



October 21, 2024

Representative Mark Born
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Finance
Rep.Born@legis.wisconsin.gov

Senator Howard Marklein
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Finance
Sen.Marklein@legis.wisconsin.gov

Chairs Born and Marklein:

Last week, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) met its statutory obligation of filing a report on the status of the statewide literacy coaching program, in compliance with Wis. Stat. 115.39. I have not yet received confirmation of receipt or a response to this report.

As stated in the report, “Funding for the literacy coach program was granted to DPI through the 2023-2025 state biennial budget Wisconsin state statute Chapter 20: Appropriations 20.255(1)(fc). and the subsequent 2023 Act 100. DPI submitted a 13.10 request to the Joint Committee on Finance for the funds necessary to administer this program on March 7, 2024. **That legislative body has not scheduled a hearing on this request to provide these funds to DPI. Therefore, the DPI has not been able to implement the early literacy coaching program.**”

I have repeatedly called for the Joint Committee on Finance to release this funding. I understand you have a concern about the governor’s partial veto, but the clear decision of the circuit court judge in that case has now once again made it clear you have the obligation to provide these funds to DPI. I know we agree that the children of Wisconsin need this critical support to learn to read, and we need to support the Wisconsin districts with the greatest early literacy needs.

Now is the time to keep your promise to Wisconsin families. Now is the time to take action and release the funding.

I implore you once again — as Committee Chairs, schedule a vote, and release the \$49,672,600 balance. Let’s keep the promise of Act 20 to help every child learn to read.

Sincerely,

Jill K. Underly, PhD
State Superintendent