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P.O. Box 7882 • Madison, WI 53707-7882

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Contact:

Senator Alberta Darling

1-608-266-5830

Senator Duey Stroebel

1-608-266-7513

Senators: It's Time to Prepare for Back to School

(Madison) - With only a couple months left before the start of the new school year, Governor Evers finally released guidance to schools for reopening this fall. State Senators Alberta Darling and Duey Stroebel are concerned the plan doesn't put an emphasis on outcomes and could lead to a lost year for students.

Most of the decision is currently left up to local school boards. Senator Darling says she supports letting local officials decide, in part because the Governor's 87-page guidebook skips over the most important job of schools - providing a quality education for students.

"September will be here soon. Parents and students need to know that children will be put in a position to succeed and learn. Unfortunately, that doesn't seem to be a priority for the DPI. I am grateful my local districts are already surveying parents and working on plans for the upcoming school year and through our conversations have emphasized learning and safety are their top concerns," Darling said, "Providing a quality education must go on. Despite the challenges ahead, there must be a real emphasis on the outcomes for our students. Our students do not have the luxury to waste a year and we cannot allow that to happen."

Senator Stroebel says the Governor's plan is shortchanging students.

"It is disappointing the DPI guidance did not even consider the possibility of children learning five days a week in the presence of a teacher. For most children, the ad hoc virtual instruction we saw this spring is no replacement for in person instruction. It is unrealistic to have more than 420 school districts create online learning curricula in parallel with classroom instruction. For those seeking virtual instruction, there are established online options that have been developed over years and are available now," Stroebel said "What I hear from my constituents is we

need to get our kids learning again, in a safe environment, every day. I want to remind all school districts they have the power to decide how their schools will function this fall regardless of DPI's guidance. I know Wisconsin has the ingenuity to educate safely in this environment without hamstringing our children's education."

Senator Darling represents portions of Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington and Waukesha Counties. Senator Stroebel represents portions of Calumet, Fond Du Lac, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, and Washington Counties.

The DPI guidance plan is available [here](#).

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