

# Sen. Marklein: Local school leaders join Sen. Howard Marklein in fight for rural schools

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MADISON – Assembly Bill (AB) 835 to increase sparsity aid funding and to provide relief for low-spending school districts received a public hearing by the Assembly Committee on Education today.

More than 15 superintendents and education associations from across the state, including Ron Saari from the Potosi School District and Riverdale District Administrator Bryce Bird testified or registered in favor of the bill.

“I have consistently fought for increases to the sparsity aid program because the rural schools in our communities need our support,” Marklein said. “I was proud to join school district leaders from the 17th Senate District to support this bill. We have great schools that are led by superintendents and district administrators who are fighting for our kids. I am just as committed to get this bill done this spring.”

“We are extremely thankful for the \$200 increase in categorical aid already passed in the budget in addition to the \$100 increase for sparsity aid. They are very important to us” said Saari.

“The additional revenue would help us replace buses that are 20 years old, hire additional staff for high need students and invest in technology” Bird added.

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. AB 835 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 22 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 revenue limit 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.

AB 835 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.

Click the following link to see how Senator Marklein’s proposal would affect your local school district: [AB 835 School District Map](#)