

News Release

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New video series features four Wisconsin students

MADISON — “I’m Ready,” a new video series from the Department of Public Instruction, profiles the journeys of four students and their experiences in Wisconsin schools that helped prepare them for college and career.

The students featured in the online videos are

- **Isaiah Buhrke**, Cedarburg High School, Cedarburg School District;
- **Xochil Rios-Castro**, West High School, Madison Metropolitan School District;
- **Connor Scherg**, James Madison Middle School, Appleton Area School District; and
- **Sydney Wilcox**, a 2016 graduate of Seymour High School, Seymour Community School District.

“Every day, educators work with our kids to help them discover their talents and develop knowledge, skills, and habits that will help them succeed in school and life,” said State Superintendent Tony Evers. “Stories like those of Isaiah, Xochil, Connor, and Sydney are not uncommon in Wisconsin. They represent an example of what is possible when families, communities, and educators work together to improve the lives of kids.”

Isaiah Buhrke

Born with visual and hearing impairments, Isaiah Buhrke never let either stand in his way. With the help of his family, educators, and through his own hard work and determination, Buhrke has conquered many challenges. His teachers wear special microphones to amplify their voices, and his lessons are provided in Braille allowing him to attend classes and receive the same assignments as his peers. Through practice and training, he is learning to walk to and from school and his home without guidance. He is also an accomplished organist who has been hired by churches around the state. After high school, he hopes to supplement this income with a job in the restaurant industry. This summer, he will attend an EmployAbility camp at the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Xochil Rios-Castro

Xochil Rios-Castro is determined to do well in school so she’s able to attend college to become a doctor or veterinarian. Earlier in her school career, Rios-Castro struggled, even failing to pass classes. Joining a community-supported tutoring program at West High School helped her prioritize success in school and apply herself to her

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academics. Through the support of her teachers and tutors, Rios-Castro raised her grades and would like to begin a medical assistant program as soon as next year.

Connor Scherg

Connor Scherg is already looking ahead to his future after high school. Following his parents' divorce, Scherg struggled to apply himself or maintain an interest in school. After being inspired by his fourth-grade teacher, Scherg realized he had an aptitude in math and was given the opportunity to help other students struggling with the subject. Now enjoying school and succeeding in all subject areas, Scherg has begun planning for a potential career as a graphic designer through his school's Academic and Career Planning program.

Sydney Wilcox

This fall, Sydney Wilcox will become the first in her family to attend college. When she entered high school, Wilcox intended to focus on her grades as well as athletics. After receiving encouragement from her business education teacher, Wilcox joined Future Business Leaders of America. She ran for an officer position and eventually became the 2015-16 Wisconsin State President. Wilcox will attend Edgewood College in fall and plans a career as a business educator or leadership consultant.

“I want to thank Isaiah, Xochil, Connor, and Sydney and their families for sharing their ‘I’m Ready’ stories,” Evers said. “Their inspiring tales highlight the transformational work of educators and the role our public schools play in helping our kids succeed.”

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NOTES: View “I’m Ready” online at <http://dpi.wi.gov/ready> or <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhyAMZQdbxJ1x1ERZpU1oeYXhtGzeQPOc>. This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2016_67.pdf.