

# Sen. James: Recovery high schools bill signed into law

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Madison – [Senator Jesse James](#) (R-Altoona) and [Representative Barbara Dittrich](#) (R-Oconomowoc) celebrated the signing of [Senate Bill 267](#) – now 2023 Wisconsin Act 72 – into law earlier today. Act 72 establishes a grant program to support a network of recovery high schools across Wisconsin.

“Today is a win for one of our state’s most vulnerable populations,” Senator James said. “If we are able to stop addictions early, we can prevent more complex conditions from arising later on. This will not only save the state money, but it will also give these young people another chance at success.”

Recovery schools, or sober schools, are institutions designed specifically for students in recovery. They provide young people with essential resources and support who battling addiction at a fraction of the cost. Recent numbers from the CDC suggest opioid use disorder alone costs approximately \$221,219 per year per person, and this figure does not include other dependencies like alcohol. Horizon High School, Wisconsin’s only currently operating recovery school, spends approximately \$30,000 per year per person. That is nearly \$191,000 in savings per person per year.

“It isn’t often that we get the double benefit of saving money while we save lives with legislation,” stated Representative Dittrich. “Expanding the success of recovery schools offers students the opportunity to extract themselves from an academic setting that may make them more prone to relapse with substance abuse. I am grateful that we were able to advance this bill for the benefit of Wisconsin’s students.”

Back in January, Governor Tony Evers declared 2023 the “Year of Mental Health”.

There are currently 42 recovery schools operating across the United States. Wisconsin only has one currently operating recovery school, [Horizon High School](#) located in Madison.