

Underly says state superintendent should remain as elected position

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Department of Public Instruction chief Jill Underly predicted Wisconsin residents wouldn't approve a Republican idea to change the state constitution and make the jobs of schools superintendent, secretary of state and state treasurer positions appointed by the governor, rather than chosen by voters.

"The department being independent has served Wisconsin well for nearly two centuries," Underly said in an interview aired Sunday on "UpFront," produced in partnership with WisPolitics.com.

"It's our job at DPI to administer public education in the state. That's why we're supposed to lead on issues around public education," she said. "The department being independent has served Wisconsin well for nearly two centuries."

Underly also had a message for local districts caught between parents pushing for masks and full Covid mitigation efforts and others demanding their children not wear masks at schools.

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"My message to schools is hang in there. The issue itself has just become way too political. We need to remove politics from it. When we take politics out of it, we take the emotion out of it as well," she said. "We have to take emotion out of some of these mitigation measures and follow the science and do what we need to do to protect kids and staff."

Also on the program, Franklin small businessman Jonathan Wichmann, a Republican candidate for governor, suggested he could beat better known and better-funded candidates by outworking them.

“I put in the work,” Wichmann said. “I’ve been campaigning for 15 months. I was out there leading when Wisconsin had no leadership, right? People were scared and afraid. I don’t believe elections are won simply by money.”

He said the problem in the state and the country is “we have so many career politicians who are really out of touch with the people. And so I am one of the people.”

See more from the program:
<http://www.wisn.com/upfront>