



## Luther S. Olsen

State Senator  
14th District

**TO:** Senate Committee on Education  
**FROM:** Senator Luther Olsen  
**DATE:** Tuesday, August 13, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Testimony for Assembly Bills 53 and 54

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Thank you members of the Senate Committee on Education for holding a hearing and allowing me to testify in support of Assembly Bills 53 and 54.

Most information contained within a pupil's record is confidential, but state law does allow school boards to disclose certain information that is categorized as directory data. Under current law we allow them to disclose a pupil's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in activities and sports, dates of attendance, photographs, degrees and awards, and the name of the school most recently attended. It is entirely up to the school district which information they include in their directory data. However, parents and guardians do have the ability to opt out.

Certain agencies including law enforcement or child welfare agencies can access information that is not designated as directory data such as the name of a pupil's parent or guardian, but only under specific circumstances. Assembly Bill 53 will add the name of a pupil's parent or guardian to the list of categories that a school can include it in their list of directory data. This update to the current statute would be beneficial for situations where having access to the name of a pupil's parent or guardian in a timely manner would be useful for safety purposes. Parents will still have the same ability to opt out of this, just as they do the other directory data information.

Under current law, we require that schools conduct drills that prepare students in the event of a fire, tornado, or school safety incident without giving them advanced warning of the drill. Assembly Bill 54 makes a simple change that will allow the person who is responsible for conducting the drills the ability to give advanced notification of the upcoming drill to students, if it would be in their best interest. For example a student with a disability who doesn't do well with changes to their normal routine would be able to prepare ahead of time for the disruption.

Again, thank you for holding a hearing today. I ask for your support on Assembly Bills 53/54 and I would be more than happy to answer any questions.



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# MARK BORN

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 39<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

## Testimony in Support of Assembly Bills 53 and 54

*Senate Committee on Education*

August 13, 2019

Good morning Chairman Olsen and members of the Senate Committee on Education, thank you for holding a public hearing on Assembly Bills 53 and 54.

Before you today are two bills that were developed out of several meetings with a workgroup on school safety. Over the past few years, I've had the opportunity to join the group to discuss how all aspects of society can work together to improve the safety of our children in our schools. This initiative is a great example of how schools, law enforcement, and government can come together, break down silos, and accomplish our shared goals. In attendance today is Mike Reissmann, Dodge County Detective, to speak to the basis of these proposals and why the workgroup brought these suggestions forward.

Assembly Bill 53 makes a change to statute that will allow school districts to add the name of a pupil's parent or guardian to the list of categories that they can include in their directory data. Directory data is a list of information that a school may disclose, in a timely manner compared to other mechanisms, as long as certain notification procedures are followed. The current list of categories that a school can include in their list is: *a pupil's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, photographs, degrees and awards received and the name of the school most recently previously attended by the pupil.* AB 53 adds a pupil's parent or guardian to that list, giving local school districts the option to include it in their set of directory data.

Assembly Bill 54 makes a simple change to current law that will allow a person that has direct charge of a school to give a warning to students before a fire, tornado, or school safety drill, if it is in the best interest of the student. After meeting with the workgroup, an issue was raised that in some situations it would be in the best interest of students if they were allowed to warn them about an upcoming drill. A warning would be especially useful in situations for students with disabilities.

AB 53 and 54 passed with bipartisan support out of the Assembly Committee on Education in April of this year. In June, they passed the full Assembly. I appreciate your time and consideration of these proposals. Please feel free to contact my office if you have any questions or concerns.



"Leadership in Public School Governance"

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WISCONSIN  
ASSOCIATION OF  
SCHOOL BOARDS

TO: Members, Senate Committee on Education  
FROM: Dan Rossmiller, WASB Government Relations Director  
DATE: August 13, 2019  
RE: SUPPORT for ASSEMBLY BILL 54, relating to fire, tornado, and school safety drills for public and private schools.

Assembly Bill 54 makes a relatively minor but important change to the statutes relating to required fire, tornado, and school safety drills.

Currently, state requires that these drills be done without previous warning to pupils. Assembly Bill 54 would allow the person having direct charge of a school (e.g., a principal) to provide previous warning of any of these drills if he or she determines that providing previous warning of the drill is *in the best interest of pupils* attending the school.

The impetus for this bill came from local school administrators. They recognized that as requirements for these drills, particularly school safety drills, have increased, not having the ability to warn students such as those with emotional and behavioral disabilities could cause such students unnecessary trauma and often left them in a highly agitated state long after the drills had ended.

From the standpoint of the WASB, there is no obvious downside to the flexibility and local control provided by this bill.

The approach this bill allows, when applied judiciously, reflects both common sense and a balancing of interests that is easily understood and applied. We note the *best interest of the child* standard is applied throughout the statutes.

Importantly, this bill will avert the situation where a school official would be faced with having to determine whether federal special education law trumps state law with respect to these drills. This could often happen in cases where the district interprets giving an individual special education student advanced notification to be consistent with the requirements of that student's individualized educational plan (or IEP). This bill provides a clear resolution to that dilemma.

We encourage your support for Assembly Bill 54.