



SCOTT WALKER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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More Money for Schools and Lower Property Taxes: Governor Walker Announces Support for Increased Aid for Rural Schools

Governor Walker backs bill co-authored by Sen. Marklein and Rep. Mursau

MADISON – Governor Scott Walker is visiting schools in Wausaukee, Cadott, and Belmont today to announce his support for legislation that will increase Sparsity Aid for rural schools. The increased aid for rural schools is on top of the budget's historic \$11.5 billion investment in K-12 funding, increased support for High-Cost Transportation Aid in rural areas, and expanded efforts to provide broadband access statewide.

"Rural communities have unique challenges and our original state budget plan included a major boost for rural schools," said Governor Walker. "I am pleased that Senator Marklein and Representative Mursau are introducing a bill incorporating initiatives from our budget proposal to help rural schools."

Senator Howard Marklein (R – Spring Green) and Representative Jeff Mursau (R – Crivitz) introduced legislation that increases Sparsity Aid for the 2018-19 school year. The Sparsity Aid Program aims to offset the challenges faced by low-population school districts through providing \$300 in per-pupil funding for districts with 745 students or less and a population density of less than 10 students per square mile.

The new bill provides an increase from \$300 per pupil to \$400 per pupil for districts that currently qualify for Sparsity Aid, and creates a second tier of Sparsity Aid by providing \$100 per pupil for districts with 746-1000 pupils.

"This bill provides rural schools with support that they desperately need," said Senator Marklein. "I am proud to champion this bill and look forward to working with my colleagues to move it through the legislative process."

"This increase in Sparsity Aid will positively impact rural school districts across Wisconsin," said Representative Mursau. "Our rural districts face significant challenges and I'm thankful we have an opportunity to provide these districts additional state support."

Governor Walker has visited more than 50 schools across Wisconsin since the beginning of 2017, and the budget he signed into law provides a \$636 million increase in general and categorical aids. The total two-year state investment in K-12 education is \$11.5 billion, an all-time high in actual dollars.

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