

Public Instruction

Administrative and Other Funding

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June 8, 2023

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #655

Mental Health Training Programs (DPI -- Administrative and Other Funding)

[LFB 2023-25 Budget Summary: Page 509, #6]

CURRENT LAW

Under current law, DPI is required to provide training to school district staff and the instructional staff of independent charter schools regarding the following: (a) screening, brief interventions, and referral to treatment (SBIRT); (b) trauma sensitive schools; and (c) youth mental health first aid. Funding totaling \$420,000 GPR annually is provided for this training.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Funding for the mental health training program was first provided in 2017-18, and totaled \$220,000 GPR annually during the 2017-19 biennium. Under 2019 Act 9, funding was increased to \$420,000 GPR annually and has remained at that level since. DPI is required to use the funding to establish a mental health training program and provide training to school district and independent charter school staff on evidence-based strategies related to addressing mental health issues in schools.

2. Under the current law mental health training programs, trainings are coordinated through the Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools (WISH) Center. The WISH Center is a collaborative project between DPI and the Cooperative Educational Services Agency (CESA) Statewide Network, and offers training and resources to school district personnel across the state and online in alcohol and other drug abuse, mental health, school safety, and other topics, in addition to the training topics DPI is required to provide. According to its 2021-22 annual report, the WISH Center received \$1.5 million in revenue from grants, intergovernmental agreements, and events. In that same year, WISH Center expenditures totaled approximately \$1.5 million, including \$745,000 for salary and fringe benefits of employees, \$544,000 for programs and contracts, \$27,000 for supplies and materials, and \$178,000 for other, unspecified expenditures. The WISH Center staff includes four regional coordinators, three

project coordinators, and one director.

3. SBIRT is a process that can be used to identify problematic use of alcohol or drugs or other mental health issues that was originally designed for use in healthcare settings and adapted for delivery in middle and high schools. Typically, pupils participate in a short standardized screening assessment to identify potential issues, followed by a brief intervention for pupils that need additional support. DPI indicates that coaching and technical assistance related to SBIRT were provided to participants from 28 school districts during the 2021-22 school year, including 14 new districts and 14 returning districts. A total of 97 participants from new schools were trained through five virtual sessions, 60 participants attended two refresher trainings, and 199 participants attended practice sessions to increase learning and implementation of SBIRT. In addition, 254 pupils received SBIRT services for an average of four sessions each. Two separate screening tools were used at the initial and follow-up sessions, which found reductions in substance use and behavioral health symptoms.

4. "Trauma sensitive schools" refers to a program consisting of self-guided training modules that train school staff to address behavioral or mental health challenges in pupils who have experienced trauma. The program was developed through a partnership between DPI and St. Aemilian-Lakeside, a human services agency located in Milwaukee providing foster care placement, mental health services, and education on trauma-informed care. DPI indicates that in 2021-22, state funding supported four sessions in professional development related to trauma sensitive schools and two virtual learning sessions to offer continuing education for individuals training others under the program. A total of 254 participants received professional development and training related to trauma sensitive schools.

5. The youth mental health first aid program trains school district staff to recognize early signs of addiction or mental health challenges, such as depression or generalized anxiety disorder, provide initial help to a pupil experiencing a mental health crisis, and refer pupils to appropriate professional resources. DPI indicates that in 2021-22, over 800 individuals participated in 57 youth mental health first aid trainings that were held throughout the state. In addition, federal coronavirus funding from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund was used to provide five sessions to train individuals to increase capacity to provide training in schools and 70 additional trainers were certified statewide through these sessions.

6. Assembly Bill 43/Senate Bill 70 would provide an additional \$580,000 GPR annually for mental health training and require DPI to provide training to individuals employed by an out-of-school-time program, in addition to the other staff required under current law. The bill would also modify the program to add suicide prevention to the types of training required to be provided. DPI included the modification and additional funding in its agency budget request. [Alternative 1]

7. DPI indicates that the additional funding requested would be used specifically to provide the following in each year of the biennium: (a) 20 additional trainings in youth mental health first aid at a cost of \$2,930 per training; (b) \$24,000 to each of the 12 CESAs to provide regional training in trauma sensitive schools, social and emotional learning, and bullying prevention; (c) 12 trainings in social and emotional learning at a cost of \$1,800 per training; (d) 12 bullying prevention introduction sessions and 12 toolkits at a cost of \$1,800 each; (e) 12 three-day trainings in the school mental health framework at a cost of \$5,400 per training; (f) four trainings in compassion resilience at a cost of

\$2,800 per training; (g) three two-day trainings in restorative practices at a cost of \$3,600 per training; (h) two additional trainings of trainers in youth mental health first aid at a cost of \$30,000 per training; (i) one additional training of trainers in trauma sensitive schools at a cost of \$20,000; and (j) one mental health training for out of school time programs at a cost of \$1,800.

8. DPI's proposed budget indicates that the additional funding requested by the agency and provided under the bill would expand trainings in the areas currently required in statute, and also would provide trainings in new areas, including cyberbullying, the school mental health framework, compassion resilience, and restorative practices. As noted above, the WISH Center provides various other mental health trainings and resources, including resources related to the school mental health framework (a framework for comprehensive systems of services and supports to promote student and staff mental health and wellbeing) and social and emotional learning, which provides youth and adults with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, feel and show empathy, establish and maintain healthy relationships, and make responsible decisions.

9. Cyberbullying is an increased concern due to pupil engagement in online learning as a result of COVID-19. Under current law, an appropriation totaling \$150,000 GPR annually provides a grant for bullying prevention, which is awarded to a nonprofit organization to provide training and support the creation of an online bullying prevention curriculum for pupils in grades kindergarten to eight. Rather than duplicating these efforts, DPI indicates that additional funding for training on bullying prevention could include the creation of online training modules for schools and related resources to help schools respond to bullying.

10. The WISH Center collaborates with Rogers Behavioral Health Community Learning and Engagement to provide training and technical assistance for schools implementing the compassion resilience toolkit, which is meant to build resilience of educators and the systems in which they serve. DPI indicates that compassion resilience training covers the impacts of stress, burnout, and compassion fatigue among educators, and the development of action plans to create resilience among educators. According to the WISH Center, such training also provides educators with strategies that can be used to work more effectively with students impacted by stress or other traumas.

11. The WISH Center utilized ESSER funds to provide training in restorative practices. DPI indicates that such training helps schools implement a behavioral program in which pupils who have engaged in inappropriate behavior must address the impact of their behavior on others and take responsibility for their actions. Rather than punishing misbehavior, which can cause a pupil to feel like a victim or disconnected from school, restorative practices emphasize learning to allow pupils to restore relationships by addressing the harm they cause in an intentional way. The WISH Center indicates that the goals of restorative practices are to: (a) understand harm and develop empathy; (b) listen and respond to the needs of all individuals involved; (c) encourage accountability and responsibility through personal reflection within a collaborative planning process; (d) reintegrate the individuals involved into the community as valuable, contributing members; (e) create caring environments to support healthy communities; and (f) avoid contributing to harm.

12. If the Committee wishes to provide additional funding for the mental health training program at a reduced cost, the Committee could consider providing an increase of \$138,600 GPR

annually, the amount DPI indicated would be used specifically to expand the trauma sensitive schools and youth mental health first aid training programs required under current law. [Alternative 2] Alternatively, the Committee could consider providing an increase of \$280,000 GPR annually and modifying the program to allow funding to be used on other types of mental health trainings. [Alternative 3] The Committee could also consider modifying the program to allow funding to be used on other types of mental health training without providing additional funds. [Alternative 4]

ALTERNATIVES

1. Increase funding for the school mental health training program by \$580,000 annually. Modify the program to require that training be provided on suicide prevention and to individuals employed by out-of-school-time programs, in addition to the other topics and staff required under current law.

ALT 1	Change to Base
GPR	\$1,160,000

2. Increase funding for the school mental health training program by \$138,600 annually to expand support for the trauma sensitive schools and the youth mental health first aid training programs required under current law.

ALT 2	Change to Base
GPR	\$277,200

3. Increase funding for the school mental health training program by \$280,000 annually. Modify the program to allow funds to be used on other types of mental health trainings in addition to the topics required under current law.

ALT 3	Change to Base
GPR	\$560,000

4. Modify the program to allow funds to be used on other types of mental health trainings in addition to the topics required under current law.

5. Take no action.

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #656

Academic and Career Planning (DPI -- Administrative and Other Funding)

[LFB 2023-25 Budget Summary: Page 510, #8]

CURRENT LAW

The State Superintendent is required to do the following: (a) ensure that every school board is providing academic and career planning services to pupils in grades 6 to 12; (b) procure, install, and maintain information technology, including computer software, to be used statewide by school districts to provide academic and career planning services; (c) provide guidance, training, and technical assistance to school districts and their staff on how to implement the information technology and model academic and career plans; and (d) promulgate rules to implement the program.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The academic and career planning program was created under 2013 Act 20 (the 2013-15 biennial budget act) to equip pupils and their families with tools to make informed decisions about their postsecondary education, training, and careers. The Act required DPI to ensure that, beginning in 2017-18, every school board provides academic and career planning services to pupils enrolled in grades 6 to 12 in the district. Funding for the program, which is provided in a continuing appropriation, was first provided in 2014-15 and has totaled \$1,100,000 GPR annually.

2. An academic and career plan is a comprehensive, individualized plan developed and maintained by a pupil that includes the pupil's academic, career, personal, and social goals and the means by which the pupil will achieve those goals both before and after high school graduation. Academic and career planning services include the activities, instruction, resources, and opportunities provided by a school district to assist a pupil with developing and implementing an academic and career plan.

3. Under current Administrative Code Chapter PI 26, school districts are required to engage parents in academic and career planning by annually informing parents about the services their child receives, providing parents with multiple opportunities to participate in their child's academic and career planning, and updating parents throughout the school year on their child's progress. School districts are also required to provide information to pupils, including: (a) career awareness in the elementary grades; (b) career exploration in the middle school grades to identify personal preferences in relation to potential occupations and careers; and (c) career planning and preparation at the high school level, including school supervised work based learning experiences, instruction in career decision making and employability skills, access to career and technical education programs, access to accurate labor market information, and instruction which provides for the practical application of academic skills, applied technologies, economics, entrepreneurship education, and personal financial literacy.

4. DPI contracts with Xello, a Toronto-based software company, to provide school districts with computer software for college and career planning. DPI indicates that 417 school districts currently use the software, which is in its sixth year of use. DPI maintains contracts with each of the 12 cooperative educational service agencies (CESAs) to support the implementation of academic and career planning by subsidizing the cost of academic and career planning coordinators who provide professional development and other services to school districts located within the CESA region. DPI also contracts with the Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to conduct evaluations of the academic and career planning program.

5. In its agency budget request, DPI indicated that the \$1,100,000 GPR in annual program funding was provided in a continuing appropriation to allow sufficient time to identify a software vendor and delivery method for technical assistance to school districts, and the full appropriated amount was not expended in 2014-15 or 2015-16. The table below shows the program expenditures by category each year since 2016-17. As shown in the table, expenditures have exceeded the appropriated amount in each of the past six years, and are anticipated to exceed the appropriation in 2022-23. As a result, the amount of funds carried over has decreased each year and the appropriation is projected to have a shortfall of -\$54,200 for 2022-23. DPI indicates that it will seek to amend current contracts and use GPR from its general program operations appropriation to make up for the shortfall.

Academic and Career Planning Program Expenditures, 2016-17 to 2022-23

	<u>Xello Software</u>	<u>CESAs</u>	<u>WCER</u>	<u>Other*</u>	<u>Total</u>
2016-17	\$952,800	\$120,000	\$281,500	\$56,100	\$1,410,400
2017-18	959,300	180,000	284,800	46,000	1,470,100
2018-19	915,600	192,000	0	4,300	1,111,900
2019-20	920,500	234,500	200,000	57,700	1,412,700
2020-21	1,098,000	270,300	162,500	0	1,530,800
2021-22	763,000	298,250	137,500	-83,700	1,115,050
2022-23**	985,000	300,000	137,500	0	1,422,500

*Includes funding for professional development and limited-term employees, as well as accounting corrections.

**Estimated.

6. DPI indicates that the contract costs for the college and career planning software are based on the prior year enrollment of school districts that use the software. The current costs for the software total an estimated \$985,000 in 2022-23 and are expected to remain constant in 2023-24, and increase to \$1,044,000 in 2024-25, while the annual contracts with CESAs and WCER are expected to remain constant in the 2023-25 biennium. As a result, DPI indicates the projected budget shortfall is expected to be -\$322,500 in 2023-24 and -\$381,500 in 2024-25; therefore, additional funding would be required to continue the current costs of ongoing contracts for services.

7. Assembly Bill 43/Senate Bill 70 would provide \$322,500 GPR in 2023-24 and \$381,500 GPR in 2024-25 over annual base level funding of \$1,100,000 GPR to support the academic and career planning program. [Alternative 1]

8. DPI indicates that if additional funding is not provided, it would reduce the amount of training and technical assistance provided to school district staff related to advising pupils on developing academic and career plans and use of the required software. Based on the expenditures shown in the table on the previous page, it appears that the amount of the shortfall is such that funding may no longer be available for the regional coordinators placed at each CESA who provide professional development to school staff located within each CESA region. [Alternative 3]

9. The Committee could also consider providing \$322,500 GPR in 2023-24, which would fund the projected budget shortfall in the first year of the biennium, and placing \$381,500 GPR in the Committee's supplemental appropriation. [Alternative 2] Under this alternative, any unused funds after the first year could be used in the second year because the program is funded from a continuing appropriation, as noted, and DPI could request additional funds if necessary.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Provide \$322,500 GPR in 2023-24 and \$381,500 GPR in 2024-25 over annual base level funding of \$1,100,000 GPR to support the academic and career planning program.

ALT 1	Change to Base
GPR	\$704,000

2. Provide \$322,500 GPR in 2023-24, which would fund the projected budget shortfall in the first year of the biennium. Place \$381,500 in the Committee's supplemental appropriation to be released upon request by DPI.

ALT 2	Change to Base
GPR	\$704,000

3. Take no action.

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #657

Grants to Nonprofit Organizations (DPI -- Administrative and Other Funding)

[LFB 2023-25 Budget Summary: Pages 511-512, #14, #16, and #17]

CURRENT LAW

State GPR has been provided for the Wisconsin Reading Corps, an AmeriCorps program that provides one-on-one literacy tutoring, since 2017-18. Base level funding is equal to \$2,000,000 GPR annually.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Wisconsin Reading Corps

1. Assembly Bill 43/Senate Bill 70 provides \$1,000,000 GPR in 2023-24 and \$2,000,000 GPR in 2024-25 above base level funding of \$2,000,000 GPR to support literacy tutoring services provided through the Wisconsin Reading Corps. [Alternative A1]
2. Under 2017 Act 59, Wisconsin Reading Corps was provided with one-time funding of \$300,000 GPR in 2017-18 and \$700,000 GPR in 2018-19, with a requirement that the organization provide matching funds of \$250,000 in each year as a condition of receiving the state payment. Under 2019 Act 9, funding was made permanent and the match requirement was eliminated. Funding was further increased to \$1,000,000 GPR in 2021-22 and \$2,000,000 GPR in 2022-23 under 2021 Act 58.
3. The Reading Corps is an AmeriCorps program focusing on providing one-on-one literacy tutoring to pupils in grades K-3. The program began in 2003 in Minnesota, and is currently operating in 14 states and Washington, D.C., with over 2,000 tutors serving 32,000 pupils in 2020-21.
4. Under the program, AmeriCorps tutors commit to serve for at least one year, and spend their time providing daily tutoring in an elementary school. Tutors receive training prior to the start

of the school year, as well as ongoing literacy coaching throughout the year from an on-site supervisor and a master coach, who is a literacy expert who provides tutors and their supervisors with additional support. Pupils are identified using benchmark assessment data to find pupils who are at risk for reading difficulties. Each tutor provides daily 20 minute sessions to approximately 15-18 pupils using standardized activities prescribed by the organization, working on foundational literacy skills such as phonological awareness, letter sound knowledge, decoding skills, and oral reading fluency. Pupils participating in the program complete regular progress monitoring assessments to assess the effectiveness of their current tutoring interventions and whether the pupil is ready to exit the program.

5. Wisconsin Reading Corps started in the 2015-16 school year with tutoring programs in Milwaukee. The program expanded to include Racine in 2018-19, and now operates in public and private schools around the state. In 2021-22, 120 tutors served approximately 2,000 pupils in 148 schools. In addition to state funding, the organization receives support from donors including Northwestern Mutual, American Family Insurance, the Racine Community Foundation, the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation, and other local organizations and businesses, as well as from individuals.

6. A randomized controlled trial conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago and published in October, 2018, found positive results for pupils receiving tutoring under the program. The study was conducted by randomly assigning 176 kindergarten and first-grade pupils at 10 participating Milwaukee public schools to either receive tutoring under the program or be part of a control group. The study found that kindergarten pupils participating in the program demonstrated significantly higher letter sound fluency scores, and were on track to exceed grade level expectations within one semester. First graders participating in the program did not meet grade level benchmarks after one semester of tutoring, but demonstrated significant improvement on basic literacy skills compared to the control group.

7. If the Committee wishes to provide some additional fund for the Wisconsin Reading Corps but at a reduced ongoing cost, the Committee could consider providing an increase of \$1,000,000 GPR annually. [Alternative A2]

The Literacy Lab

8. AB 43/SB 70 provides \$75,000 GPR in 2023-24 and \$1,370,000 GPR in 2024-25 to The Literacy Lab to provide an evidence-based literacy intervention program in public schools located in the cities of Milwaukee and Racine. [Alternative B1]

9. The Literacy Lab began operating in District of Columbia and Alexandria, Virginia public schools in 2009. In 2012, it was selected as a national replication partner for the Reading Corps model. As a Reading Corps partner, The Literacy Lab implements the evidence-based intervention model developed by Reading Corps.

10. The Literacy Lab serves pupils age three through third grade. The organization places trained full-time literacy tutors in elementary schools. Tutors serving pre-kindergarten pupils are embedded full-time in a single classroom for a school year and provide literacy tutoring one-on-one, in small groups, and to the entire class. Tutors serving grades kindergarten through three work with a caseload of 15-18 pupils at a time and provide twenty minutes of tutoring to each child every day.

Tutors receive approximately 60 hours of training in topics such as foundations of literacy, reading interventions, assessments, progress monitoring, and data-based decision making, and receive ongoing coaching at their school sites from literacy coaches who observe tutors, provide feedback, and convene regular data meetings.

11. A subset of The Literacy Lab tutors are participants in the organization's Leading Men Fellowship, which recruits men of color between the ages of 18 and 24 who have graduated from high school but have not yet finished college. Fellows are placed in a pre-kindergarten classroom to work with three- and four-year-olds, preparing them for kindergarten and providing literacy tutoring. Fellows are paid an hourly wage, and receive an education award of \$2,500 upon successful completion of their service.

12. The Literacy Lab currently operates in metropolitan District of Columbia; central Virginia; Baltimore, Maryland; Kansas City, Missouri; Springfield, Massachusetts; Atlanta, Georgia; Cincinnati, Ohio; Phoenix, Arizona; and Milwaukee. In 2021-22, a total of 365 tutors reached over 5,200 pupils in 142 schools. The Milwaukee program began in the 2018-19 school year through a partnership with Milwaukee Public Schools and Next Door Milwaukee. Currently, 180 pupils in five Milwaukee schools are served by 10 Leading Men Fellows.

13. The Department of Administration indicates that the funding in the bill (\$75,000 GPR in 2023-24 and \$1,370,000 in 2024-25) would be used to support a program manager in Racine starting in 2023-24 to expand the program to that city. Beginning in 2024-25, the funding would be used to expand the number of fellows to 30 in each of Racine and Milwaukee. [Alternative B1]

14. If the Committee wishes to provide some funding for The Literacy Lab but at a reduced cost, the Committee could provide \$500,000 GPR beginning in 2024-25 to expand the number of fellows working in Milwaukee. [Alternative B2]

Reach Out and Read

15. AB 43/SB 70 would provide \$250,000 GPR annually to Reach Out and Read, Inc. for an early literacy program operated in Wisconsin to support integration of books and reading into pediatric care and encourage families to read aloud together. [Alternative C1]

16. Reach Out and Read is a nonprofit organization that partners with pediatric clinicians (including doctors, nurses, and physician assistants) to provide children's books and information about the importance of reading to families at routine checkups for children ages birth through five. Clinicians are trained to provide information to parents such as the benefits of reading out loud to children, looking at board books and naming pictures with infants, rhyme and repetition for gaining phonemic awareness during toddlerhood, and reading interactively when reading with preschoolers. At each visit, children are given a new, developmentally-appropriate book to take home with them, so that by the time a child reaches kindergarten, they have received eight to 10 books through the program. In 2021-22, Reach Out and Read provided 6.6 million books to 4.2 million children through partnerships with 33,000 health care providers at 6,000 sites across the country.

17. Other activities include Reach Out and Read Counts, an early math initiative in which

pediatric clinicians provide parents with suggestions for engaging in counting and early math activities with children; a guide for families and medical providers of children with disabilities with tips and book recommendations for children with various special needs; and specialized training and materials for providers who serve Spanish-speaking families and American Indian/Alaska Native families. Reach Out and Read also has a military initiative to serve military families on bases worldwide.

18. Clinics apply to participate in the Reach Out and Read program. As part of their application, they must certify that they have sufficient funding to provide new books at all well-child visits from six months through five years for at least the first year of the program. The actual costs of books varies, but the organization uses an average cost of \$2.75 per book to estimate the cost of the program. Other costs, such as providing clinician training and support, are incurred by the organization.

19. Reach Out and Read Wisconsin operates at 257 clinics in 55 counties, providing more than 171,000 children with 253,000 books since the Wisconsin chapter began in 2010. Its 2021 impact report indicates that more than 75 clinics, serving an additional 35,000 children, are on the waiting list to join the program. The organization hopes to expand to an additional 50 clinics in 2023, reaching all Wisconsin counties as well as increase participation with tribal clinics and other under-resourced communities.

ALTERNATIVES

A. Wisconsin Reading Corps

1. Provide an increase of \$1,000,000 GPR in 2023-24 and \$2,000,000 GPR in 2024-25 for the Wisconsin Reading Corps.

ALT A1	Change to Base
GPR	\$3,000,000

2. Provide an increase of \$1,000,000 GPR annually for the Wisconsin Reading Corps.

ALT A2	Change to Base
GPR	\$2,000,000

3. Take no action.

B. The Literacy Lab

1. Provide \$75,000 GPR in 2023-24 and \$1,370,000 GPR in 2024-25 to The Literacy Lab to provide an evidence-based literacy intervention program in public schools located in the cities of

Milwaukee and Racine.

ALT B1	Change to Base
GPR	\$1,445,000

2. Provide \$500,000 beginning in 2024-25 to The Literacy Lab to expand the number of fellows working in Milwaukee.

ALT B2	Change to Base
GPR	\$500,000

3. Take no action.

C. Reach Out and Read

1. Provide \$250,000 GPR annually to Reach Out and Read, Inc. for an early literacy program to support integration of books and reading into pediatric care and encourage families to read aloud together.

ALT C1	Change to Base
GPR	\$500,000

2. Take no action.

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June 8, 2023

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #658

Public Library System Aids (DPI -- Administrative and Other Funding)

[LFB 2023-25 Budget Summary: Page 513, #20]

CURRENT LAW

Public library systems receive state aids in order to supplement public library services provided by local and county funds. In 2022-23, public library aid totaled \$20,013,100 SEG from the universal service fund.

The state segregated universal service fund (USF) receives its funding through assessments on annual gross operating revenues from intrastate telecommunications providers. The USF currently funds universal telecommunications services programs under the Public Service Commission (PSC); the telecommunications access program under the Department of Administration (DOA); BadgerLink, Newsline for the Blind, and public library system aid under DPI; and BadgerNet under the University of Wisconsin (UW) System. Total USF appropriations are budgeted at \$48.2 million in 2022-23. The PSC modifies assessments each year to reflect appropriation levels and unappropriated assessments.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Public library systems were created by the Legislature in 1971 in order to improve and extend public library services, promote resource sharing among libraries, and increase access to library materials and services by the state's residents. Serving a specific geographic region, each system provides special services and programs not offered by municipal and county libraries individually. Currently, there are 16 library systems serving all 72 counties and every state resident. Library systems receive state aids for coordination and supplementation of services beyond what could be provided by county and local funds.

2. Library systems do not oversee the administration of local libraries, which remain

autonomous in regard to local services and operations. Municipal funds support the costs of providing basic library services at a municipal library to residents who pay taxes for library services. A county board may provide funds to individual municipal libraries or to public library systems. County funds, which must be provided under current law, are most commonly used to provide library service or access to it for county residents not residing in a municipality that operates its own library. Counties may also provide services themselves through county libraries.

3. State aids are distributed according to a statutory formula based on the amount of state aid each public library system received in the prior year. State funds are intended to fund system services that are required by statute. Such services include interlibrary loans, reference referral, continuing education, services to users with special needs, resource library services, collection development, and multi-type library cooperation. However, systems also have the authority to develop programs that meet area needs and support such programs with state aid. Each system must provide DPI with an annual report and a proposed service plan as a condition of receiving aid, and state statutes require DPI to conduct an annual audit to ensure that no more than 20% of state funds are used for administrative purposes.

4. Prior to 2003 Act 33 (the 2003-05 biennial state budget), public library aids were fully funded with general purpose revenue (GPR). Under Act 33, a supplemental public library aid appropriation was created, funded with USF moneys. Public library systems were funded from a combination of the two appropriations through 2008-09. Under 2009 Act 28 (the 2009-11 biennial budget), the GPR appropriation was deleted and the SEG appropriation was increased, becoming the sole funding source for state aid to library systems.

5. One-time funding of \$500,000 SEG in 2017-18 and \$1,000,000 SEG in 2018-19 was provided under 2017 Act 59 as a result of a corresponding decrease in funding for the Technology for Educational Achievement (TEACH) program under DOA. TEACH provides eligible entities, including public libraries, with access to the Internet and two-way interactive video services through rate discounts and subsidized installation of data lines and video links. The one-time funding is not part of the base for the 2019-21 biennium. However, the Legislature provided an additional \$1,000,000 SEG annually beginning in 2019-21 under 2019 Act 9, which maintained funding at the same dollar amount as under the one-time funding. A further increase of \$2,500,000 SEG in 2021-22 and \$4,000,000 SEG in 2022-23 was provided under 2021 Act 58.

6. Historically, state funding for public libraries has been indexed relative to total operating expenditures from local and county sources for all public library systems in the state. Prior to 2017 Act 59 (the 2017-19 biennial budget), state statutes required DPI to include in its agency budget request a request for additional funding for public library systems so that state aid would be equal to 13 percent of estimated prior year local and county expenditures. Act 59 eliminated that requirement.

7. The table below shows the level of state aid for public library systems between 2013-14 and 2022-23, as well as total operating expenditures from local and county sources and state aid as a percentage of local expenditures.

**State Aid to Public Library Systems, Local and County Expenditures, and Aid as a Percentage of Local and County Expenditures, 2013-14 through 2022-23
(\$ in Millions)**

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Local Expenditures*</u>	<u>Aid as a % of Prior Calendar Year Expenditures</u>
2013-14	\$15.0	\$217.1	6.9%
2014-15	15.0	223.4	6.7
2015-16	15.0	232.1	6.5
2016-17	15.0	225.9	6.6
2017-18	15.5	243.7	6.4
2018-19	16.0	248.6	6.4
2019-20	16.0	254.9	6.3
2020-21	16.0	245.6	6.5
2021-22	18.5	248.6**	7.4**
2022-23	20.0	253.5**	7.9**

*Library expenditures are recorded on a calendar year basis; the expenditures shown for fiscal year 2013-14 are from calendar year 2013, the expenditures for fiscal year 2014-15 are for calendar year 2014, and so on.

** Estimated.

8. It is estimated that the current level of state public library aid will equal 7.8% of local and county expenditures in 2023-24 and 2024-25. Assembly Bill 43/Senate Bill 70 included an increase of \$7,000,000 SEG annually above base level funding of \$20,013,100 SEG for public library system aid, but in a technical errata, the Department of Administration requested that the amount be reduced to \$5,000,000 SEG annually, the same amount as was included in DPI's agency budget request. This \$5 million increase would provide state funding equal to approximately 9.8% of local and county funding in the first year of the biennium and 9.7% in the second year. [Alternative 1] The bill reduces funding for the USF-funded TEACH program under DOA by \$5,254,000 in 2023-24 and \$5,532,800 in 2024-25, which would cover the cost of the increases provided to USF funded programs under DPI (including public library aid, funding for library service contracts, funding for BadgerLink and Newslines for the Blind, and funding for a new appropriation for Recollection Wisconsin).

9. The Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) has proposed an increase of \$2,000,000 in 2023-24 and \$4,000,000 in 2024-25. [Alternative 2] These amounts would provide state funding equal to 8.6% of local and county funding in 2023-24 and 9.3% of local and county funding in 2024-25. WLA indicated that additional state aid would be targeted to three priority areas: (1) workforce and economic development, including online courses and in-person resume and interview coaching and business plan development assistance; (2) information technology, such as providing wireless internet access, coding initiatives, and technology trainings; and (3) reading proficiency and lifelong learning, including providing STEM programs, summer reading programs, and creative learning labs for all ages to learn robotics, 3D modeling, and other skills.

10. If the Committee wishes to provide additional funding for library systems at a reduced

cost, the Committee could provide an increase of \$2,000,000 SEG in each year, which would fund an estimated 8.6% of local and county funding in each year. [Alternative 3]

11. The Committee could also consider providing additional funding totaling \$1,000,000 SEG in each year, which would fund an estimated 8.2% of local and county funding in each year. [Alternative 4]

ALTERNATIVES

1. Provide an increase of \$5,000,000 beginning in 2023-24 above base level funding of \$20,013,100, which would fund an estimated 9.8% of local and county funding in 2023-24 and 9.7% in 2024-25.

ALT 1	Change to Base
SEG	\$14,000,000

2. Provide an increase of \$2,000,000 in 2023-24 and \$4,000,000 in 2024-25 above base level funding of \$20,013,100, which would fund an estimated 8.6% of local and county funding in 2023-24 and 9.3% in 2024-25.

ALT 2	Change to Base
SEG	\$6,000,000

3. Provide an increase of \$2,000,000 annually above base level funding of \$20,013,100, which would fund an estimated 8.6% of local and county funding in each year.

ALT 3	Change to Base
SEG	\$4,000,000

4. Provide an increase of \$1,000,000 annually above base level funding of \$20,013,100, which would fund an estimated 8.2% of local and county funding in each year.

ALT 4	Change to Base
SEG	\$2,000,000

5. Take no action.

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June 8, 2023

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #659

Online Early Learning Program (DPI -- Administrative and Other Funding)

CURRENT LAW

DPI is required to contract with a service provider to conduct an early learning pilot program from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2023. The program is required to provide online instruction in reading, math, and science to help low-income children transition to kindergarten.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The early learning pilot program was created under 2019 Act 170. The act provided \$500,000 GPR annually beginning in 2020-21, and specified that the appropriation would be repealed on July 1, 2023.

2. Act 170 created an appropriation for the program, and included nonstatutory language with requirements for DPI to award a contract to a service provider to administer an early learning program for children who are eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch and who live in a participating school district. DPI is required to select the following school districts for participation in the program: (a) Milwaukee Public Schools; (b) the two urban districts with the largest reading achievement gaps, with an urban district defined as a district with more than 18,000 pupils in the previous school year; and (c) three rural school districts that have reading achievement gaps, as defined by DPI, with a rural district defined as a district with fewer than 745 pupils in the previous school year.

3. Under the act, the online early learning program is required to satisfy all of the following criteria: (a) provides computer-based instruction to children on a home computer connected by the internet to a centralized file storage facility; (b) is designed to improve a child's transition to 5-year-old kindergarten; (c) contains content in reading, math, and science; (d) is aligned with nationally recognized early learning standards; (e) provides, at no cost to low-income families participating in the program, access to a computer or internet service, or both, in the homes of low-income families

participating in the program that do not have a computer or internet service access in their home; (f) includes a parental engagement and involvement component that includes interaction with a learning coach provided by the program; (g) includes an evaluation component that measures a child's growth over the course of the program; and (h) is being administered by a service provider in at least two other states.

4. DPI is required to use a competitive request-for-proposals process to award a contract to a service provider, defined as a nonstock, nonprofit organization that has successfully conducted an online early learning program and demonstrates past success using independent and reliable evaluations. DPI is required to pay the amount appropriated to the service provider, who is also required to provide a total of \$500,000 in matching funds during the three years of the contract.

5. The service provider is required to submit an annual report to DPI containing all of the following information for each participating school district: (a) the number of eligible children who applied to participate in the online early learning program; (b) the number of eligible children who participated in the online early learning program; (c) the number of low-income families that requested a computer or home internet service; (d) the number of low-income families that were provided a computer or home internet service; (e) the frequency with which children participating in the online early learning program used the instructional software provided by the program; (f) how children participating in the online early learning program performed on prekindergarten and kindergarten readiness assessments selected and administered by the service provider; and (g) parental feedback on the online early learning program. DPI is required to compile the information from the reports and submit it to the Joint Committee on Finance and to the appropriate standing committees of the Legislature by October 15, 2023. Additionally, the provider must submit information needed by DPI to identify participating pupils in the Department's student information system.

6. DPI has contracted with Waterford, an education nonprofit based in Utah, for its Waterford Upstart early learning program. Upstart has provided online kindergarten readiness instruction since 2009. The organization provides software with activities intended to teach children beginning reading, math, and science skills, with an emphasis on reading. The program also includes a parental engagement curriculum. The software includes skills such as recognizing letters and letter sounds, counting, recognizing shapes, and understanding basic science concepts such as seasons and weather. Children are required to use the program for at least 15 minutes per day, five days per week. The program is intended for use in the year before a child starts kindergarten. A 2018 analysis by the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse found strong evidence of effectiveness for the program.

7. At the time of Act 170's passage, Waterford indicated that the average cost per child for Upstart is \$1,800. The cost includes providing laptops and Internet access to families, early learning software, and support and coaching provided by Waterford. The program was initially funded by the Utah Legislature when it was first launched in Utah, and also receives funding from private donations and grants. In 2019, Waterford Institute was awarded a \$14.2 million Education Innovation and Research Expansion grant by the U.S. Department of Education to launch pilot programs in Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Idaho, and Montana.

8. In addition to Milwaukee Public Schools, the two urban school districts selected to

participate in the program are Green Bay and Racine, and the three rural school districts selected to participate are Lac du Flambeau No. 1, North Crawford, and Siren.

9. Data provided by Waterford in the annual reports submitted to DPI following the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years indicate that in 2020-21, 171 pupils registered for the program and of those, 30 completed the final assessment. Of the participating pupils, 90 were provided with a computer and 20 were provided with internet access. Participants averaged 49 minutes of reading usage per week, and total reading usage of 1,413 minutes, compared to the program benchmarks of 75 minutes per week and 1,500 minutes in total. In 2021-22, 305 pupils registered for the program. (The data provided does not indicate how many pupils completed the final assessment in that year.) Of the 305 participants, 249 received a computer and 70 received internet access. The average total reading usage for participants in 2021-22 was 1,750 minutes.

10. The reports submitted by Waterford include the number of participants by municipality. The table below shows this information by each pupil's closest participating school district.

**Pupils Participating in Online Early Learning Pilot Program,
2020-21 and 2021-22**

	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2021-22</u>
Green Bay	8	48
Lac du Flambeau	6	14
Milwaukee	38	177
North Crawford	11	4
Racine	90	55
Siren	18	6
N.A.	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
	171	304

11. 2019 Act 170 repeals the appropriation for the online early learning program effective July 1, 2023; however, Assembly Bill 43/Senate Bill 70 includes funding for the program in the 2023-25 biennium in the Chapter 20 schedule. The Legislature could take no action, which would maintain the original sunset date; if this alternative is selected, base level funding for the program would be deleted. [Alternative 2] Alternatively, the Legislature could delete the provision repealing the appropriation and establish the program in statutes, so that it would continue permanently. [Alternative 1]

ALTERNATIVES

1. Delete the sunset provision under which the early learning pilot program will end on July 1, 2023, and move the nonstatutory provisions creating the program to statutes.

2. Take no action, which would maintain the original sunset date and delete \$500,000 annually for the program.

ALT 2	Change to Base
GPR	-\$1,000,000

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PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Administrative and Other Funding

LFB Summary Items for Which No Issue Paper Has Been Prepared

<u>Item #</u>	<u>Title</u>
2	Fuel and Utilities Reestimate
19	Program Revenue Reestimates
21	Recollection Wisconsin
22	Badgerlink and Newslines for the Blind
23	Library Services Contracts

