

Helping Students Reach their Dreams

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Sen. Jeff Smith writes about the “Reaching Higher for Higher Education” package he introduced with legislative colleagues to invest in Wisconsin’s higher educational institutions and make college more affordable for students and families around our state.

MADISON - If you ever asked a kid what they want to be when they grow up, I’m sure you heard a good answer. Kids dream of being an astronaut, firefighter, teacher or doctor. With all the confidence in the world, a kid can assert they want to grow up to be the President of the United States. Kids have big dreams and see endless opportunities in their future.

Unfortunately, kids can lose some of this ambition as they get older and learn about the expensive costs that come when pursuing a higher education. In Wisconsin, [the median student loan debt is \\$17,323](#)

. In 2016, Wisconsin ranked 14th among states based on average student debt, and 7th overall for the proportion of graduates with debt, according to the [Institute for College Access and Success](#)

. These statistics are a reality check for many students as they’re planning their future. This information can deter students from achieving their dreams, but it doesn’t have to be like this.

