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## Rep. Sanfelippo: It's time to hold the failing DPI accountable

MADISON, Wis. – State Rep. Joe Sanfelippo, R-New Berlin, has responded to a [news release](#) from Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Superintendent Tony Evers that claims recent state budgets have set up schools and educators to fail.

“It’s ironic that DPI is talking about failures when they have been failing children in Milwaukee Public Schools for years by turning a blind eye to the problems in that district,” Sanfelippo said. “DPI’s blatant unwillingness to hold MPS accountable has allowed the state’s largest school district to be a perennial failure, which calls into question DPI’s ability to carry out its core mission.”

MPS was the only school district in Wisconsin that failed to meet expectations in 2013-14, according to the latest available [state report cards](#). DPI has currently identified 55 MPS schools that fail to meet expectations, which represents 83.3 percent of all failing schools in Wisconsin. At least one MPS school doesn’t have a single student proficient in reading.

“We have more than 50 failing schools in Milwaukee year after year, yet DPI does nothing to ensure those schools are improving. We can’t let DPI preserve status quo and continue to turn their back on these students,” Sanfelippo said. “DPI has a massive budget and hundreds of employees and their only job is to make sure our children are receiving a good, quality education. But they have been failing at that job for years. And it’s not just Milwaukee. The graduation rate for black students in Madison is a paltry 55 percent. In the affluent Madison suburb of Middleton, the graduation rate is even lower at 52 percent. And across Wisconsin, only 36.6 percent of students are proficient or better at reading. That is simply unacceptable.”

DPI paid out \$36.6 million in salaries and benefits to 415 administrative employees in 2014-15, according to data compiled by the state Legislative Fiscal Bureau. DPI also spent more than \$140 million on operational costs and programs that same school year.

“If we really want to get serious about stepping up for public education and improving the economic and social health of Milwaukee and the state, it’s time we look at making DPI more efficient by taking the millions of dollars being wasted there and putting the money directly into the classrooms,” Sanfelippo said.

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