

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBER SCHOOL BOARDS

The Policy and Resolutions Committee received seventeen (17) resolution proposals from member boards by the Sept. 15, 2024, deadline as recommendations for the 2025 Delegate Assembly.

The Committee deliberated at length before deciding to approve and submit twelve (12) resolutions for consideration to the Delegate Assembly, including one (1) resolution stemming from the committee itself. That resolution is not included in this packet, since it did not come from a member board.

In several cases, the committee modified proposed resolutions to advance them in a different form. Additionally, the committee in several instances worked the proposed resolutions language and/or intent into a current resolution to not create contradictions or redundancies in the resolution booklet.

The committee turned down six (6) submitted resolutions. The committee's rationale for turning down a member board resolution is briefly explained below.

According to the WASB bylaws, the member board resolutions turned down by the committee may still be brought up for action from the Delegate Assembly floor by a two-thirds favorable vote. **We urge you to review all resolutions as submitted, because member boards may bring these resolutions to the Delegate Assembly floor even if they were not advanced by the committee.** Furthermore, amendments can be offered to revise the resolutions put forward by the committee with modifications to their original form as submitted by the school board.

Member Board Resolutions Submitted by Sept. 15:
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Elmbrook: Teacher Pipeline (p. 1)

- The committee reworked the intent of the proposal into existing WASB resolution 4.061 (a) *Teacher Shortages and Alternative Licensure Pathways*. These changes are reflected in ***Resolution 25-02: Pathway to Licensure for Paraprofessionals***.

Neenah Joint: Focus on Staff Mental Health for Improved Retention Rates (p. 2)

- The committee advanced this proposal as ***Resolution 25-07: Staff Mental Health***.

Neenah Joint: Consistent Standards for Wisconsin Public, Private, and Charter Schools, Districts, and Local Education Agencies (p. 4)

- The committee reworked the intent of the proposal into existing WASB resolution 2.70 *Private School Aid/Voucher Funding*. These changes are reflected in ***Resolution 25-05: Consistent Standards Across All Wisconsin Schools***.

Neenah Joint: Parity of State Aid Equalization Formula to Reduce Funding Gap (p. 6)

- The committee turned down this proposal, noting that intent of the proposal was already covered under existing WASB resolutions such as: 2.03 Equity and Fairness, 2.06 (d) School Funding Formula, 2.44 Narrowing Disparities in Allowable Revenue Under the Revenue Limits, and 2.45 Low-Revenue Ceiling and Secondary Cost Ceiling Alignment.

Neenah Joint: Public-Private Partnerships and Expanded Use of Title I Funding for Early Childhood Education, Public 3K and Full Day 4K (p. 8)

- The committee approved this resolution in a modified version. It is reflected in *Resolution 25-06: Early Childhood Education Funding and Public-Private Partnerships*.

Stoughton Area: Amend Existing Resolution 3.83 Truancy (p. 10)

- The committee approved this resolution in a modified version. It is reflected in *Resolution 25-10: Truancy*.

Stoughton Area: Amend Existing Resolution 3.04 Achievement Gap (p. 11)

- The committee turned down this proposed resolution, noting that the proposal did not sufficiently change the intent or language of the resolution to warrant consideration. The committee stated that WASB lobbyists could achieve the intent of the proposal without any changes.

Stoughton Area: Amend Existing Resolution 3.05 Educational Objectives (p. 12)

- The committee approved this resolution in a modified version. It is reflected in *Resolution 25-09: Educational Objectives*.

Stoughton Area: Amend Existing Resolution 5.11 Education Cabinet Position (p. 13)

- The committee turned down this proposed resolution, noting that the proposal did not sufficiently change the intent or language of the resolution to warrant consideration. The committee stated that WASB lobbyists could achieve the intent of the proposal without any changes.

Sun Prairie Area: Amend Existing Resolution 6.18 Meal Shaming (p. 14)

- The committee advanced this proposal as *Resolution 25-11: Funding for School Meal Debt*

Sun Prairie Area: Amend Existing Resolution 3.16 (b) Student Assessment (p. 15)

- The committee turned down this proposed resolution, noting that the intent of the proposal was already covered by existing WASB resolution 3.10 (d)(3) *Student Assessment*.

Beloit: Take Legislative Action on the Blue Ribbon Commission Recommendations (p. 16)

- The committee approved this resolution in a modified version. It is reflected in *Resolution 25-01: Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding*.

New London: Save Women's Sports (p. 19)

- The committee turned down this proposed resolution. Committee members noted that the proposed resolution may conflict with current WASB resolution 3.98 *WIAA Autonomy* and could open the door to further external attempts by the Legislature to regulate the internal affairs of the WIAA on other topics. Other committee members did not believe that the WASB was the proper forum for these discussions, considering the WIAA has a medical advisory committee to inform their policies, and all member schools can vote to approve, delete, or amend the WIAA's internal eligibility policies if the WIAA's membership believes a change in WIAA policy is needed.

New London: Revise School Accountability Practices in Reference to District and School Report Cards (p. 20)

- The committee approved this resolution in a modified version. It is reflected in *Resolution 25-08: Accountability and School Report Card Standards*.

Shullsburg: One-Cent Sales Tax (p. 22)

- The committee turned down this proposed resolution, noting that it restates existing WASB Resolution 2.055—One-Cent Sales Tax for School Infrastructure, Technology and Tax Relief.

(Because WASB resolutions, once adopted, remain in force until they are either repealed or amended, the committee saw no need for the Delegate Assembly to take up language identical to the existing resolution.)

Kettle Moraine: Decoupling State Aid Reductions (p. 24)

- The committee approved this resolution in a modified version. It is reflected in *Resolution 25-04: Decoupling Public and Private School Funding*.

Milwaukee Public Schools: EL Literacy Assessments (p. 25)

- The committee advanced this proposal as *Resolution 25-03: Early Literacy Assessment for English Learners*.



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date:

Subject of Resolution:

Submitted by the School Board of:

RESOLUTION:

RATIONALE:

Checking the box (at left) confirms that this submitted resolution was duly approved by the School Board.

Checking the box (at left) and typing in the name of the board president (below) confirms that the board president signed this resolution.

Board President:

Date of Approved Resolution:



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date: 2024-09-04 07:19:41 -0600

Subject of Resolution: Mental Health Advocacy and Staff Retention Proposal for the 2024 Delegate Assembly: Focus on Staff Mental Health for Improved Retention Rates

Submitted by the School Board of: Neenah Joint School District

RESOLUTION: Resolution: The WASB supports legislation to fund mental health initiatives for district staff throughout the state, in order to help improve staff mental health and increase retention rates.

RATIONALE: Rationale: Many school staff members experience significant stress due to a number of unique factors of working in a school district. School staff are asked to support students' social, emotional, behavioral, physical and academic needs in concert with the cooperation of families, the community, and an elected school board. Despite these significant challenges, school districts in Wisconsin consistently produce some of the most successful students in the country as measured by academic and other quality of life measures. This is due in no small part to the dedication, talents, and perseverance of all school personnel. However, in some cases, school staff members find themselves feeling overwhelmed, exhausted, underappreciated, or may even be experiencing burnout. Teachers are the backbone of a school district and their retention is crucial to the health and well-being of children. According to a 2024 report from the Wisconsin DPI, 39.4% of new teachers leave the profession or state within six years, and only 68% of those who complete an education preparation program end up teaching in a Wisconsin public school. Some possible explanations for an increase in teacher turnover include: 1) declining compensation; 2) teachers working with low-income students that bring to school unique challenges; 3) low unemployment rates may lead to high demand in other professions; and 4) the pandemic contributed to higher stress levels for teachers. (New DPI Report shows Wisconsin's Education Workforce is in Crisis, April 11, 2024). There is evidence that improving staff mental health positively impacts student outcomes. For example, a study in American Educational Research Journal found that teacher well-being is closely linked to student achievement and classroom environment (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Effective Interventions and Support Strategies Professional Development Mental Health Resources Workload Management Supportive Leadership Collaborative Culture Flexible Work Arrangements Self-Care Initiatives

RATIONALE,
cont'd.

Key Points

Address Stressors: Identify and address the primary stressors affecting school staff.

Invest in Resources: Provide mental health resources and support in the school setting and through community and EAP resources.

Promote Positive Culture: Foster a supportive and collaborative work environment with the help of a wellness coordinator and other mental health experts who work with the District.

Encourage Self-Care: Implement initiatives that promote work-life balance and self-care. Support these initiatives at the administrative levels by allowing time to do one's work while also being able to take time for self-care.

Currently many districts have received grants from a variety of sources; however, many of these opportunities are competitive in nature and additional funding is needed to appropriately address the widespread need. The Neenah Joint School District supports legislation to create a Mental Health Fund, directly for staff members, who are struggling with mental health issues in order to address the following needs:

Contracted mental health coach (specifically for staff)
Mental health days/trainings
Peer-to-peer mental health support

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Board President:

Date of Approved Resolution:



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date:

Subject of Resolution:

Submitted by the School Board of:

RESOLUTION:

RATIONALE:

Checking the box (at left) confirms that this submitted resolution was duly approved by the School Board.

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Board President:

Brian Epley

Date of Approved Resolution:

9/3/2024



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date: 2024-09-04 07:21:47 -0600

Subject of Resolution: Parity of State Aid Equalization Formula to Reduce Funding Gap

Submitted by the School Board of: Neenah Joint School District

RESOLUTION:

Resolution: The WASB supports positive education funding policy change that addresses the disparity and gap between per pupil revenue limit/aid amounts in low spending districts, the state average, and voucher aids for (private) schools in Wisconsin. This can include but not be limited to; reconfiguration of base per pupil revenue limit/aid amounts for all districts based on the actual cost of service; holding equalization aid/revenue limits constant for higher spending districts (with low SES and other identified qualifiers); determining equitable policy to increase aid amounts in determined low spending districts to be commensurate with state averages and the average of high spending districts and voucher supports, whichever is greater; and incrementally increasing all low spending district funding to decrease the gap by raising revenue limit caps first, and adding categorical aid after/in addition to.

RATIONALE:

Rationale: WASB cares about the best possible educational outcomes for all children in Wisconsin. Recognition of this funding disparity has led to initial work by the legislature to achieve parity, however, the funding gap still exists with districts that were locked into low spending per pupil aid amounts.

Each year all districts receive the same percentage increase. During the 2023-25 biennial budget categorical aid was used to reach low spending revenue limits rather than added after continuing the widening of the gap. Additionally, 2023 voucher expansion instituted a higher per pupil state funding aid amount for private school students than public school districts continuing the disparity.

Many Wisconsin communities and school districts are seeing an increase in student economic disadvantage as measured by participation/eligibility for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) free and reduced price lunch (FRPL) requiring additional resources for student support for successful student outcomes and concentrating the strain on low spending districts.

Rising special education costs and reimbursement rates of only 28.2 percent require public school districts to use on average ten percent of general fund budget amounts to cover the cost of service further decreasing the pool of funds in low spending districts to be used for all students. The high cost special education aid (HCSE) reimbursement rate of only 24.23 percent puts districts at a significant disadvantage for servicing students with the most significant needs. Additional challenges such as underfunded (Act 20) and unfunded mandates, open enrollment not receiving the same reimbursement, differences in the starting line structure, add to the disparity.

RATIONALE, cont'd.

Finally, the Wisconsin Constitution provides for a free and uniform education for all Wisconsin students with equal protection under the law. District per pupil aid was frozen at existing operational levels when the current Wisconsin public school funding formula revenue limits were finalized by Wisconsin Act 16 for the 1993-94 school year. Public school districts in Wisconsin had a wide range in per pupil aid amounts at the time of the funding formula equalization in 1993 for reasons of local community property value/wealth as the basis for the prior funding, as well as the fiscal responsibility of the district and cost of service at the time. Consequently, there continues to exist a wide disparity in per pupil aid amounts between low spending districts, the state average, and high spending districts.

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Board President:

Brian Epley

Date of Approved Resolution:

9/3/2024



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date: 2024-09-04 07:22:43 -0600

Subject of Resolution: Public-Private Partnerships and Expanded Use of Title I Funding for Early Childhood Education, Public 3K and Full Day 4K

Submitted by the School Board of: Neenah Joint School District

RESOLUTION:

Resolution: WASB supports a pilot program for fully funded public school 3K and full day 4K for all Wisconsin children including those who are at risk of not being prepared for kindergarten (5K); socioeconomically disadvantaged, participants in social support programs through direct certification as identified through; early screenings, direct certification, Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), FoodShare/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), HeadStart, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL) eligibility, BadgerCare/Medicaid, foster children, homeless families, Women, Infants and Children (WIC), communities/blocks of poverty as identified geographically by the US Census tract data, earned income and child tax credit recipients, and incarcerated primary caregivers.

WASB also supports collaborative partnerships between state supported Wisconsin public school districts and federally funded HeadStart, county social support services, private childcare providers, the NSLP/Title I, and Wisconsin institutions of higher learning, including technical colleges, that provide programming, certifications, and educator training for high quality early childhood education (ECE) and early learning. WASB further supports district discretionary use of expanded Title I dollars to earlier grade levels by districts meeting the benchmarks for NSLP direct and categorical participation, and 3K and 4K student households meeting income eligibility for NSLP.

RATIONALE:

Rationale: Great work is being done in Wisconsin school districts, early learning centers, and childcare providers to meet the needs of Wisconsin students and families. However, there exist challenges with the cost and availability of high quality childcare and early childhood education for many families. Additionally, many areas in Wisconsin are experiencing an increase in poverty and economic disadvantage, and childcare deserts exist in many areas.

Early interventions such as high quality early childhood education (ECE) and childcare, including early literacy and social skills development, that counteract poverty and student economic disadvantage have positive, lasting effects, and a high return on public investment, especially when applied early in a child’s education. According to recent research, “strategies that bring adequate school funding for wraparound supports—health, mental health, and social services—and extended learning to such schools through community school models can counteract these challenges and support higher achievement and attainment for students” (Cookson 2020).

RATIONALE, cont'd.

Additionally, these early interventions help to address a rise in social, emotional, and behavioral needs resulting from the covid pandemic. "Public preschool programs—state-funded and -run early childhood education programs serving children ages 3 and 4—are an essential part of child care supply" (CAP 2023). There currently exists a shortage of early childhood education for three and four year olds and childcare opportunities in Wisconsin, with approximately 58 percent of families living in childcare deserts (CAP 2018). High quality early education is expensive for parents who wish to be in the workforce, and there exists a shortage of certified ECE teachers due to low comparative wages and high cost of providing early childhood education and childcare.

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Board President:

Date of Approved Resolution:



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date:

Subject of Resolution:

Submitted by the School Board of:

RESOLUTION:

RATIONALE:

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Board President:

Date of Approved Resolution:



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

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Board President:

Date of Approved Resolution:



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

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Subject of Resolution:

Submitted by the School Board of:

RESOLUTION:

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Board President:

Date of Approved Resolution:



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date:

Subject of Resolution:

Submitted by the School Board of:

RESOLUTION:

RATIONALE:

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Board President:

Date of Approved Resolution:



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date: 2024-09-11 15:25:56 -0600

Subject of Resolution: Take Legislative Action on the Blue Ribbon Commission Recommendations

Submitted by the School Board of: School District of Beloit

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS, the School District of Beloit serves students with special needs, students who are multilingual, and students who are low-income, and does not receive additional or sufficient funding from the state to meet the increased needs of these categories of pupils in order for them to receive a sound, basic education, and thereby must supplement that gap from our own ever-diminishing General Fund;

WHEREAS, the School District of Beloit, like many other districts in Wisconsin and across the United States, is dealing with declining enrollment, which strains the ability of the district to fund a sound education for all;

WHEREAS, the pass rates for districts going to Operational Referendums are declining, the system of closing funding gaps on the backs of voting property taxpayers is proving to be insufficient to adequately fund districts to make their budgets stretch to meet the needs of every student to provide each one a sound education for all;

WHEREAS, in the 2000 State Supreme Court Opinion in the case of Vincent v. Voight, it was stated that: An equal opportunity for a sound, basic education acknowledges that students and districts are not fungible and takes into account district with disproportionate numbers of disabled students, economically disadvantaged students, and students with limited English language skills. So long as the legislature is providing sufficient resources so that school districts offer students the equal opportunity for a sound, basic education as required by the constitution, the state school finance system will pass constitutional muster;

WHEREAS, the current legislative definitions for a sound, basic education are defined in Wis. Stat. s.s. 118.30(1g)(a) and 121.02(L)(1997-98) as the opportunity for students to be proficient in mathematics, science, reading and writing, geography, and history, and for them to receive instruction in the arts and music, vocational training, social sciences, health, physical education and foreign language, in accordance with their age and aptitude;

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin Legislature's Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding was established in 2019 by Representative Vos and Senator Fitzgerald to examine how tax dollars are distributed to schools and to make recommendations to better meet the needs of students across the state;

RESOLUTION,
cont'd.

WHEREAS, the Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding Report made recommendations in the following categories:

- Per Pupil Adjustment and Per Pupil Aid
- Declining Enrollment
- Negative Tertiary Aid
- Timing of School Aids Distribution
- School Levy Tax Credit Funding
- Revenue Limit Adjustments
- Per Pupil Adjustment Inflation Indexing
- Special Education Categorical Aid
- Bilingual-Bicultural Aid
- Aid for Low-Income Pupils
- High-Cost Transportation Aid
- Sparsity Aid
- Gifted and Talented Pupils
- Mental Health
- School District Consolidation
- Early Childhood
- Incentives for Shared Services
- Summer Learning Loss
- Educator Workforce Shortage
- Two-Thirds Funding

WHEREAS, the Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding identified deficiencies in the current way in which the legislature funds public schools, which potentially interferes with the ability for districts to provide an equal opportunity for a sound, basic education for all due to ineffective funding;

WHEREAS, it is the opinion of the Wisconsin State Supreme Court that the legislature has a Constitutional obligation to provide sufficient resources for district to provide an equal opportunity for a sound, basic education for all;

WHEREAS, the Legislature acting upon these recommendations would significantly increase resources from the Legislature to support the Constitutional right for an equal opportunity for a sound, basic education for all;

RATIONALE:

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the School District of Beloit Board of Education fully endorses the recommendations of the 2019 Blue Ribbon Commission Report and calls upon the Legislature to revise the school funding system in order to enact all twenty of the recommendations in order to ensure that the School District of Beloit along with all other public school district in Wisconsin are sufficiently resourced by the State Legislature to provide an equal opportunity for every pupil to have a sound basic Education.



Checking the box (at left) confirms that this submitted resolution was duly approved by the School Board.



Checking the box (at left) and typing in the name of the board president (below) confirms that the board president signed this resolution.

Board President:

Date of Approved Resolution:



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date:

Subject of Resolution:

Submitted by the School Board of:

RESOLUTION:

Resolution to Protect Title IX in K-12 Public Education
And Save Women’s Sports

Whereas the participation of biological males in female teams in k-12 education has caused a large perception across the country of unfairness in female sports competition;

Whereas Title IX passed in 1972 by a large majority, and signed into law, was enacted to create more equality of opportunity for girls and women;

Whereas the participation of biological males in female sports, identifying as females, has caused many female athletes to be pushed out of higher placements for awards and qualifications;

Whereas many states in the United States of America have enacted legislation to protect Women’s Sports by barring biological males from playing on all-female teams;

Be it resolved that the Wisconsin Association of School Boards supports legislation for our state government to prevent biological males from competing in all-female sports.

RATIONALE:

At least 24 states have passed legislation that bans biological males from competing on all-female sports teams in k-12 public education. Wisconsin has not yet passed such legislation. Title IX was passed by congress and signed into law in 1972, and has resulted in many more opportunities for girls and women in education. Wisconsin needs to join these other states to keep things fair for women and girls.

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Board President:

Date of Approved Resolution:



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date:

Subject of Resolution:

Submitted by the School Board of:

RESOLUTION:

Resolution to Revise School Accountability Practices
 In Reference To District and School Report Cards

Whereas, current school accountability practices have become complex, obscuring clear assessments of student achievement;

Whereas, there is a need to streamline the overall scoring system;

Whereas, define grade bands across all districts to enhance transparency and comparability regardless of school building configuration;

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction revises the current school accountability practices to:

1. Report overall score grounded in student achievement.
2. Report other factors and metrics (such as attendance, graduation rates, etc.) but exclude these from directly influencing the overall score.
3. Define grade bands that ensure consistency and fairness across all districts (such as K-5, 6 8, 9-12).
4. Eliminate calculated weighted average and report out raw results.

Be It Further Resolved that these revisions be implemented in a timely manner to enhance transparency, clarity, and effectiveness in assessing school performance across Wisconsin.

RATIONALE:

The New London Board of Education supports redefining the reporting model for the Department of Public Instruction District and school report cards. This redefinition aims to establish consistent scoring metrics across grade bands rather than individual schools, and be simplified and grounded in universal student achievement factors for all school districts.

Checking the box (at left) confirms that this submitted resolution was duly approved by the School Board.

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Board President:

Date of Approved Resolution:



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date:

Subject of Resolution:

Submitted by the School Board of:

RESOLUTION:

Whereas:

The Shullsburg School Board supports the implementation of a new statewide one-cent (one percent) sales tax to help public school districts build, maintain, and upgrade facilities, upgrade district technology infrastructure, software, and teacher training related to technology and help lower property taxes for Wisconsin taxpayers. District electors would need to approve a one-time revenue purpose statement before these sales tax funds could be expended and funding from the sales tax could not be spent on supplies, hiring additional staff or employee salaries and benefits. This one-cent sales tax is intended to provide equitable, designated funding for all public schools and all students, distributed on a per-student basis, as a new, ongoing revenue stream for the stated purposes and should not be used by the legislature to replace existing state revenues or for other purposes. This tax should remain in place for a long enough period of time to enable schools to borrow (issue bonds) against this revenue stream.

RATIONALE:

Rationale:

Existing WASB resolutions support “new state revenues, including sales and income taxes, and proposals to broaden the base of state tax programs in order to provide state revenues to school districts consistent with WASB policies” as well as, “developing a well-balanced tax system that lowers Wisconsin’s heavy reliance on ... property taxes while properly funding existing mandates.”

This resolution endorses a specific approach to augment those general statements. Supporters of this resolution argue that providing revenue to schools through a sales tax increase has the benefits of reducing the dependency on the property tax and including out-of-state visitors in sharing in the cost through sales tax collections attributable to tourism. Other states, including the neighboring states of Iowa and Illinois, have implemented one-cent sales tax for schools programs. Supporters argue local communities in those states are using the funding based on their unique facility/infrastructure needs and that it allows school boards in those states to create more reliable long-term plans and budgets. Local school boards oversee facility planning, with local community approval of the broad purposes and uses of the funding stream sought by this resolution.

Checking the box (at left) confirms that this submitted resolution was duly approved by the School Board.

Checking the box (at left) and typing in the name of the board president (below) confirms that the board president signed this resolution.

Board President:

Casey Fennell

Date of Approved Resolution:

09/11/2024



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date:

Subject of Resolution:

Submitted by the School Board of:

RESOLUTION:

RATIONALE:

Checking the box (at left) confirms that this submitted resolution was duly approved by the School Board.

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Board President:

Date of Approved Resolution:



2025 WASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

Date: 2024-09-12

Subject of Resolution: ELL Literacy Programs

Submitted by the School Board of: Milwaukee Public Schools

RESOLUTION: The WASB supports that early literacy assessments, screeners, and diagnostics required in state law be provided in an English Learner (EL) student’s home language in accordance with current best practices in assessment and instruction for bilingual program students. EL students tested in English should not be labeled “at risk” without verification that the student also fails an early literacy test in their home language.

RATIONALE: Wisconsin currently serves nearly 55,000 English Learners (ELs), with over 140 identified languages spoken by Wisconsin students, and with approximately 9,000 ELs concentrated in Milwaukee alone. Wisconsin State Statutes 115.96 (4)(b) states that an established bilingual-bicultural educational program should provide, “through the use of the native language of the limited- English proficient pupil, instruction in the subjects necessary to permit the pupil to progress effectively through the educational system,” Wisconsin State Statutes 118.017 states that, “All instruction shall be in the English language, except, in part, those programs established under subchapter VII of Ch. 115, where instruction shall be in the English language and in the non-English language of the bilingual- bicultural education program,” and; The current practice of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to test all ELs in English, regardless of their time learning the English language, violates federal law under the Supreme Court decision Lau v. Nichols (1973), which addresses equity in language instruction and by extension, assessment. Lau further holds that once a student is identified as an EL under the Lau Remedies, they cannot be treated as other English-dominant students. By testing students in English before they have learned English, 2023 Wisconsin Act 20 goes against federal Lau compliance mandates, which require that elementary schools provide students with limited English proficiency special English-as-a-second-language instruction as well as academic subject-matter instruction through the student’s strongest language until the student achieves proficiency in English sufficient to learn effectively in a monolingual English classroom.

RATIONALE, cont'd.

Reading readiness screeners given only in English are not a valid assessment of students who speak languages other than English because these tests measure the student's level of English language acquisition instead of their level of literacy development and ignore the fact that an EL might be at grade level in their home language.

The Wisconsin Association for Bilingual Education (WIABE) the largest organization in the state of Wisconsin that serves educators of emerging bilingual and multilingual students is leading advocacy efforts that bring to light the unjust nature of this law which disproportionately impacts English Learners and violates their right to learn in two languages.

The current implementation of 2023 Wisconsin Act 20 is in direct opposition to the successful bilingual/dual language program models of instruction in Wisconsin, which support students acquiring English language proficiency while maintaining their home language and which is supported by research evidence that skills developed in the first language, will automatically transfer to the second language (Cummins, Collier & Thomas, Escamilla, Gottlieb, Castro, Beeman & Urow).

The current implementation of 2023 Wisconsin Act 20 will adversely impact bilingual teachers who will feel compelled to refrain from using the native language to develop academic skills and who may shift to English-only instruction.

2023 Wisconsin Act 20 may pressure school districts to move away from following the fidelity of the bilingual/dual language programs to comply with English testing mandates, thereby jeopardizing the quality of bilingual/dual language programs in Wisconsin. 2023 Wisconsin Act 20 disregards the unique strengths and needs of ELs. English-only standardized tests, and screeners, and diagnostics are not valid for ELs.

Checking the box (at left) confirms that this submitted resolution was duly approved by the School Board.

Checking the box (at left) and typing in the name of the board president (below) confirms that the board president signed this resolution.

Board President:

Marva Herndon

Date of Approved Resolution:

9/12/24