

Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty: Releases policy brief on Act 10 and merit pay

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Despite the media coverage, Act 10 producing “silent successes” in school districts August 21, 2018 - Milwaukee, WI — Today WILL released a [policy brief](#), authored by WILL’s Will Flanders and Lauren Tunney, which looks at the tone of the media coverage of Act 10 over the last seven years and highlights a number of successes stories. Wisconsin public school districts have embraced new ways to pay teachers based upon performance, reforming their management structure to be more accountable to parents and students.

Despite the passage of time, Act 10 - Governor Walker’s historic collective bargaining reform law - remains a subject of intense feeling and interest. And despite enormous savings and innovation in local government, polls since 2012 suggest support for Act 10 has slipped, peaking in 2014 at 52% before falling to 46% in 2018.

This could be due to how the media has covered Act 10 as well as the spin from the law’s opponents. WILL’s latest study, [Silent Successes](#), shows how, over 7 years, the tone of the media coverage has been overwhelmingly negative. In fact, only 2% of stories about Act 10 have been positive.

Yet, positive stories of Act 10 do exist and are happening on a regular basis in the classroom of public schools. Silent Successes examined contracts between Wisconsin school districts and their unions to determine how superintendents are using Act 10 reforms. The report documents how Wisconsin districts have implemented two different systems of merit pay: Merit pay at the discretion of the school board, and merit pay based on performance evaluations. Both systems accomplish the same end— they incentivize the teacher pay system.

These are important stories, even if they never garner big headlines. The public deserves to know how Act 10 is working in their community. In every corner of the Badger State, Act 10 is impacting all public school administrators, teachers, students, and taxpayers.

This is the first of three policy reports authored by WILL in the coming weeks attempting to gain a further understanding of the impact of this historic law.