

Sen. Darling: Senate approves Empowering Parents Agenda bills

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Madison – Governor Evers will soon have a choice: does he stand with students and parents or unions and bureaucrats? On Tuesday, the Wisconsin State Senate approved six bills that will shake up the status quo in education. One of the main authors of the package, Senator Alberta Darling, says the governor has a chance to prove he is “the education governor.”

“If the governor goes through with his planned vetoes of these reforms, it’s clear he’s okay with failure,” Darling said, “Test scores continue to plummet on his watch and the governor offers no real solutions and rejects a chance to be a part of fixing Milwaukee Public Schools.”

[According to data collected by the MacIver Institute](#)

- Only 4.2% of Milwaukee Public School (MPS) students scored proficient or better in Math on the Forward exams last year (grades 3-8)
- Only 7.3% of MPS students scored proficient or better in English on the Forward exams last year (grades 3-8)
- Only 8.9% of MPS students scored proficient or better in Science on the Forward exams last year (grades 4 and 8)
- Only 7.2% of MPS students scored proficient or better in Social Science on the Forward exams last year (grades 4, 8, and 10)

“There is a crisis in our schools, especially in MPS,” Darling said, “It is heart-wrenching to watch the governor and Democrats blocking reforms while there are MPS schools that are failing our kids. Unfortunately, they are giving up on another generation of children in Milwaukee.”

The Senate approved six bills that are part of the Empowering Parents Agenda.

[Assembly Bill 963](#): Parental Bill of Rights – Establishes several parental rights relating to decisions regarding a child’s religion, medical care, records, and education, and creates a cause of action for the violation of these rights. Allows a

parent to bring a suit if those rights are violated.

[Assembly Bill 965](#): School Accountability Reports – Establishes uniform standards for school accountability reports. Our state’s educational accountability system relies heavily on the state school and district report card. This bill improves the accountability reports to provide a consistent assessment of student success.

[Assembly Bill 966](#): Milwaukee Public School Reform – Establishes a new commission made up of elected officials with a vested interest in the community, including the Mayor of Milwaukee, the Governor, and the State Superintendent by 2024, MPS will be divided into smaller community districts that are more manageable and accountable to parents and their communities. The new community district boundaries will be developed by the commission.

[Assembly Bill 967](#) & [Assembly Bill 968](#) High-Performing Charter Replication and Creation of Statewide Charter Board – Charter schools are public schools that operate with less red tape. This bill will streamline replication for the highest performing charter schools in our state and will increase opportunities for more students and families statewide.

[Assembly Bill 970](#): School Choice Expansion – Opens school choice to all Wisconsin families by removing state enrollment caps, family income limits, and grade entry points – marking the beginning of true school choice for all our students and families.

Senator Darling represents portions of Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha Counties.