



DAVE MURPHY

State Representative • 56th Assembly District

Assembly Committee on Education

Public Hearing, February 1, 2022

Assembly Bill 893

Testimony of State Representative Dave Murphy

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, thank you for hearing Assembly Bill 893 today.

The ability to earn college credit while in high school can result in a student graduating college faster, entering the workforce earlier, and extending their earnings potential over a lifetime. Establishing positive relationships between high school students and Wisconsin colleges also increases the chance that highly skilled and academically talented students will complete their college education in our state and remain here after they graduate. For all these reasons and more we created the Early College Credit Program in the 2017-19 state budget. As a pilot program we also included a sunset date of July 2021. The ECCP has proven to be incredibly successful, which is why we continued to fund it in the current state budget; however, due to an oversight the sunset date was left in place.

Our bill simply eliminates the sunset date for the Early College Credit Program and allows high school students to continue to benefit from the funding that has already been set aside.

AB 893 has already been recommended for adoption unanimously in the Senate Committee on Education and I look forward to seeing similar bipartisan support in our chamber.



DALE KOOYENGA
STATE SENATOR · 5TH DISTRICT

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February 1, 2022

TO: Members of the Senate Committee on Education

FR: Senator Dale Kooyenga

RE: Support for AB 893 – relating to grants to support the teaching of college courses in high schools (dual enrollment)

Thank you for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 893.

The 2017-19 Wisconsin State Budget created the Early College Credit Program (ECCP) and in so doing, unintentionally harmed highly successful dual enrollment programs.

Under ECCP, any public or private high school can enter into a contractual agreement with an institution of higher education to allow students to enroll in college coursework and take one or more nonsectarian courses to earn both high school and college credit. An institution of higher education means a UW System school, a tribally controlled college, or a private, non-profit institution of higher education located in the state. These courses may be taken online, in person or in a blended format.

Dual enrollment programs can significantly reduce the rising cost of higher education for students. Along with the creation of the program, a \$500,000-per-year grant program was created and administered by the Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB) to assist high school teachers in covering tuition expenses for courses taken to meet the minimum qualifications necessary to teach dual enrollment courses. Funding for the program was included in the 2021-23 budget. However the underlying program to access the funding sunset in 2021.

Assembly Bill 893 eliminates the sunset date of this successful program.

Thank you for hearing AB 893. I respectfully ask for your support.

Supporting High Schools' Ability to Offer Concurrent Enrollment Courses
Elmbrook Schools
February 1, 2022

Greetings, I am Mike Sereno and I serve as the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning in the School District of Elmbrook. Elmbrook serves the communities of Brookfield, Elm Grove and New Berlin in Waukesha County. We serve over 7,500 students and send over 90% of students to a two year or four year college.

I believe that all of our elected representatives recognize the tremendous cost associated with obtaining a post-secondary degree. This is a cost that families across our state take on to ensure a brighter future for their children. Separate but related to the high cost of a post-secondary education, is the current labor shortage we are experiencing across all sectors of our economy. I have not witnessed a labor shortage of this magnitude in my lifetime, and it appears this challenge will continue into the foreseeable future.

Now more than ever, it is essential that we look for innovative ways to shorten both the time and the cost to a post-secondary degree for our students. Our K-12 education system serves as a key lever in this area. In addition to providing high school students the opportunity to attend university classes through programs like the Early College Credit Program (ECCP) and Start College Now (SCN), many high schools across our state offer a variety of concurrent enrollment courses - courses taught by high school faculty that can be taken for college credit through a partner university. These courses are more accessible to students than ECCP and SCN courses, as they are offered at the students' high school. Additionally, these courses cost significantly less than courses offered through ECCP and SCN. In the School District of Elmbrook, we have been continually expanding our concurrent enrollment course offerings through partnerships with universities like UW-Oshkosh, and UW-Milwaukee. Our goal is to provide all students and families with the opportunity to earn up to 30 college credits prior to graduating high school, significantly reducing the time and cost to their post-secondary degree.

The single greatest barrier to offering concurrent enrollment courses in our state's high schools, is securing faculty that will be approved to teach the courses through our partner universities and their accrediting body, The Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Each of these universities (and the HLC) require our instructors to have a masters degree and a minimum of 15 masters level graduate credits in the content area they are teaching. While the rigor of this coursework is significant for our high school faculty, we have found that the cost of the courses often dissuades qualified educators from pursuing the credentials needed to teach concurrent enrollment courses.

The Dual Enrollment Credential Grant, offered through the Higher Education Aids Board over the past 3 years, has permitted The Elmbrook School District to assist 8 of our teachers in becoming credentialed to teach concurrent enrollment courses. In our district, this has allowed

us to expand our offerings to include two additional English courses, one additional speech course, and two additional mathematics courses in which our students can obtain university credit.

While we are excited that we can offer these opportunities to students, in many cases we are one retirement or resignation away from having to eliminate our concurrent enrollment courses. We simply do not yet have a pipeline of educators credentialed to take on these courses as opportunities become available. As I collaborate with school districts in southeast Wisconsin, their story is the same.

Extending the Dual Enrollment Credential Grant is essential for schools to continue to offer and expand their concurrent enrollment offerings; but this is about more than just maintaining and expanding offerings - this grant will positively impact Wisconsin families pocket books and can serve as one strategy to overcome the acute labor shortage we currently see across all Wisconsin industries.

Thank you for your time and support.

Respectfully submitted,

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Assistant Superintendent, Elmbrook Schools



Office of Government Relations

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DATE: February 1, 2022

TO: Members of the Assembly Committee on Education

FROM: Deej Lundgren, UW System Interim Associate Vice President for Government Relations

RE: Written Testimony on Assembly Bill 893

Thank you, Chair Thiesfeldt and committee members, for providing UW System (UWS) an opportunity to submit written testimony on Assembly Bill 893 (AB 893). UWS supports this legislation, and we thank Representative Murphy and Senator Kooyenga for authoring the bill.

UWS supports offering dual enrollment courses for Wisconsin students as it provides them the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school. Dual enrollment programs increase students' access to higher education and can limit their total financial obligation by completing college coursework at a reduced rate while in high school. However, high school teachers, who teach dual enrollment courses must meet the criteria established by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The Dual Enrollment Credential Grant administered by the Wisconsin Higher Education Aids Board (HEAB) is vital to the growth of dual enrollment programs in Wisconsin as many high school educators teaching these courses need additional education to meet the HLC criteria.

UWS institutions continue to grow our dual enrollment offerings. However, continued growth of these programs could be hampered with the sunset of the Dual Enrollment Credential Grant. This legislation would allow more high school teachers the opportunity to take the needed coursework, encourage continued program growth, and expand access to high school students.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony on this legislation.

