

For Immediate Release
June 23, 2023

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Representative Hurd Votes on Right to Read Act

Madison – State Representative Karen Hurd (R-Fall Creek) and her Assembly Republican colleagues made concrete steps towards addressing the reading crisis throughout the state of Wisconsin.

Sixty-four percent of fourth-graders are not proficient at reading. In addition, Wisconsin has the lowest racial achievement gap in the nation. Our schools are teaching flawed curriculums and this bill would transition to science-based literacy instruction, a proven method to address failing literacy. Thirty-one other states have made the shift towards the Science of Reading approach.

“Only 36% – nearly 1 in 3 – of our 4th Grade students are proficient in reading. The Look-Say Teaching Method is clearly not working. Reading opens up many opportunities for children and being unable to read closes those doors. Almost 85% of teens in the juvenile justice system have difficulty reading. 70% of adult prisoners cannot read above a 4th grade reading level, Students who drop out of school make up 90% of Americans on welfare and 75% of food stamp recipients. These aren’t just statistics. These are precious and valuable lives. Our kids are too important to let them waste away in sub-par curriculum. The Right to Read Act – modeled after the ‘Mississippi Miracle’ – will not only provide critical support and resources for students, but also for teachers. We need to give our children the most scientifically sound method with the best results for their betterment.”

This bill will establish the Office of Literacy, which would oversee a literacy-coaching program. In addition, professional development training would be provided to kindergarten to third-grade teachers, principals, and reading specialists to enhance their expertise in science-based early literacy instruction.

The bill will provide grants to assist schools in purchasing science of reading curricula. Additionally, the bill requires screening and reading assessments of students earlier and more often to catch students who need extra reading instruction before they get to third grade. Teachers across our state will have the tools needed to assist struggling readers in catching up to grade level, allowing all students to thrive in all subjects.

The legislative package now heads to the state Senate for consideration.

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The 68th Assembly District includes portions of Eau Claire, Chippewa, and Clark Counties including the communities of Altoona, Fall Creek, Augusta, Fairchild, Greenwood, Owen, Withee, Thorp, Cadott, Boyd, Stanley, the Town of Lafayette, and parts of Eau Claire.