

Assembly signs off on bill to create state merit scholarship program

Posted on Thursday, Feb 15, 2018

A bill that would provide merit scholarships to students at UW schools cleared the Assembly shortly after the chamber moved back into regular session.

The bill, by Rep. Tyler August, R-Lake Geneva, and Sen. Steve Nass, R-Whitewater, would require the UW Board of Regents to distribute \$5,000 scholarships to Wisconsin high school graduates. It passed on a [65-32 vote](#).

The merit scholarship program would not require any GPR spending, instead getting its funding from interest earnings from the \$28 million Normal School Fund, which is administered by the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands. The number of scholarships awarded will depend on interest accrued by that fund, but is estimated to be between 125 and 300, according to the state treasurer. August said commissioners do not oppose the plan.

A previous version of the legislation that was circulated for co-sponsors in May would have funded the scholarships by having the Department of Natural Resources borrow money to buy land from the BCPL. The state would have then invested the money from the land sale and used those earnings to pay for the scholarships.

>> 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](#).

The bill now heads to the Senate.