



Alberta Darling

Wisconsin State Senator · District 8

Testimony before the Assembly Committee on Education
Assembly Bill 975
2/16/22

Thank you Chair Thiesfeldt and committee members for taking the time to hear Assembly Bill 975.

Assembly Bill 975 has been introduced to help alleviate our substitute teacher shortage in Wisconsin. Under current law, an individual is eligible for a substitute teacher permit if the individual passes a background check, has an associate degree, and has successfully completed substitute teacher training.

Assembly Bill 975 would allow for an additional pathway for an individual to receive a substitute teaching permit. In order to qualify under this bill, an individual would need to pass a background check, be at least 21 years of age, enrolled in a teacher preparatory program approved by the State Superintendent, have achieved junior-level status in the program if applicable, and have completed at least 15 hours of classroom observation.

Assembly Bill 975 offers more benefits than just addressing the shortage of substitute teachers. This bill provides our undergraduate students working toward their degree with the opportunity to receive hands on training, better mentoring, and begin building relationships in the profession for employment later on.

I want to thank Ted Neitzke from CESA 6 for his continued leadership and for bringing this proposal to us. I hope to count on your support.

Thank you again committee members for hearing Assembly Bill 975. I hope to have your support.

Jeremy Thiesfeldt

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 52nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony on Assembly Bill 975 Substitute Teaching Bill *Assembly Committee on Education*

Good morning, honored members of the Committee. Thank you for allowing me to testify on Assembly Bill 975, an important bill that should be instrumental in making a difference in helping the teacher shortage in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin is currently facing a teacher shortage. It's been hard for many school districts to stay fully staffed with quality teachers. Finding substitute teachers has long been a struggle, and the substitute teacher shortage has only been exacerbated by the pandemic.

This bill paves a way to allow juniors and seniors in the education program at their colleges to receive substitute teaching permits. By allowing juniors and seniors to become substitute teachers, we are giving them real-world experience in their field of study, they are able to teach in various schools, schools can see if these soon-to-be teachers are a good fit, and we are hopefully helping these future teachers stay in Wisconsin after graduation. Wisconsin needs teachers.

Specifically, this bill allows an individual to receive a substitute teaching permit if the individual has a successful background check, is at least 21 years old, is enrolled in a teacher preparatory program, is a junior or senior in college, and has completed at least 15 hours of classroom observation.

This bill has been requested by one of the state's CESAS, and it is supported by many, many school districts.

We would love your support on this bill that will help our school districts, our future teachers, and of course, our students. Thank you.

Serving the communities of Fond du Lac, Oakfield, Byron, Empire, Taycheedah, and the western half of Calumet township

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Cooperative Educational Service Agency 6

Ted Neitzke, Chief Executive Officer

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2300 State Road 44

Oshkosh, WI 54904

Phone: (920) 233-CESA

The following school districts and systems support AB 975:

- Beaver Dam School District
- Markesan School District
- Neenah School District
- Harford Unified
- Slinger School District
- Southern Wisconsin District Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
- Little Chute School District
- North Fond du Lac
- Holy Hill Area School District
- Hustisford School District
- Omro School District
- Hortonville School District
- Lomira School District
- Dodgeland School District
- St. Paul Lutheran in Grafton
- Living Word Lutheran High School
- Waupun School District
- Winneconne School District
- Oshkosh School District
- Fond du Lac School District
- Erin School District
- Rosendale-Brandon School District
- Kaukauna School District
- Menasha School District
- Berlin School District
- New London School District
- Catholic Diocese of Madison
- Kewaskum School District
- Shiocton School District
- Weyauwega School District
- St. Mary's Springs Fond du Lac
- Waterloo School District
- Richmond School District
- Appleton School District
- Sheboygan Falls School District
- Port Washington School District
- Stone Bank School District
- Rhinelander School District

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- Waterford Union



**Testimony to the Assembly Education Committee
Opposition to Assembly Bills 966, 967, 968, 970, 971, 975**
submitted by the
Wisconsin Education Association Council
February 10, 2022

The Wisconsin Education Association Council, representing teachers and education support professionals in Wisconsin Public Schools, are opposed to Assembly Bills 966, 967, 968, 970, 971 and 975. These bills are circulating at a time when lawmakers should be working with parents and educators to help our students and develop sustainable solutions to the exodus of educators leaving the classroom. The following is a quote from WEAC President and teacher Peggy Wirtz-Olsen:

“Legislators need to stop politicizing our schools and pitting families against each other with divisive proposals. The supporters of these bills are making an already difficult job that much more complicated for educators. These bills are reckless and could cause the destruction of our public school system.

“The people who know best how these proposed laws would impact public schools – educators – can’t even attend the public hearing to give input because they are at work – keeping schools open and teaching students. We have not been consulted nor given time to educate the bills’ sponsors on the consequences of these bills on our students and classrooms. The bills’ sponsors are urged to take time to discuss these proposals with the front-line professionals who teach the children.”

Peggy Wirtz-Olsen, President
Bob Baxter, Executive Director

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

I am writing to you today to ask for your support of education bills AB 966, 967, 968, 970, 971 and 975. As a parent of a child enrolled in a Wisconsin public school, I believe legislation is the only way to restore parental rights in our schools. As things stand now, I have little faith in our public schools, and I see no evidence that DPI wants to operate with parental input into our schools. I want parents and taxpayers to have a say in our children's education – not a faceless bureaucracy. I believe these bills are a step in the right direction. Thank you for giving parents a much needed voice.

Doug Dyer
Elmbrook Parent and Resident

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to you today to ask for your support of education bills AB 966, 967, 968, 970, 971 and 975. All of these bills are vital to maintaining the integrity of our educational system. Wisconsin parents have lost all faith and trust in our government schools and DPI. These bills help to give authority back to the parents, taxpayers and stakeholders, to determine what is best for our children's education. Thank you for your service and commitment to improving our K-12 education system, and for helping to get Wisconsin schools back to success.

Most Sincerely,

Heidi Anderson
Brookfield, WI

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

I am writing to you today to ask for your support of education bills AB 966, 967, 968, 970, 971 and 975. All of these bills are vital to maintaining the integrity of our educational system. Wisconsin parents have lost all faith and trust in our government schools and DPI. These bills help to give authority back to the parents, taxpayers and stakeholders, to determine what is best for our children's education. Thank you for your service and commitment to improving our K-12 education system, and for helping to get Wisconsin schools back to success.

Emily Donohue
Elmbrook Parent and Resident

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to you today to ask for your support of education bills AB 966, 967, 968, 970, 971 and 975. All of these bills are vital to maintaining the integrity of our educational system. Wisconsin parents have lost all faith and trust in our government schools and DPI. These bills help to give authority back to the parents, taxpayers and stakeholders, to determine what is best for our children's education. Thank you for your service and commitment to improving our K-12 education system, and for helping to get Wisconsin schools back to success.

Thank you.
Eric Valk
950 Chester St.
Brookfield, WI