

# Education

## **DRW supports education policies that offer equal opportunity and quality supports to students with disabilities.**

**Why:** Wisconsin has a significant achievement gap for students with disabilities which has been exacerbated by a decade-long funding freeze on state special education investments. In the 2014-15 school year, 8th graders with disabilities were only one-third as likely to be proficient in language arts as their peers; only 1 in 10 8th graders with disabilities were proficient in math. High school completion rates for students with disabilities consistently lag 20 points lower than their peers. When students with disabilities do not achieve a high school diploma, often they are destined for a life of poverty, reliant on public benefits, and are at higher risk of the school to prison pipeline.

- **Proposal:** DRW strongly supports increased state funding for special education services to keep pace with increasing costs. (State match to 30% of costs; fully fund high cost students. See DPI estimates.)
- **Proposal:** Support DPI with specific, time-limited funding to implement promising Results Driven Accountability and College and Career Ready IEP initiatives that have the potential to reduce achievement gaps. Focus local technical assistance efforts on ensuring that educators and families understand their roles in helping students with disabilities succeed. (\$1 million over the biennium).

## **DRW supports the elimination of harmful seclusion and restraint practices in our schools.**

- **Proposal:** Adopt recommendations from the “Seclusion & Restraint in Wisconsin Public School Districts 2013-2014: Miles to Go” report including state level data collection and investment in training on evidence-based crisis intervention practices, particularly in schools and districts with problematic data. (\$500,000 over the biennium).

## **DRW supports equitable accountability measures for all schools that receive public funding.**

**Why:** Parents of students with disabilities need accurate information about education outcomes to participate in improving their child’s education. There is an increasing reliance on publicly funded segregated schools that do not report data that is available to parents.

- **Proposal:** DRW supports requiring student performance reporting by all schools that receive public funding, including public, voucher, charter, schools for the Deaf and Visually Impaired and County Children with Disability Education Boards (CCDEBs). Data must be comparable across schools. (No cost).

## **DRW opposes expansion of voucher programs of any type that do not protect necessary Individuals with Disabilities Education Act rights of students with disabilities.**