

February 1, 2024

Representatives Kitchens and Wittke, and Senators Stroebel and Jagler,

Thank you for your continued partnership and support in our shared efforts to improve early literacy in Wisconsin's schools. I am thankful for the assistance you continue to provide and appreciate your willingness to deepen relationships to help students and educators.

I am following up on the letter we received from numerous education stakeholders, dated January 26, 2024, calling attention to the implementation challenges they are facing at the local level with 2023 Act 20.

While the department is on track to meet the statutory deadlines spelled out within the statute, our partners in schools (both public and private), continue to convey genuine fear. Without additional flexibility concerning timelines, the initial rollout of this important work may be disrupted or worse yet, fail to take hold.

I am therefore asking that you please consider making changes to the timelines spelled out in the first year of 2023 Act 20, slightly delaying the compliance timeline, to reflect the magnitude of the change we're asking local school leaders, as well as educators, parents, and learners, to make.

I am willing to organize a small group of stakeholders who are willing to present a set of narrowly tailored recommendations that respect the spirit and goals of the law, while providing the needed flexibility for implementation and the professional training necessary for this important effort to raise achievement to be successful. The focus of this conversation, as pointed out in the letter you received, centers on how the universal screener is provided to schools.

I look forward to your response to this request and stand ready to provide you with recommendations when you are open to them. We are so close. I don't want this to fail, and a big piece of this is reassuring our school district leaders by giving them the appropriate amount of time needed to do this implementation right.

Yours in partnership,



Dr. Jill Underly
State Superintendent
Department of Public Instruction

Cc: Bob Delaporte, John Soper, Honorable Governor Tony Evers, Executive Director Faith Vanderhorst, Executive Director Dee Pettack, Government Relations Director Chris Kulow, Executive Director Jerry Fiene