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State superintendent statement on inaction by legislature

MADISON – State Superintendent Jill Underly issued the following statement today regarding inaction by the Wisconsin State Legislature to provide additional support and resources to Wisconsin’s public schools, students, and educators.

“As school districts work to return to face-to-face instruction, the threat of the Delta variant rages. Children under age 12, the majority of our school population, still cannot be vaccinated. Yet, instead of finding ways to help schools do the important work needed to help students recover academically, the legislature has ignored them. Our legislative leaders point to one-time federal grants provided by Congress as a solution. Make no mistake, this money comes with significant strings attached and does not meet the needs of our students, educators, or their communities. The legislature is telling districts that despite a record budget surplus, they are not going to get the assistance they need.

“Schools will make tough choices in the years ahead because of this legislature’s short-sightedness. But they don’t have to. The state is still sitting on a record surplus thanks to Governor Tony Evers. I encourage every Wisconsin school district administrator, board of education president, and every parent to contact their legislators and detail every item that will be cut from our public school budgets. Describe for them the individuals who will lose their jobs, the facility repairs that will go undone, the bus routes that will go unmanned, the classrooms that will go without substitute teachers, and the enrichment programs your community is proud of that will go away. All of these decisions translate into fewer opportunities for our kids. They need to hear how that impacts your life.

“To find your state elected officials, you can use [the Wisconsin Legislature’s public website](https://legis.wisconsin.gov). And if they don’t answer your phone calls, call them again, or email them for an explanation.”

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NOTE: This news release is available electronically at <https://dpi.wi.gov/news/releases/2021/jill-underly-statement-budget-schools-funding>.