

To: Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities

From: Dee Pettack, Legislative Liaison, DPI

Date: March 10, 2015

Re: Statement on Assembly Bill 56

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) offers the following statement for information on Assembly Bill 56 (AB 56).

Earning a high school diploma demonstrates that a graduate is ready to be successful in the next steps of life. As such, reducing the need for college remediation and improving readiness of high school students are priorities shared by both DPI and the UW System. Both agencies are currently collaborating to address remediation issues and overall readiness for students who attend any UW System school.

Several years ago DPI overhauled Wisconsin's English Language Arts and Math Standards. Leaders from business, commerce, workforce, and higher education were convened to tell us what they expected from Wisconsin's high school graduates. As a result, Wisconsin's new academic standards for mathematics and English language arts are higher and more rigorous than the previous standards. We heard from faculty at public and private colleges and universities throughout the state who support Wisconsin's higher standards and that their implementation will help to reverse a trend of too many incoming students needing remedial education in mathematics.

The Department has the following concerns with the proposal as currently drafted:

- The bill does not provide a provision related to non-traditional students who may have exited high school years ago and are now returning to finish their degree.
- AB 56 requires UW campuses to track high school students and create a report specifically for the legislature. Sharing that report with the schools, school boards, and parents, who may have more information about non-reported factors, opposed to or in addition to sharing it with the legislature, may be useful.
- It is unclear what methods will be used to delineate between the variance in tests and proficiency scores used to determine math and English remediation at UW System schools and how that will be reflected in the reported data.
- The proposal is unclear as to the protections it will provide to maintain student privacy under the new reporting requirement.

DPI will continue to work with our educational partners around the state on college readiness. We want to make sure that all our students are on the path to success in the next stage of their academic career.



School Administrators Alliance

Representing the Interests of Wisconsin School Children

TO: Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities
FROM: John Forester, Director of Government Relations
DATE: March 10, 2015
RE: Assembly Bill 56 – UW System Remedial Courses

The School Administrators Alliance (SAA) is testifying for information only on Assembly Bill 56, relating to UW System reporting on students taking remedial courses in English and Mathematics.

This bill, if adopted, would require the UW Board of Regents to submit a report to the legislature by September 1 of each year that identifies the high schools of students who, based on placement test performance in the preceding 12 months, are required to take remedial courses in English or Mathematics.

We believe this bill provides a great opportunity for Wisconsin to improve in the area of high school and higher education collaboration and data sharing. But, in order to do so, the bill must be improved and strengthened.

Currently, school districts can send a data file of their graduates to the UW placement exam office and eventually get a report on placement exam results. This is not the primary mission of this office, so there is a time delay in getting the report. I'm not sure how many school districts are aware of and request this report. There are two other limitations of the current report. First, school districts don't receive any individual data that is actionable and the report is a system-wide report on placement test results, not actual student placements at the various UW campuses.

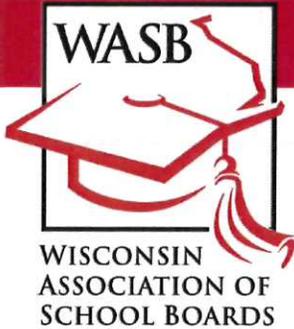
It is our understanding that the Technical College System sends all districts a report on actual placements and includes student level data. In addition, a Dane County school administrator shared with me that they receive a data file with individual student information from Madison College. The key here is that districts receive detailed information and Madison College does this with all of its school districts on a regular basis. They even hold workshops to engage school administrators on the topic.

If it is required that the UW System provide the legislature this report by high school, there should also be a requirement that UW System send each school district an annual report that includes placement exam results, actual course placements, and student level data to support school district continuous improvement efforts. We need to seize this opportunity to provide school districts

with better data to analyze what course sequences and other factors contribute to college readiness as opposed to remediation. Otherwise the legislature simply receives a report that presents some schools in a good light and some schools in a bad light without schools receiving useful data to guide improvement efforts.

Mr. Chairman, I have reached out to the author of the bill, but we haven't had an opportunity to discuss our ideas. We would be happy to work with the author and with the Committee on improving the bill.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. If you should have any questions regarding the SAA's thoughts on AB 56, please call me at (608) 242-1370.



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John H. Ashley, Executive Director

TO: Members, Assembly Committee on Colleges & Universities
FROM: Dan Rossmiller, Government Relations Director
RE: Assembly Bill 56, relating to University of Wisconsin System reports regarding remedial courses in English and mathematics.
DATE: March 10, 2015

Mr. Chairman and members, my name is Dan Rossmiller, and I am the government relations director for the Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB), representing all 424 of Wisconsin's locally elected public school boards. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Assembly Bill 56.

Assembly Bill 56 requires the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin (UW) System to require each student who is a graduate of any high school in this state to identify the high school, and the city, village, or town in which it is located, when taking any English or mathematics placement test that is required upon the student's admission to the UW System. The bill also requires the Board of Regents to submit a report to the legislature by September 1 of each year that identifies the high schools of students who, based on placement test performance in the preceding 12 months, are required to take remedial courses in English or mathematics. The bill prohibits the Board of Regents from disclosing the identities of such students in the reports.

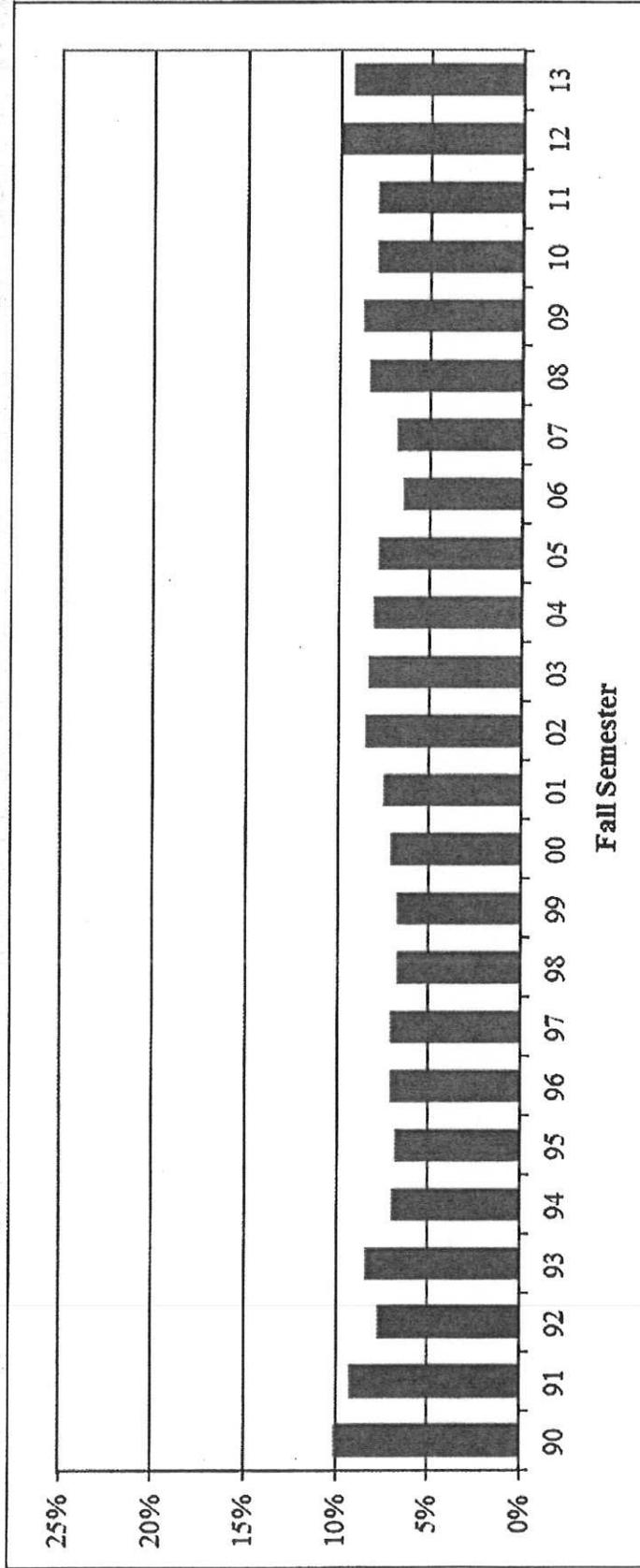
Many school boards strive to ensure every student is prepared to succeed after high school. The WASB would like to see this bill expanded in a way that can assist school board efforts to ensure such success. We see this as an opportunity for school boards to gather useful information to identify areas where improvement is needed in instruction, curriculum, and assessment of student proficiency to better prepare college-bound students to succeed at the next level. If our students aren't achieving success or aren't adequately prepared to succeed, school boards want to know that so we can take appropriate steps to correct this.

Currently, schools can obtain information of the type identified in this bill from the UW System by request but it can be a lengthy process. The WASB would support amending the bill to include providing the results back to the school districts themselves as well as to the Legislature. That way school boards have another diagnostic tool available to help direct continuous improvement activities at the local level.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I would be happy to answer questions.

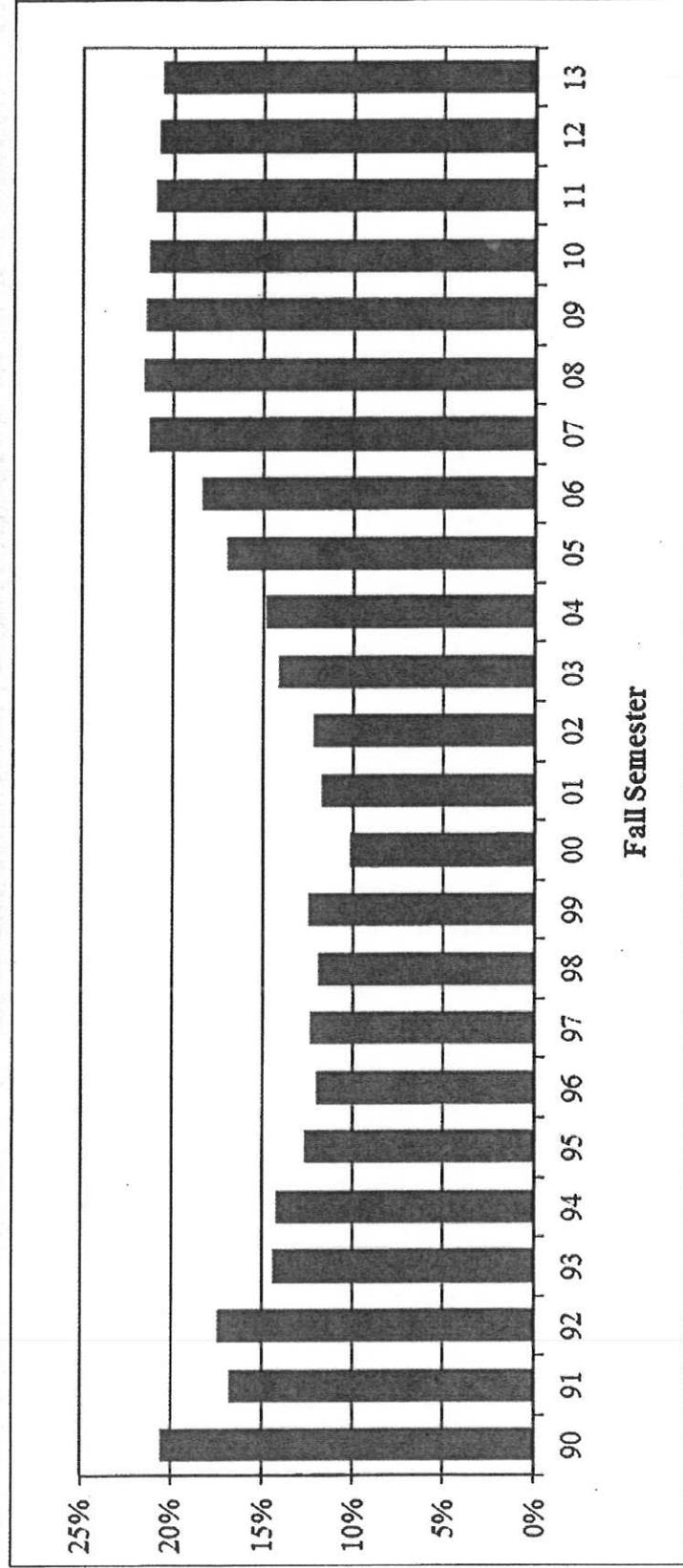
UW System New Freshmen Placed into English Remediation, 1990-2013

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UW System New Freshmen Placed into Math Remediation, 1990-2013

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Fall Semester