools play in serving all students, and an examination of the role of federal policy and funding.

Governor Tony Evers, State of Wisconsin

12:00 - 12:30 PM **Transition to Lunch**

12:30 - 1:30 PM **Working Lunch**

Location: The Old Fashioned, 23 N Pinckney St #1, Madison, WI 53703

Following a packed morning at the State Capitol, Aspen facilitators will lead congressional staff through a structured debrief drawing connections between the policymaker perspectives heard from state legislators and Governor Evers. Participants will reflect on the themes, tensions, and takeaways emerging from those conversations, identifying areas of bipartisan agreement, points of contention, and implications for federal education policy, as they prepare for the afternoon's deeper dive with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

1:30 - 1:45 PM **Travel to Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction building, 201 W Washington Ave, Madison, WI 53703

1:45 - 3:45 PM **Meeting with Department of Public Instruction**

TBD conference room at Wisconsin DPI.

TParticipants will meet with Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction leadership for an in-depth conversation on the state of education policy and funding in Wisconsin. This discussion will build on the morning's legislative conversations, offering a state agency perspective on how Wisconsin's school choice programs are administered, funded, and evaluated, and how federal policy and funding streams intersect with state priorities. DPI leaders will speak to the opportunities and challenges of overseeing a diverse education ecosystem that includes public, charter, and private choice programs, providing congressional staff with a comprehensive view of how state-level implementation shapes the policy landscape that federal legislation must ultimately account for.

Jill Underly, State Superintendent, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (invited)
Tom McCarthy, Deputy State Superintendent, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

3:45 - 4:00 PM **Travel back to Hotel**

Embassy Suites By Hilton Madison Downtown
231 S. Pinckney Street, Madison, Wisconsin, 53709

4:00 - 5:00 PM **Discussion with State Education Organizations**

Embassy Suites By Hilton Madison Downtown

Participants will hear from leaders of Wisconsin's foremost school choice advocacy and membership organizations, offering a perspective that complements the governmental voices heard earlier in the day. Katie Scott of the Wisconsin Council of Religious & Independent Schools (WCRIS), Jim Bender of the Wisconsin Independent Charter School Association, and Andrew Neuman of School Choice Wisconsin will speak to how their respective sectors — religious and independent schools, charter schools, and the broader choice movement — experience and engage with Wisconsin's policy and funding landscape. This conversation will surface the priorities, challenges, and federal policy considerations most pressing to the organizations actively shaping and supporting school choice in Wisconsin, rounding out the day's multidimensional look at the state's education ecosystem.

Katie Scott, Executive Director, Wisconsin Council of Religious & Independent Schools (WCRIS)
Jim Bender, Executive Director, Wisconsin Independent Charter School Association
Andrew Neuman, Board Member, School Choice Wisconsin

5:00 – 6:15 PM **Break**

6:15 – 6:30 PM **Walk to Reception & Dinner**

Location: Graze Restaurant 1 S Pinckney St, Madison, WI 53703

6:30 – 8:00 PM **Working Reception & Dinner with Faculty, Local Education Leaders**

Location: Graze Restaurant 1 S Pinckney St, Madison, WI 53703

The day's conversations continue over a working reception and dinner, bringing together congressional staff and the educators, policymakers, and organizational leaders from across the day's sessions. This informal setting offers a valuable opportunity for staff to step outside the structured dialogue, deepen relationships with speakers, and follow up on the threads and questions that emerged throughout the day. Aspen facilitators will help animate the conversation, drawing connections across the diverse perspectives heard — from the State Capitol to the Department of Public Instruction to Wisconsin's leading school choice organizations — and helping participants synthesize their learning as the Madison portion of the visit draws to a close.

Thursday, April 9, 2025

7:30 – 9:00 AM **Breakfast**

Embassy Suites By Hilton Madison Downtown

231 S. Pinckney Street, Madison, Wisconsin, 53709

9:00 – 9:15 AM **Travel to Lighthouse Christian School**

Location: 6402 Schroeder Rd, Madison, WI 53714

9:15 – 11:00 AM **School Visit: Lighthouse Christian School**

9:15 - 9:45: School Tour

Participants will tour Lighthouse Christian School, a private faith-based school serving students in grades PreK–5. As the first and only private school in Dane County participating in Wisconsin's Parental Choice Program, Lighthouse offers a compelling window into how the state's voucher program operates in practice — expanding access to bilingual, multicultural education for low-income and minority families who might not otherwise have access to a private school option.

9:45 – 11:00: Roundtable discussion with Principal and leadership team

Following the tour, participants will hear from school leadership to have a conversation on the school's experience participating in Wisconsin's Parental Choice Program. The discussion will explore how voucher funding has shaped the school's growth, its model of bilingual and faith-based instruction, and what school choice means for the diverse Madison families Lighthouse serves — offering congressional staff a firsthand perspective on how state choice programs reach underserved communities.

Rev.Tia Sierra, Principal and Co-Pastor of Lighthouse Christian School

11:00 – 11:30 AM **Travel to Madison Public Schools**

Madison Public School are confirming the location 3/30/26

11:30 – 1:30 PM **Madison Public Schools Meeting**

11:30 - 12:15: School Tour
Participants will have the opportunity to walk through an example of Madison Public Schools with school staff, getting an on-the-ground look at the learning environment, facilities, and programming that define the Madison Public Schools experience. This tour offers a firsthand glimpse into how the district is translating its broader vision into everyday practice — and sets the context for the conversation to follow.

12:15 – 1:30: Roundtable discussion

This roundtable brings participants into a candid conversation with Madison Public Schools leaders about the district's evolving landscape. Topics will include the local political dynamics shaping charter school policy in Madison, recent trends in enrollment growth, and the district's "Building for the Future" plan — a forward-looking framework for how the

district is investing in its schools, students, and communities. Participants are encouraged to come with questions and engage directly with the leaders navigating these challenges and opportunities in real time.

Dr. Joe Gothard, Superintendent

1:30 - 2:00 PM **Boxed Lunch & Travel to Madison Airport**

4:00 PM **Depart Madison, Wisconsin**

MSN to DCA: American (4:12 PM - 7:29 PM)

7:29 PM **Land in DC**