

Weekly Dem radio address: Rep. Pope touts Gov. Evers' \$90 million investment in K-12 schools

Posted on Friday, Sep 2, 2022

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Hi, this is Representative Sony Pope with this week's Democratic radio address.

As summer winds down and a new school year begins, it's easy, and comforting, to return to familiar routines. It's also easy to lose sight of just how important public education is — how central it has been to the success of generations of Americans.

I know it's hard for my grandkids to understand, but when our republic was formed, there wasn't an internet. Instead of TikToks, the framers of our democracy wrote essays, a whole lot of essays. While they disagreed on many things, it's safe to say they all believed that democracy requires a well-educated populace that understands political and social issues in order to prosper.

While some northeastern communities had publicly funded schools in the late 1780s, the idea of free, public education did not begin to take hold on a wider scale until the 1830s. We've come a long way, but challenges remain. Currently, too many schools in our state are struggling to provide a high-quality education for all due to funding and staffing shortages. Educators' efforts are complicated by additional obstacles and circumstances unimaginable to earlier generations.

Republicans can complain about the \$90 million Governor Evers is investing to help our local public schools. But my Democratic colleagues and I are proud to stand with the Governor in support of our values, our kids and our future.