

# Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty: WILL puts Dept. of Public Instruction, Evers on notice for ESSA plan, Dept. of Education approves Ever's state plan

Posted on Wednesday, Jan 17, 2018

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WISCONSIN INSTITUTE  
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## **WILL Puts DPI, Evers on Notice for ESSA Plan Department of Education approves Evers' state plan**

January 17, 2018 - Milwaukee, WI - Yesterday U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos [approved](#) Wisconsin's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan. Secretary DeVos acknowledged that the "plans should not be seen as a ceiling, but as a foundation upon which states can improve education for students."

ESSA has been a [missed opportunity for Wisconsin](#), a state struggling with low-performing public schools and the widest racial achievement gap in the country. Our state plan fails to maximize the opportunity to change education. Rather, it furthers State Superintendent Tony Evers' status quo policies.

An [independent review of the ESSA state plans](#) by the Collaborative for Student Success and Bellwether Education Partners concluded: "Wisconsin's plan largely continues processes and effort it has been pursuing for the last several years. While that means the state can point to stakeholder buy-in for decisions it is already implementing, Wisconsin could have capitalized on opportunities provided by ESSA to move in new directions." This echoes [criticisms](#) from [Governor Scott Walker](#), who said in a September letter to Evers that the plan "does little to challenge the status quo for the benefit of Wisconsin's students."

The Wisconsin legislature can - and should - take steps to improve the plan.

WILL's Executive Vice President, CJ Szafir, noted, "DPI cannot implement parts of the state plan until they get the appropriate legal authority to do so. This could mean going through the rule-making process and possibly new laws. We will monitor the process and outcomes to ensure the rule of law is being followed with the state plan and failure to do so could result in litigation."