

Rep. Allen: Votes for AB 321: Right to Read

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Madison, WI – Today, State Representative Scott Allen (R – Waukesha) joined a bipartisan effort to pass AB 321, which provides basic standards for student curriculum and invites parents to join alongside their children in their reading journey, ultimately increasing the ability of our students to flourish.

“Students in Wisconsin are struggling to read,” said Rep. Allen. “In fact, 2 out of 3 students cannot read at a proficient level.”

Wisconsin is currently in the midst of a reading crisis. The data is shocking- since 1992, national reading achievement rankings among white students fell from 6th to 28th, among black students from 19th to 50th, and among Hispanic students from 1st to 28th!

AB 321 trains teachers in a new curriculum that involves a science of reading approach. Specifically, it involves screening schoolchildren to ensure their reading capabilities are where they ought to be, notifying parents of any potential concerns, and creating clear plans to get kids on track to succeed. Additionally, the law mandates summer instruction for students until they get caught up to their grade level, providing support to families in need until parents sign off that their child no longer needs additional help. AB 321 uses proven, evidence-based solutions for the good of every child.

The bill shifts Wisconsin to a science-based method of teaching reading, one embraced by cities and states around the country. In particular, AB 321 is founded on the precedent of Mississippi, a state who adopted this approach and soon went from being one of the worst states in reading scores to being the middle of the pack- in less than 10 years.

“The passage of AB 321 is a step in the right direction for the future of reading in Wisconsin,” stated Rep. Allen. “Reading is the key to future success. We must empower every person to have the tools they need to achieve that success.”