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Rep. Thiesfeldt: Supports Gov. Walker's rejection of ESSA plan

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Madison, WI – Today, Rep. Jeremy Thiesfeldt (R-52 Fond du Lac) agreed with Gov. Walker's decision to decline the opportunity to place his signature on State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Evers' proposed submission of Wisconsin's plan for the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The ESSA plan replaces the restrictive No Child Left Behind Act and allows for much more state control and innovative solutions for improving Wisconsin schools.

Thiesfeldt stated, "The ESSA plan as submitted is largely a status quo document. The Governor is correct to be disappointed with the plan. The state is missing an opportunity to act boldly and lead the nation in school reform. During my committee meetings on ESSA, I implored the Department of Public Instruction to act boldly within the parameters of the law, and even offered the idea of crafting a plan to increase parental engagement—an idea universally accepted as the #1 factor in student success. The idea and bold initiatives were summarily dismissed by the department in favor of maintaining the status quo."

Rep. Thiesfeldt advocated for Assembly Bill 233 which would have allowed the legislature to have a larger, albeit limited official role in the plan. This bill has passed the State Assembly and at this time leaves the complete power of creating and submitting the plan to Tony Evers.

"I would encourage State Superintendent Evers to reconsider his plan, and include bold innovation worthy of Wisconsin's families. The status quo has not given us the results our families in Wisconsin deserve," Thiesfeldt concluded.