



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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## **Senate GOP Radio Address Delivered by Senator Kathy Bernier: Evers Vetoes Bill to Improve Reading Readiness**

Sixty four percent of Wisconsin fourth-graders can't read at grade level – and a full 34% struggle to read at even the most basic level. Over the last three decades, Wisconsin has been on a steady decline in reading achievement. In 1992 Wisconsin ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in the nation, today, we've fallen to 27<sup>th</sup>.

While Wisconsin continues to fall behind, states across the nation are making huge gains by adopting proven, research-based reading methods. Modeled on these successes, I authored the Roadmap to Reading Success, a bill that adopts undisputed best practices for identifying struggling readers sooner and getting them the help they need before they fall behind.

Despite earning bipartisan support, the education establishment in Madison, along with their paid lobbyists, made it very clear they not only oppose this bill, but have no plans to fix Wisconsin's reading crisis. Unfortunately, when this bill reached Governor Evers' desk a few short weeks ago, it wasn't the voices of parents of struggling readers that Governor Evers listened to. Instead, he vetoed the bill leaving Wisconsin without a plan and students without the help they need.

Literacy in Wisconsin is at a crisis point. While Governor Evers sides with the very people who got us into this mess, two-thirds of our kids can't read. This is totally unacceptable. Senate Republicans will not give up on addressing this crisis and helping every child succeed.