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Differences Are What Make Us Great

Madison – Today, the Assembly was in session. Representative Dave Considine (D-Baraboo) issued the following statement on the bills passed today:

“Instead of bringing forth bills that will help our students, we debated a bill that is based on fear and division. Assembly Bill (AB) 510 requires a school to give parental notice when covering “controversial subjects”, which is broadly defined and includes discussions of race, racism, gender, and sexual orientation. While I believe that parents need to be involved in their children’s education, I also believe that students have the right to learn about our world.

“We must allow students to grow. Students need to have the opportunity to learn their parents’ perspectives and the perspectives of others. Discussions about differences may be difficult, but they are also essential. Most parents I know are open to tough discussions with and about their children. The classroom provides an environment where students can examine complex social and world issues. When necessary, parents already have the option to opt their student out of a lesson. This bill would hinder growth and learning in our schools.

“We need to focus on how to improve learning outcomes in our schools. The state can take proactive measures by passing the Healthy School Meals for All Act, which provides each student with a free breakfast and lunch. The legislature should also focus on how to improve mental health in schools. This means increasing the amount of social workers, counselors, behavioral specialists, and interventionists in our schools. This also means looking at ways to make our schools more inclusive for all children. When our students feel belonging, they are much more likely to succeed.”

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