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Investing in staff recruitment

Testimony as prepared for delivery by Deputy State Superintendent Dr. John Johnson

WISCONSIN DELLS — *The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction today released the following testimony, as prepared for delivery, to be provided at an upcoming Joint Committee on Finance listening session on the 2023-25 biennial budget. Gov. Tony Evers' budget proposal, released in February, [provides historic support of the state's public schools and libraries during a time of critical need.](#)*

Hello co-chairs and committee members. I'm John Johnson, the Deputy State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and I am here on behalf of State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly and the Department of Public Instruction to testify in support of the public school and library workforce development provisions in the governor's budget proposal.

Last week, I testified to the importance of high quality teachers and support staff in our schools and the need for investment to retain and support them. Today, I am speaking on the need to recruit these educators and librarians in the first place. We do that by investing in our current and future education workforce.

By investing in local "grow your own" programs, we help create pathways to teacher licensure for school staff currently in non-teacher roles, helping them fund higher education, licensure, or certifications. The \$5 million earmarked for this programming will also help support local student organizations dedicated to inspiring and supporting high school students in pursuing future careers as K-12 teachers.

Stipends for student teachers and school library interns will help them cover the costs of those prep programs and travel expenses of those work placements while they pursue their teaching and library degrees. Internships and student teaching are integral to becoming effective teachers. Relieving some of the financial pressure student teachers and library interns feel while working an unpaid internship will go a long way in getting them into our workforce. In addition to this \$9.4 million investment in stipends to support interns, the budget also provides funding to support the cooperating teachers who take on student teachers.

(more)

These mentorship roles are key in preparing our educator workforce, and the veteran teachers who agree to train our future generations of teachers should be compensated for working more sharing their time and expertise.

We must make these investments to strengthen and expand our educator workforce, because doing so improves the quality of our students' education and strengthens the future of our state.

Thank you for your support on this.

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