

Rep. Swearingen: Applauds Governor's Budget that Prioritizes Rural Schools

Posted on Thursday, Feb 9, 2017

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Madison, WI – Representative Rob Swearingen (R-Rhineland) is pleased with the recommendations brought forward by Governor Walker in his biennial budget address before a joint session of the Legislature.

“It’s encouraging to see the Governor’s commitment to rural schools and the unique challenges that they face on a daily basis,” stated Rep. Swearingen. “A number of the provisions that are included in the Governor’s budget proposal, such as increased transportation aid and broadband investment, were major points of discussion during the Rural School’s Task Force that I chaired a few years ago. It’s exciting to see those past discussions turn into realities.”

The Governor’s rural education plan, Every Student Matters, will provide greater support for Wisconsin’s rural schools through an increase per-pupil funding, a record increase in transportation and sparsity aid, school district flexibilities, and additional investments in broadband, technology and Fab Labs.

“I am also pleased to hear that the Governor has proposed a \$509.2 million increase in per-pupil state aid that will be distributed outside of the general school funding formula. This represents a \$200 per-pupil increase in 2017-2018 and \$204 increase in 2018-19 that will be guaranteed to each student in my district,” stated Rep. Swearingen.

The Governor included the following in his Every Student Matters plan:

- \$509.2 million increase in per-pupil state aid routed outside of the traditional

funding formula

- 100% reimbursement for rural school districts in the High-Cost Transportation Aid program
- Increase Sparsity Aid by \$20 million
- Increase broadband expansion grant program by roughly \$13 million
- Increase funding for TEACH program by \$22.5 million
- Increase opportunity to recruit and retain teachers
- Increase flexibility through school district shared services
- Allocates \$1 million over the two year budget for the Fab Lab grant program

“I will continue to fight for my rural schools and would like to thank Governor Walker for dedicating a portion of his budget to helping rural education, which in turn will lead to a stronger economy and more job growth in the Northwoods,” concluded Rep. Swearingen.