



Survival Coalition

of Wisconsin Disability Organizations

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SURVIVAL COALITION SUPPORTS PROPOSED DPI BIENNIAL BUDGET INVESTMENTS IN STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

(MADISON) – The Survival Coalition of more than 30 statewide disability organizations applauds this week’s announcement of significant investments in students with disabilities by the Department of Public Instruction, particularly at a time when many have experienced disproportionate impacts on their educations by the COVID pandemic.

The proposed budget specifically includes:

- Increases Wisconsin’s special education reimbursement rate from 28 percent to 40 percent by the end of the biennium with a goal of reaching a 60 percent reimbursement rate by the end of the 2023-2025 biennium.
- Makes a historic \$371 million increase in special education categorical aid while also providing nearly \$13 million for high cost special education aid to help fully fund all eligible expenses for students with the greatest needs.
- Expands state support to mental health and pupil support categorical aid to nearly \$60 million over the biennium to include expenditures for all pupil support professionals.
- Leverages \$1 million over the biennium to expand mental health training opportunities to include bullying and violence prevention, while also increasing support for trauma-sensitive schools training throughout the state.

Survival Coalition members have heard heartbreaking stories from families of the additional challenges their children have experienced during the pandemic. DPI’s proposed budget recognizes the additional challenges students with disabilities are facing because of COVID and the added financial pressures on local school districts. At a time when schools need added funds for smaller class sizes and added costs for cleaning and PPE, local schools instead are facing

layoffs and reduced revenue as a result of pandemic-related enrollment drops. This budget reflects the needs of students, their families and local districts.

Survival Coalition Issue Teams: education, employment, housing, long term care for adults, long term care for children, mental health, transportation, workforce, voting, Medicaid and health care.

Real Lives, Real Work, Real Smart, Wisconsin
Investing in People with Disabilities