



For Immediate Release
February 6, 2017

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The Arc Wisconsin Celebrates Investments in Youth with Disabilities Seeking Employment

Madison, WI – The Arc Wisconsin supports Governor Walker’s proposed new investments to ensure youth with disabilities can get jobs in their communities. The Governor has pledged to invest in two disability employment initiatives that also support schools to develop quality transition supports for youth.

“The Governor’s Better Bottom Line transition incentives proposal already has bi-partisan support and will reward schools that prove they have helped youth with disabilities keep jobs or enroll in postsecondary education. This is a great way to invest in the outcomes we want,” says Lisa Pugh, State Director of The Arc Wisconsin.

According to the Department of Public Instruction too few of Wisconsin’s special education students are successfully transitioning to competitive work or postsecondary education after completing high school. Schools say they don’t have the resources and teachers don’t have enough time to connect directly with businesses and secure jobs for students.

The Governor’s proposal provides a total of \$7.6 million in employment supports for youth with disabilities. The funding includes awards to school districts that help students obtain employment or postsecondary training and an initiative that offers supports for school districts to improve their transition programs. Both initiatives have been supported by the Department of Public Instruction and have been championed in the legislature by Representative Rob Brooks (R-Sauville.).

“Just one paid job for a youth can double their chances of being employed after high school,” says Pugh. “This funding will mean more kids will be able to have work experiences before they graduate.”

The Arc Wisconsin looks forward to seeing the details of the Governor’s education proposals which also including promising investments in mental health supports, school social workers and increased per pupil funding that will benefit all students with disabilities.

The Arc Wisconsin advocates for and serves people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD), including Down syndrome, autism, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, cerebral palsy and other diagnoses. The Arc Wisconsin has 15 local chapters and is connected to a network of more than 650 chapters across the country promoting and protecting the human rights of people with I/DD and actively supporting their full inclusion and participation in the community.

Editor’s Note: The Arc is not an acronym; always refer to us as The Arc, not The ARC and never ARC. The Arc should be considered as a title or a phrase.