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## Doing what is best for our kids and our state

*A statement by State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly on Gov. Evers' State of the State Address*

MADISON – State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly released the following statement today in response to Gov. Tony Evers' State of the State Address:

“I am proud to stand with Gov. Evers in support of Wisconsin’s kids. My guiding principle as an educator and a leader has always been to center what is best for kids, and our governor knows what is best for our kids is what is best for our state.

“Doing what is best for our kids must include responding to the governor’s call for investment in child care. Reliable, quality child care is a critical need for our state’s economy today, and for our state’s future tomorrow.

“Our state has the resources to also now more robustly fund public education, and I renew my call for the legislature to use a portion of our state’s \$7 billion surplus to strengthen the future of our state by investing in public schools, starting with increasing the special education reimbursement rate. The current rate is at an untenable level, and investing in special education funding is an investment that supports every kid in every public school. We also must invest more in school mental health services, nutrition support, bilingual/bicultural aid, and sparsity aid. If we want our kids to be prepared and ready for their future, we need to invest in them now.

“I also want to highlight the work the DPI has undertaken in partnership with the Department of Workforce Development to develop the teacher apprenticeship pilot program, which the governor mentioned tonight. In the face of our significant workforce challenges, we must implement sustainable solutions to teacher recruitment, retention, and diversification, and I know we will have more to say on apprenticeship in the coming months.”

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**NOTE:** This news release is available online on the [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction’s website](https://www.wisconsin.gov/dpi).