



# PAT STRACHOTA

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

## AB 370 Testimony – 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade High School Credit Bill 9/25/13

This bill will help students achieve more academic success during their time in middle school and high school by providing opportunities to take more advanced classes.

Under current law, a pupil must be in grades nine to twelve to receive credit toward a high school diploma. However, many middle school students today are excelling and taking high school courses while still in middle school even though they cannot currently get credit for these courses. Allowing them to earn credits for these courses will mean more flexibility to continue taking rigorous coursework in high school.

This bill would allow these middle school students to earn high school credits while in seventh and eighth grade. It allows them to have a richer high school experience, and potentially graduate early as well. The ability to engage in additional advanced, technical, and hand-on classes and experiences as a result of entering high school having earned several credits while still in middle school provides them with more opportunities to advance.

Students who are able to complete high school courses in middle school will also have more room in their high school schedule for Advanced Placement classes. By taking these college level classes and potentially earning college credit, they reduce their college expenses.

The ability to take a wider range of courses in High School gives students more opportunities to decide what potential field of study or career they would like to go in to. Again, this could reduce the costs of college by preventing numerous changes of a student's major.

As we continually seek to reduce school and school district costs across the state, this bill has the potential to aid those efforts. More kids getting required high school credits taken care of in middle school could reduce staffing costs overall. This is a good bill that will help students, school districts, and families across the state.

September 24, 2013

To: Members of the Assembly Committee on Education  
From: Senator Glenn Grothman  
Re: Assembly Bill 370

This legislation was an idea that was brought to me by my West Bend School District Superintendent. He told me that 20 percent of West Bend School District eighth-graders have the capability to pass a ninth grade class. Therefore, this bill will allow these middle school students to earn high school core credits while in seventh and eighth grade. Currently, you can earn elective credits. This will give these students the ability to progress in their studies if they are ready to do so.

Under current law, a pupil must be in grades nine to twelve to receive credits towards a high school diploma. Many middle school students today are excelling and are unable to continue taking rigorous coursework.

This bill not only gives students opportunities while in seventh and eighth grade, but also gives these students the ability to have a richer high school experience. They are able to engage in additional advanced, technical and hand-on classes and experiences.

Please join me in supporting this commonsense legislation that will help students have more opportunities in middle school and high school.



*School District of*  
**West Allis-West Milwaukee, et al.**  
EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION CENTER

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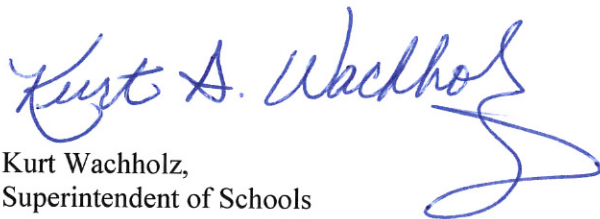
September 25, 2013

Dear Assembly Education Committee Members,

On behalf of Kurt Wachholz, the Superintendent of Schools in the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District, I am providing testimony on Assembly Bill 370.

We are in support of the proposal to allow certain credits a pupil earns while in grades 7 and 8 to be recognized as high school credits. In the West Allis-West Milwaukee Schools, for example, we teach algebra to our Intermediate School students and some are ready for Geometry and beyond. In the area of World Languages many of our Intermediate Students have taken three years of a foreign language by the time they are in eighth grade and their mastery demonstrated through assessments place them at level 3 or above in high school sequence. Currently students in these classes can move forward in course sequencing but attain no high school credit. Through assessment, when students demonstrate proficiencies in these areas, credit should be partnered with course advancement similar to what we currently do between high school and post-secondary. This includes advanced placement and transcribed classes where students may earn college credit while in high school.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of this matter. Please contact my office with any questions.



Kurt Wachholz,  
Superintendent of Schools