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For Immediate Release

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State Senator Kathy Bernier

## **DPI Word Salad Shows Ed. Agency Completely Out-of-Touch with Parents, Unwilling to Acknowledge Reading Crisis**

*While 64% of 4<sup>th</sup> Graders Fall Behind in Reading, DPI Makes Case Against Research-Based Reading Help for children, Lays Out Plans to Kick the Can Down the Road*

(Madison)... Senator Kathy Bernier (R – Chippewa Falls) issued the following statement on the Department of Public Instruction’s recent essay “[The Riches of Reading](#)”:

“When 64% of Wisconsin 4<sup>th</sup> graders can’t even read at grade level, remarks like these show just how out-of-touch these Madison bureaucrats really are. Too many parents aren’t told their child is struggling to read until the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Forward Exam when their child has already fallen behind and lost self-confidence. Parents don’t want the Department’s wishful thinking about ‘authentic family engagement’ or endless meetings they don’t have time to attend. They need to be informed years earlier that their child is struggling and they need a plan to get their child back on track.

“It’s ironic and sad that the very people who got us into this mess are too busy writing word salad essays and planning useless meetings, that they’re not hearing the thousands of parents and educators across this state crying out for actual meaningful engagement to turn around Wisconsin’s literacy crisis. We need to catch struggling readers sooner through evidence-based screeners, simple in-class interventions, and clear requirements in law for open communication with parents.

“As DPI buries its head further in the sand, thousands of parents and educators now look to former Superintendent Evers to recognize that current law is leaving two-thirds of our kids behind. We appeal to Governor Evers: sign this bipartisan bill into law.”

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