



CHRIS LARSON

STATE SENATOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 11, 2021

CONTACT: Senator Chris Larson

608.266.7505

GOP chases imaginary problems while ignoring the crisis they helped create

Milwaukee, WI – Today the Assembly and Senate Committees on Education held a joint public hearing on Senate Bill 411 and Senate Bill 463. Sen.Larson (D-Milwaukee) issued the following statement on the hearing:

“Today, I put out \$100 to the first person who can find me a public elementary school in the state that is teaching Critical Race Theory as part of their curriculum. There isn’t one. This is just another attempt by extremist politicians to use their ill-gotten power to sow further division and threaten our public schools at a time where they have been underfunded and trying to tackle the pandemic with limited resources. This attack comes just weeks after the same legislators passed a state budget that neglected the needs of our schools and will lead to teacher losses in all 421 school districts. It’s clear that Republicans’ only priority is catering to Trump’s extremism, even when it hurts our kids.

“Wisconsin teachers are already asked to do a lot with paltry resources, and often cite the lack of pay, resources, and unrealistic requirements as reasons they choose to quit teaching. Senate Bill 463 would make the problem of [recruiting](#) and retaining our educators even harder by threatening every Wisconsin school district with up to \$15,000 in attorney fees if they fail to post online exhaustive information related to learning materials and educational activities used in pupil instruction. By law, this material is already available to any parent who requests it. Interestingly, it doesn’t require the same disclosure of the unaccountable voucher schools that just this school year, have drained an additional [\\$140 million](#) from local taxpayers.

“Senate Bill 411 - the Republican fragility bill - is Trump-inspired legislation clearly meant to strong-arm teachers into only teaching topics that won’t hurt Republicans’ feelings.

“This legislation is an echo of a broader partisan agenda and a legislative scheme to prevent authentic conversations about race and discrimination while stifling the voices of the disenfranchised and the majority of people in the public who are calling for understanding history, regardless of who might have a say about it.

“This Republican agenda denies local control of curriculum and uses broad, sweeping language that would open up a swath of inconsistent penalties across districts. Unlike Republican legislators, our children can handle historical truths. We should listen to the folks who are experts on history to teach these lessons, not legislators who saw a FoxNews segment.

“The committee agenda today represents a vast disconnect between Legislative Republicans and the rest of the people of Wisconsin. As our neighbors worry about the ongoing pandemic and its effects on the upcoming school year, GOP legislators continue to focus on their divide and conquer politics to distract from their harmful inaction over the past year and a half.”

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WISCONSIN STATE CAPITOL
P.O. Box 7882 • MADISON, WISCONSIN 53707-7882
(608) 266-7505 • (800) 361-5487 • FAX: (608) 282-3547
SEN.LARSON@LEGIS.WI.GOV • SENATORCHRISLARSON.COM