

GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE

April 8, 2022

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing **Assembly Bill 965** in its entirety.

This bill requires the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to seek legislative approval for any changes to future report card measures, index systems, or other components, methods, and formulas by requiring DPI to promulgate rules. Further, the bill prohibits DPI from weighing pupil growth more heavily than pupil performance in calculating overall school report card scores. Finally, it requires DPI to use components and formulas used for school and school district report cards for the 2018-19 school year for report cards prepared for the 2021-22 school year.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature's continued efforts to politicize our schools and our classrooms. For years, DPI has reported school and school district report cards on an annual basis. This bill would constrain DPI's ability to improve how it calculates school report card scores, including changes based on input from parents, educators, and school administrators, as well as education experts, on what metrics best reflect school and student achievement. As I have said before and appreciate the opportunity to reiterate again today, I trust parents, educators, and schools to work together to do what is best for our kids—they have long been doing this work without political interference and micromanagement by the Legislature.

Moreover, this legislation again fails to provide meaningful investments in our kids and our schools. Our kids have faced an especially challenging few years due to the coronavirus pandemic. We must act swiftly to ensure our kids have the support and resources to be successful, and that conversation begins with the state upholding its obligation to provide meaningful, sustainable investments in our schools. Over the course of the last three years, we have worked diligently to support and improve school quality after a decade of disinvestment. Now, our pre-K-12 education system ranks 8th best in the country after falling to 17th just five years ago. We can and should do more, I have called repeatedly on the Legislature to do so, and I welcome the opportunity to work together to do what's best for our kids.

Respectfully submitted,
TONY EVERS
Governor