

Sen. Marklein: Continues fight for rural schools with new legislation

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Renewed effort to increase sparsity aid funding now paired with relief for low-spending school districts

MADISON – State Senator Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green), Representative John Nygren (R-Marinette) and Governor Scott Walker have announced a renewed effort to increase sparsity aid funding for rural schools and to increase the revenue limit ceiling for low spending school districts. Senate Bill (SB) 690 was introduced on January 10, 2018 with strong support in both houses of the legislature.

SB 690 will increase sparsity aid from \$300 to \$400 per pupil for the 2018-19 school year, an estimated \$6 million boost for rural schools. In addition, this proposal also increases the low revenue ceiling from \$9,100 to \$9,400 for the 2018-19 school year, with the low revenue ceiling rising by \$100 per year thereafter up to \$9,800 by the 2022-23 school year.

“Combining an increase to sparsity aid with increasing the low revenue ceiling will provide needed relief for more rural schools and is a result of collaboration among legislators with differing districts,” Marklein said. “Legislators throughout Wisconsin came together to work on this new proposal and I am encouraged by our group effort.

Sen. Marklein has consistently championed increases to the sparsity aid program, as well as increased funding for K-12 public education overall. He spoke out [against making changes to the Governor’s increase for sparsity aid during the budget process](#) and [introduced legislation to restore these changes in October](#). SB 690 has

a similar impact on school districts throughout the state with new benefits for low-spending school districts.

“Sparsity Aid is an important funding program that helps 21 of the 33 school districts in the 17th Senate District with fewer than 745 students and less than 10 pupils per square mile. The change to the low revenue ceiling will impact six school districts in the 17th Senate District as well, including one district that does not qualify for sparsity aid,” Marklein said.

“SB 690 enhances the historic \$11.5 billion investment in K-12 funding in the biennial budget by providing additional support for rural schools,” Marklein said. “I am proud to champion good policy on behalf of the school districts I serve.”