

## **CO-SPONSORSHIP MEMORANDUM**

**TO: All Legislators**

**FROM: Rep. Shae Sortwell**

**Sen. André Jacque**

**DATE: Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>**

**RE: Co-Sponsorship of LRB-0322/1, relating to: a school psychologist loan program.**

**DEADLINE: Tuesday, May 13<sup>th</sup> at 4pm**

Addressing the mental health of our youth has become more and more important as depression, anxiety, and other mental health concerns have [skyrocketed](#) over the last several years. One area that needs addressing is Wisconsin's school psychologist shortage. The National Association of School Psychologists has a recommended [state standard](#) of 500 students to 1 school psychologist. According to 2021-2022 data, Wisconsin has a ratio of 815:1.

To incentivize students to go into this field, LRB-0322 creates a school psychologist loan forgiveness program that models the program for teachers. Administered by the Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB), they may award to those eligible a loan up to \$10,000 annually for up to three years. HEAB must also forgive 25% of the loan for each school year that the recipient is employed as a school psychologist in an urbanized county or rural area.

This legislation has the support of the Wisconsin School Psychologist Association.

**To be added as a co-sponsor of this legislation, please reply to this email or contact Rep. Sortwell's office (9102) or Sen. Jacque's office (6-3512).**

### ***Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau***

This bill creates a school psychologist loan program to be administered by the Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB) for students who meet certain eligibility criteria, including enrollment at an institution of higher education in a program of study leading to a school psychologist career. Under the program, HEAB may award to an eligible graduate student a loan of up to \$10,000 annually for up to three years. HEAB must forgive 25 percent of the

loan for each school year that the recipient is employed as a school psychologist in a rural county or urbanized area, as defined in the bill. "School psychologist" is defined in the bill as a licensed psychologist who practices in a school-based setting or an individual who is licensed as a school psychologist under rules promulgated by the Department of Public Instruction.