

# U.S. Rep. Steil: Leads more than 20 colleagues to support students, highlight importance of safely reopening schools

Posted on Friday, Feb 26, 2021

>> **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.](#)**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**—Today, Congressman Bryan Steil (WI-01) [introduced a resolution](#) to support students and highlight the need for schools to safely reopen. Steil was joined by 22 colleagues, including Wisconsin Congressmen Mike Gallagher (WI-08) and Scott Fitzgerald (WI-05).

“The science is clear: students can be safely back in the classroom. The Biden Administration’s goal of reopening 50% of schools for one day of in-person learning per week should not be the standard. We must strive to have every child learning in-person five days a week. For nearly a year, kids have suffered mentally, emotionally, and academically from virtual learning. Further, working parents with young children have been unable to get back to work. Today’s Biden Bailout Bill does not tie funding to reopening schools and only five percent of the money for education will be spent this year. Thank you to my colleagues for joining in this effort to support our nation’s children,” said Steil.

**[Steil’s resolution](#) and list of co-signers are below:**

Expressing the sense of Congress that schools should safely reopen for in-person instruction as soon as possible.

Whereas President Joe Biden has said “I think it’s important to follow the science. Listen to the experts. Do what they tell you.”;

Whereas an article published in the Journal of the American Medical Association maintained that “there has been little evidence that schools have contributed meaningfully to increased community transmission” and noted “the preponderance of available evidence from the fall school semester has been reassuring insofar as the type of rapid spread that was frequently observed in congregate living facilities or high-density worksites has not been reported in education settings in schools.”;

Whereas an article published in the New England Journal of Medicine argued that “[u]ntil [. . .] children physically return to school full time, many will lose out on essential educational, social, and developmental benefits; neither the economy nor the health care system will be able to return to full strength given parents’ caretaking responsibilities; and profound racial and socioeconomic injustices will be further exacerbated. We believe that safely reopening schools full-time for all elementary school children should therefore be a top national priority.”;

Whereas Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has said “[t]here is increasing data to suggest that schools can safely reopen and that safe reopening does not suggest that teachers need to be vaccinated” and “[v]accinations of teachers is not a prerequisite for safely reopening schools.”;

Whereas Dr. Anthony Fauci, the Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, has said “[y]ou don’t want to essentially have nobody in school until all the teachers get vaccinated.”; Whereas Congress has provided over \$75 billion in financial assistance to help schools mitigate the risks of COVID- 19 transmission and return to in-person instruction;

Whereas school closures have been projected to harm Black, Hispanic, and low-income students most acutely, exacerbating achievement gaps by 15 to 20 percent and increasing the likelihood of dropping out of school by 2 to 9 percent;

Whereas school closures have led to a significant drop in student literacy skills;

Whereas school closures have been associated with an increase in mental health challenges for students including a higher risk for suicide; and

Whereas school closures harm childcare-dependent lower income families and working mothers and will likely contribute to earnings gaps and lower employment rates among women: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that school administrators should follow the science and safely reopen schools for in-person instruction as soon as possible, for the benefit of students and their parents.

Bryan Steil

William Timmons

Andy Barr

Kelly Armstrong

Scott Fitzgerald

David Rouzer

Claudia Tenney

Tracey Mann

Barry Loudermilk

Neal Dunn

Ben Cline

Madison Cawthorn

Mike Gallagher

Lance Gooden

Scott Perry

Dan Meuser

Gregory Steube

Brian Babin

David Valadao

Jim Hagedorn

Jefferson Van Drew

Debbie Lesko

Blake Moore