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Contact: DPI Media Line, (608) 266-3559, media.inquiries@dpi.wi.gov

State superintendent calls for investment in special education

MADISON – State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly released the following statement today calling for increased investment in special education. The statement comes [after Gov. Tony Evers announced](#) the highest state surplus and “rainy day” fund balance in Wisconsin history, with a positive balance of \$7.07B.

“This budget news is a strong reminder that Wisconsin has tremendous resources readily available to help children and families. We must set partisanship aside and invest in our public schools and the future of our kids. I am calling today for the state to increase its contribution to local districts and raise the special education reimbursement rate to 60%. This simple, affordable, and sensible step is the least we can do to help local school districts address growing challenges, balance their budgets, invest in educator recruitment and retention, and help all students succeed.”

[An October 2022 report](#) by the Education Law Center found Wisconsin’s current underfunding of special education costs disproportionately harms students, and that among eight states using a reimbursement method for special education funding, Wisconsin ranked among the lowest in reimbursement rate. In 2019, the bipartisan Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding recommended additional funding for students in need of special education services and programming and increasing the reimbursement rate up to 60%.

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NOTE: This news release is available online on the [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction’s website](#).