

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
ADAM NEYLON



98TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

DATE: March 3, 2016
FROM: State Representative Adam Neylon
TO: Senate Committee on Education
RE: Supporting AB 722

Dear Members of the Committee, during Governor Scott Walker's 2015 State of the State, he called on Legislators to, "pass legislation ensuring objective information is available for each and every school receiving public funds in this state. Provide the information and allow parents to make the choice. No need for bureaucrats or politicians to make that choice—I trust parents. Give them access to objective information and they will make the choice that is best for their children."

The ultimate form of local control for education is informed parents. Parents should have information on the schools they are considering for their children. Since we trust parents with the decision of where to send their child to school, it is necessary that schools provide parents with basic information on the makeup and performance of the schools they are considering for their children.

What is happening now?

In the most recent budget, school districts became required to publish the most recent School Report Card on their websites. However, we have since signed legislation into law, known as 2015 Wisconsin Act 20, which pushes back the ability for DPI to generate School Report Cards for a year. As you can see, the Pewaukee High School and Sussex Hamilton High School Report Cards I have attached to my testimony, assigns an accountability score and rating, which includes student's proficiencies in reading and mathematics in relation to other schools in Wisconsin.

What does this bill do?

This bill is essentially an extension of the requirement in the state budget, which would require all schools that receive a DPI generated School Report Card, to display the report card on the school's website or via direct link. As you may know, the DPI website is not exactly the most intuitive. Furthermore, parents may not even realize DPI is generating these reports that evaluate the schools. Parents may not use the DPI website very often, but they do routinely use their children's school's website to find out information on important dates, athletics and other announcements. Having the DPI report card located on each school's websites makes sense, because it is already a place parents go to access information regarding their children's education.

This bill does not create any new reports, and no additional cost is associated with the bill. This bill simply requires schools that DPI generates a School Report Card on, to publish the School Report Card on their website. This bill provides parents with access to objective data that informs parents about schools, so they can make the best decision for their children.

Thank you.