

Senate Committee on Education
August 17, 2017

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 301

Senator Olsen and members of the committee, thank you for engaging around expanding summer learning opportunities for students in Wisconsin. The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is supportive of Senate Bill 301, as it aligns to our efforts to have more kids participate in summer learning.

As many of you know, DPI has been working to expand summer learning opportunities for students. As part of that effort, we recently led a cross-sector effort in Milwaukee to increase summer school attendance that resulted in tremendous successes this year.

Now in its second year, "Hot Summer MKE" is a central hub website for fun educational summer activities. This year we ran a digital campaign to promote the site, which generated over 1.3 million ad views, sending almost 22,000 people to HotSummerMKE.com. For comparison, we had around 3,400 people visit the site last year. So, we had a 650 percent increase in the web traffic to the site!

Most importantly, that is translating into real increases in summer school participation. MPS' early registration increased over 11 percent and their attendance/participation jumped over 22 percent compared to last year! These are big numbers.

DPI appreciates Senator Olsen and Representative Hebl's leadership on this important issue. We know students experience significant learning loss when they do not participate in educational activities during the summer months.

We need to actively work against the "summer slide" and increasing the options students have to access summer learning opportunities is part of the solution, which is why we are happy to offer our support to Senate Bill 301.

Thank you for your time today – I am happy to answer any questions you may have.