

**Senate Committee on Education
November 7, 2013**

**Department of Public Instruction Testimony on
2013 Senate Bill 51**

I want to thank Chairperson Olsen and members of the committee for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Jennifer Kammerud and I am the legislative liaison at the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). I am here today on behalf of State Superintendent Tony Evers in support of Senate Bill 51 (SB 51) as amended by Senate Substitute Amendment 1 (SSA 1) and Senate Amendment 2 to the substitute.

As amended this bill will increase the math and science credits required for graduation by the state while providing additional flexibility for school districts to meet the needs of students who are considering a variety of post-secondary options.

The state currently only requires two credits of math and science to graduate. While many districts exceed this number, around 45 percent in math and 37 percent for science, we need to do more if we are to ensure students are ready for college and careers. Based on college remediation rates and what we hear from employers, too many of our students are not graduating high school with an expected mastery of math and science concepts. This is why requiring three years of math and science was part of the state's No Child Left Behind waiver request to increase college and career readiness.

The Senate Amendment to SSA 1 will also provide additional flexibility for school districts and students who are concentrating in career and technical education (CTE) coursework. School boards will now be able to give CTE concentrators a science or math credit for their career and technical education work if the board determines the class or classes meet the requirements for a science or math credit. Additionally, SSA 1 gives school boards the opportunity to count computer science as a math credit. Out of all students taking advanced math and science courses at the K-12 level, only two percent are studying computer science, despite the fact that over half of all STEM jobs are in computing.

In summary, the department believes the bill will lead to greater math and science mastery and improve the college and career readiness of all of Wisconsin's high school graduates. Further, the flexibility contained in SSA 1 and the amendment to the substitute will encourage more CTE and computer science offerings and will lead more students to think about pursuing a concentration in this area. We urge your support.

At this time, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.