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Resolution makes DPI superintendent appointed position

MADISON, Wis. – State Rep. Joe Sanfelippo (R-New Berlin) is circulating a resolution that would change the superintendent of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction from an elected position to one that is appointed by the governor with consent from the state Senate.

“Wisconsin is one of only [12 states in the country that elects its state superintendent](#) of public schools rather than have that person appointed by the governor or state school board,” Sanfelippo said. “Nearly every other state agency in Wisconsin is led by an appointed administrator, so it makes sense to treat DPI the same so we can have a more cohesive state government.”

According to several studies, the appointment process would allow the state to select the best candidate possible based upon their qualifications.

If an appointed superintendent is not meeting the standards and goals set by the state, the Legislature would have the authority to take immediate action and seek a replacement for the betterment of the state’s education system.

“For too many years DPI has been able to deflect blame for its failures and rebuff desperately needed reforms by hiding behind the fact that its superintendent is an elected official,” Sanfelippo said. “The state’s school system needs to be improved and the only way we can do that is by holding DPI more accountable, and with an appointed superintendent, we can do exactly that.”

Elected superintendents in Wisconsin are entitled to four-year terms even if their performances are deemed inadequate.

“The students of our state should not be held hostage just because special interest groups can get someone without the proper qualifications to win a popularity contest every four years,” Sanfelippo said. “Our children and teachers deserve much better.”

Because Sanfelippo’s resolution calls for a constitutional amendment, it would need to be adopted by two successive legislatures and ratified by voters in a referendum before it would become effective.

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