



WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

LORI PALMERI

54TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: December 10th, 2025

Contact: Rep. Lori Palmeri, 608-237-9154

Rep. Lori Palmeri Co-Authors Legislation to Backfill Special Education Reimbursement Rates

MADISON, WI –On Monday, legislative democrats introduced legislation that would ensure school district’s special education costs are reimbursed to the percentages estimated during the 2025-27 state budget, 42% and 45%. Rep. Lori Palmeri released the following statement:

“When the state budget was signed this summer, school districts were expecting their special education costs to be reimbursed at 42% in 2025-26 and 45% in 2026-27. However, when the Department of Public Instruction released the School Finance Bulletin 1058, it showed this rate would be closer to 35%. Many constituents have asked me how the estimates could be so off,” stated Representative Palmeri.

“The answer is that while these estimates are made each budget, the reimbursement percentages are not guaranteed. The state sets aside a chunk of money and if other factors like inflation, raise the costs of these services, it means our estimates for reimbursements are no longer accurate. The funding formula needs to be fixed. Period.

“This is why we released legislation that will ensure these reimbursements are funded “sum sufficient”, meaning payments from the state will continue until they meet the 42% and 45% reimbursements promised in the 2025-27 state budget.

“With the Oshkosh Area School District facing a \$6 million shortfall, and countless other school districts trying to bridge the same funding gaps, we need to uphold our promise of the 42% and 45% reimbursement rates. We also need to start being proactive when it comes to school financing and realize few investments matter if we do not first invest in our children.”

###