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(MADISON) – The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities supports the many families, school districts and educators who have shared at budget hearings statewide this spring the need for a significant increased state investment in special education funding.

As the Joint Committee on Finance prepares to consider state funding of special education on Thursday, BPDD supports the Governor’s proposal to fund special education at 45% in year one of the next biennial budget, and 50% in the second year.

The significant strains put on students with disabilities, their families and local school districts as a result of the historic pandemic has made investing in supports to address skill regression, increased behavioral challenges, and heightened social isolation resulting from the pandemic especially important.

The Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations, of which BPDD is a member, released a survey from 300 Wisconsin families in February:

- 9 in 10 families report a negative change in special education services.
- 3 in 4 families expect their child to experience skill regression.
- 2 in 3 expect or are experiencing increased behavior challenges.
- Over 2 in 3 say they expect their child to lose friendships and critical social connections.