

Senate Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families
April 23, 2019

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Information on 2019 Senate Bill 55

Thank you Chairman Kooyenga and members of the committee for the opportunity to provide information on Senate Bill 55.

Senate Bill 55 Analysis:

This bill modifies eligibility criteria under the minority teacher loan program administered by the Higher Educational Aids Board. Senate Bill 55 modifies the definition of “minority student” for purposes of the program to include any student of Asian or Pacific Island origin, not just Hmong students; Alaskan natives; and any student whose ancestry includes two or more races.

The bill also modifies the eligibility criteria for loan forgiveness under the program. Under the bill, a loan recipient is eligible for loan forgiveness if he or she is employed by a public or private school located in a Wisconsin school district in which minority students constitute at least 40 percent of the membership.

Senate Bill 55 Policy Effects:

Under the bill, based upon 2017-18 data¹, the following school districts would qualify under the new eligibility requirements:

District Name	Percent White
Menominee Indian	0.50%
Lac du Flambeau Elementary	1.50%
Milwaukee	11.10%
Bayfield	16.90%
Brown Deer	24.20%
Beloit	36.00%
Arcadia	36.30%
Racine Unified	39.40%
Madison Metropolitan	42.70%
Delavan-Darien	42.80%
Norris High	45.00%

Green Bay Area Public	45.70%
Glendale-River Hills	47.60%
Bowler	47.60%
Kenosha	49.00%
Gresham	49.00%
Abbotsford	49.30%
West Allis-West Milwaukee	52.20%
Sheboygan Area	54.80%
Greenfield	56.00%
Crandon	57.40%
Saint Francis	58.30%
Independence	58.40%
Walworth Elementary	59.60%

ⁱ Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. n.d. "2017-18 District Report Card Data Download File." Accessed April 23, 2019. http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/accountability/xls/2017-18_district_reportcard_data.xlsx



Amy Loudenbeck

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S 31ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony before Senate Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families
Senate Bill 55
Rep. Amy Loudenbeck
April 23, 2019

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee members for the opportunity to testify in favor of Senate Bill 55. This bill will expand the Wisconsin Minority Teacher Loan Program which is administered by the Higher Education Aids Board (HEAB) to allow for a minority teacher who works in a Wisconsin school district in which minority students constitute at least 40% of the membership to be eligible to apply for loan forgiveness.

By expanding this program, we provide an opportunity for teachers in several other areas of the state to be eligible for this program.

Schools across Wisconsin are trying to close the achievement gap between white and non-white students and research indicates that hiring teachers of color can help close achievement gaps. This isn't a new program or a new appropriation, the bill would simply allow qualifying schools outside of the City of Milwaukee to benefit from this program

The current program is limited to public and private schools in the City of Milwaukee and the program is woefully underutilized. In February of 2018, HEAB requested authority to transfer nearly \$50,000 out of this program to cover expenses in another HEAB program. The request was sent to JFC for approval which is how I became aware of the limitations on the current program and decided to look at ways it could be improved.

Thank you for your time today, I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

LAKESHIA MYERS

Wisconsin State Representative • 12th Assembly District

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Testimony in Support of SB 55: The Minority Teacher Loan Program

Senate Committee on Universities Technical Colleges, Children and Families

April 23, 2019

Chairman Kooyenga and members of the committee, thank you for holding a hearing on Senate Bill 55. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill. As a former educator, I have firsthand experience of the tremendous impact minority teachers have on students. When students of color have a teacher of color, they are more likely to graduate from high school. In 2017, National Public Radio News surveyed more than 80,000 African American and Hispanic public school students in fourth through eighth grade that lived in six different states. The survey concluded that when students had teachers of the same race, they reported feeling more cared for, more interested in their schoolwork, and more confident in their teachers' abilities to communicate with them. These students also reported putting forth more effort in school and having higher college aspirations.

Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings, a professor of education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison stated, "*A more diverse population of teachers alone won't help students of color. To change attitudes and behaviors about school, we need teachers who view their students of color as whole people.*" The increase of minorities in education and diversifying Wisconsin's

educational workforce is needed in order for more minority students to have access to teachers that can become their role models and mentors.

From the 1960s-1980s, school districts in both Milwaukee and Racine invested in recruiting teachers of color, primarily those who were graduates of Historically Black colleges and Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions; colleges that are known for producing the majority of African American and Hispanic educational professionals. What has become evident in the past twenty years has been the retirement of these individuals and the lack of investment in attracting a new generation of teachers of color. It is my hope that by supporting the Minority Teacher Loan Program, this will be a first step in increasing the number of teachers of color in our state. It is also my hope that through this program, we can begin to attract and retain minority teachers at a rate that mirrors the population of our schools and our state.

Ensuring that each educational institution in Wisconsin has a diverse staff is imperative. As our state becomes more diverse, the teaching force should mirror the student population. I am willing to work with the committee to support the use of this fund for minority educators across our state. Thank you for your consideration of this legislation.