

Rep. Steineke: Joins colleagues in passing reading readiness reform

Posted on Wednesday, Feb 23, 2022

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MADISON - State Representative Jim Steineke (R- Kaukauna) joined his Assembly colleagues today in passing reading readiness reform. The move comes after a recent report showed less than 40 percent of Wisconsin's third through eighth graders were proficient in English Language Arts.

"For nearly a decade, Tony Evers ran the state Department of Public Instruction and yet Wisconsin's test scores remain relatively unchanged," said Rep. Steineke. "Like usual, the Legislature is having to step in and fix the messes caused by liberal Madison bureaucrats."

According to the [2021 Forward Exam](#), only 34 percent of Wisconsin middle schoolers can read proficiently and only 33 percent are proficient in math. This constitutes a seven percent drop in reading scores and nearly a 10 point drop in math scores since 2019. The numbers were even worse for Milwaukee Public Schools, where only seven percent of middle school students can read proficiently and only four percent are proficient in math.

[Assembly Bill 971](#) revamps the state's reading readiness exams. It creates an annual assessment for students ages 4K through second grade and requires parents to be notified if their child is at risk for reading difficulties. The bill would also prevent students from being promoted to fourth grade if they cannot read proficiently at that age.

"A good education sets children up for a lifetime of success," Rep. Steineke concluded. "The fact that less than half of our middle school students cannot adequately read is appalling and addressing this should be something we can all agree on."