

WILL: Governor Evers vetoes legislation to provide parents with access to classroom materials

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WILL-supported legislation would have required districts to post classroom material online

The News: Governor Tony Evers [vetoed](#) curriculum transparency legislation ([SB 463/ AB 488](#)), Friday, denying parents access to the classroom materials in our public schools. The Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty (WILL) supported the legislation to require all public schools to publicly provide access to the material taught in our public-school classrooms.

The Quotes: WILL Director of Education Policy, Libby Sobic, said, "Governor Evers' veto of the curriculum transparency legislation, authored by Sen. Stroebel and Rep. Behnke, denies parents access to taxpayer-funded classroom materials. By vetoing this important legislation, the Governor is telling parents that their concerns are less important than the status quo in Wisconsin public schools."

Bill Brewer, a parent from Slinger, Wisconsin, said, "Governor Evers chose politics over parents when he vetoed SB 463, legislation that would have required transparency for public school learning materials. When we send our children to school, we entrust their education to our teachers and school districts. But as parents, we also want access to what our kids are learning. Governor Evers and his veto pen has denied every public-school parent a path for easier and more timely access to this information."

Why WILL Supported This Legislation: The pandemic provided parents with a unique peek into the classroom. Many demanded to know more about what their children are learning in public schools. WILL supported this legislation because parents deserve to access curriculum material and information without having to jump through hoops, like submitting open-records requests and paying exorbitant fees.

- Recent WILL [research](#) revealed the difficulty of accessing curriculum material after submitting identical open record requests to nine large Wisconsin school districts.
- WILL requested information from seven teachers who taught classes at two Madison high schools. The district responded and requested at least \$10,000 for the request to be completed.
- The Kenosha School District requested that we pay over \$1,200 for the materials. These costs serve as significant barriers to accessing information and are, unfortunately, permitted under the public records laws.
- This legislation balanced providing transparency to parents while ensuring that the districts don't violate copyright laws and are only required to post classroom materials twice a year.

What's Next? Governor Evers' [veto message](#) said, specifically, "under existing federal law - every school district already must have policies and procedures to make sure parents can request access to instructional materials being taught to their kids." WILL intends to continue to fight for greater access and will use all existing means, including records requests and federal law, to ensure schools are being transparent.

Read More:

- [The next battle in the war for parents' rights in education is a line politicians dare not cross](#), Betsy DeVos, FoxNews.com
- [WILL Testimony](#) in support of SB 463/ AB 488
- [Opening the Schoolhouse Door: Promoting Curriculum Transparency](#), Will Flanders and Jessica Holmberg, May 26, 2021
- [Appendix Featuring Controversial Wisconsin Public School Curriculum Material](#), May 26, 2021
- [Republican proposal would require school districts to post curriculum lists online](#), Cap Times, July 8, 2021