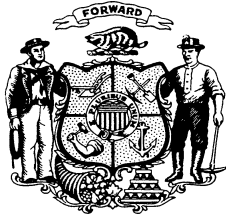


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JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

For Immediate Release – February 10, 2020

JFC Puts Kids First, Rewards In-Person Schools

Madison, WI - The Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee on Finance (JFC), Senator Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) and Representative Mark Born (R-Beaver Dam) were joined by JFC members Senator Duey Stroebel (R-Saukville) and Representative Jessie Rodriguez (R-Oak Creek) to announce plans to put kids first and get them back in the classroom. The committee took action earlier today.

“Getting our kids back to in-person learning is a top priority,” Rep. Born said. “This plan puts kids first, and incentivizes school districts to get our children back into the classroom while also rewarding those school districts who have spent time and resources to already make it happen. Our kids deserve to be in school where they have the best chance to succeed.”

“We have a unique opportunity to reward the school districts who have prioritized in-person schooling for our kids,” Sen. Marklein said. “Most of the school districts I represent have made tremendous effort to follow the science and find safe ways to teach our children in-person, in classrooms, as much as they can. These districts deserve our support.”

“We want to incentivize and reward districts that are open for in-person education. The CDC has said it is safe to re-open schools. Today’s plan helps districts cover the extra costs associated with that during the COVID-19 pandemic. The formula takes into account the total number of in-person instructional hours a school offered for the 2020-2021 school year. That means schools that are still looking at re-opening can access this bonus funding if they return to in-person education during the current semester. This policy is a winner all the way around, the way I see it.”

“My son spent all of last spring, and part of the fall, fully virtual. On his first day back to school, I asked him how it was and he said – ‘it was awesome!’ This is what every parent wants to hear,” Rep. Rodriguez said. “Teachers are doing everything they can to meet the needs of our kids, but virtual school is just not the same. The CDC says that getting our kids back to school is safe and important. With proper safety protocols, kids should be coming back.”

The JFC took up a request from the Department of Public Instruction to distribute nearly \$700 million in federal funds to K-12 schools. The amendment adjusts the distribution of \$65 million (10%) based on the number of hours of in-person instruction provided by the school districts for the 2020-21 school year. The other 90% in federal funds flows through a Title I formula and cannot be changed by the committee.

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