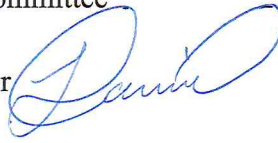


TO: Members, Assembly Education Committee

FROM: Daniel Henderson, Project Manager



DATE: January 17, 2024

RE: AB 937 - Incorporating cursive writing into state standards.

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Thank you for your consideration. The Wisconsin Council of Religious and Independent Schools (WCRIS) opposes AB-937.

As you may know, WCRIS represents over 600 private schools and over 100,000 students in K-12 schools across the state. Nationwide, Wisconsin is in the top 10 of states for private school enrollment. Wisconsin's private schools enroll about ten percent of our state's K4-12th grade population.

About two-thirds of those schools utilize the choice programs to carry out their mission of expanding access to the education they provide.

Currently, many choice schools still provide instruction in cursive writing to their students. Because of that practice, AB-937 would not impose anything new on most choice schools.

However, it will remove a school's autonomy. This autonomy is the driving force behind our schools' success and the reason many parents seek out our schools.

While some may argue that AB-937 is just a minor bill for our schools to follow, WCRIS is here to remind you that it is another mandate looming over our schools this session.

Currently, our choice schools are in the process of revamping their reading curriculum because of the Right to Read Act. Many high schools are awaiting crime reporting rules because of 2023 Act 12.

Furthermore, other proposals are looming that currently lead to more government regulation, bureaucracy and expense:

- AB 24 - Requiring the posting of child abuse and neglect hotline;
- AB 163 - Requiring anti-choking devices in school;

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Association of Christian  
Schools International

Christian Schools  
International

Diocese of Green Bay

Diocese of LaCrosse

Diocese of Madison

Diocese of Superior

Lutheran Church  
Missouri Synod  
North Wisconsin District

Lutheran Church  
Missouri Synod  
South Wisconsin District

Wisconsin Association  
of Independent Schools

Wisconsin Conference  
of Seventh Day Adventists

Wisconsin Evangelical  
Lutheran Synod  
Northern Wisconsin District

Wisconsin Evangelical  
Lutheran Synod  
Western Wisconsin District

Wisconsin Evangelical  
Lutheran Synod  
Southeastern Wisconsin  
District

Associate Members

PHONE  
(608) 287-1224

E-MAIL  
wcris.staff@wcris.org

WEBSITE  
www.wcris.org

ADDRESS  
110 East Main Street  
Suite 802  
Madison, WI 53703

- AB 223 - Maintaining and supply of opioid antagonists in schools;
- AB 346 - Requiring a cold-water immersion tub at a youth athletic activity hosted by a private school;
- AB 347 - Requiring an automated external defibrillator at youth athletic activities operated by a private school;
- AB 377 - Participating in sports according to sex;
- SB 333 - Relating to the sexual misconduct of school staff and volunteers.

Our schools are responsive to their community and parents. They want school safety for their children. Their wisdom has already instituted many measures that will help improve the education of their students. If any of the above measures are necessary, they will occur as a result of the free choices of the people in charge.

It is no secret that choice schools have received a sizable voucher increase this session. However much of the increase has been needed for costs to comply with the new reading and crime reporting requirements, rather than for closing the existing funding gap. This leaves our schools little additional funding to address these proposed new regulations.

**We ask for the removal of private schools from the cursive writing requirements.**

Allow our schools and parents to use the competition of the free enterprise system to create the requirement, if needed. It's this very component that has made our schools places of educational excellence, and places of choice for parents.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office if we can be of assistance.