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Governor Calls for Broad Look at Education Financing in First Meeting of Task Force on Educational Excellence

Wants Focus on Ensuring Every Dollar is Spent Efficiently and Resources are Focused on the Classroom

Governor Jim Doyle today called on his Task Force on Educational Excellence to take a broad look at education financing in the State of Wisconsin, including what can be done to ensure that a higher percentage of what we spend on education is actually spent in the classroom.

"We must recognize that we are living in very difficult times financially," Governor Doyle said. "We have just come through the worst fiscal crisis in our history, and our taxpayers are already overburdened. The first question we have to ask ourselves is: are we getting the most out of every dollar? What more can we do to ensure that the money we spend on education actually gets to the classroom?"

The Governor charged the task force with examining Wisconsin's system of financing education, which will include six specific areas:

- 1) To examine and make recommendations regarding the cost of providing a great education to every child in Wisconsin and determine the level at which Wisconsin citizens are prepared to fund that education.
- 2) To review how the state funds education through a combination of state and local taxes, and make recommendations regarding what proportion of these two taxes is fair and reasonable to fund public education.
- 3) To study and make recommendations on how to improve the state's ability to attract, recruit, train, and retain high quality teachers so that every child and every classroom has a highly qualified teacher.
- 4) To consider and recommend ways to adequately fund special education – an area in which the federal government has clearly and consistently failed to live up to its promises to our state and to our schoolchildren.

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- 5) To review existing barriers to academic achievement in Wisconsin and make recommendations to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to a great education, regardless of location, disability, language barriers, or their economic situation.
- 6) To study Wisconsin's current investments in early childhood education and recommend ways to deepen our commitment to early education

The Governor asked the Task Force to evaluate these issues in a "thorough and thoughtful" manner and to report back to him and to the State Superintendent by the end of the year, with final recommendations in the spring.

"Here in Wisconsin, we have a long, proud tradition of supporting our public schools," Governor Doyle said. "There is not another state in the country that wouldn't swap their education system for ours, from kindergarten through college. But there is still much that can and must be done to improve our school system, and we have an obligation to do everything we can to ensure our kids get the best opportunities we can provide."

Michael Spector serves as Chair of the Task Force.

"Michael Spector is a highly respected member of the business community and former School Board member who understands the unique needs of schools, businesses, communities, and taxpayers," Doyle said. "He will provide real leadership and valuable experience, and will be a strong voice for education in our state."

The Governor was also joined at the meeting by Superintendent of Public Instruction Elizabeth Burmaster, whom he thanked for her invaluable advice and counsel as he worked to form the Task Force.

Members of the public can find information about the Task Force, its charge, and its next meetings and submit testimony to the members of the Task Force online at edexcellence.wisconsin.gov.

Attached is the final list of Task Force members. Please note new members Tom Hall and Jim Forbes. Additionally, Vicki Boxer Samson has been replaced by Jerry Deschane.

Membership of the Governor's Task Force on Educational Excellence

The following officials have been appointed by Governor Jim Doyle to serve on the Governor's Task Force on Educational Excellence.

Michael J. Spector: Shorewood, will serve as chair of the task force. A highly respected member of the business community, Spector is a retired chairman and managing partner at Quarles & Brady LLP. He is a former Shorewood School Board member and has represented numerous school districts in Southeastern Wisconsin.

Kathleen Adee: Washburn, four-year old kindergarten/early childhood special education teacher. Adee helped develop the four-year-old kindergarten program in Washburn.

William Andrekopoulos: Milwaukee, Superintendent of the Milwaukee Public School System. Andrekopoulos has worked in Milwaukee Public Schools since 1973, spending seven years working in special education.

Barbara Arnold: Madison. Arnold served on the Madison Metropolitan School District Board of Education for nine years, including three as its president.

Debra Brown: Exeland, District Administrator for the Bruce School District. Brown served as a member of the Rusk County Transition Advisory Council, which devised an Interagency Agreement to support the transition of students with disabilities into the community.

Mark Bugher: Madison, Director, University Research Park. Bugher is a former Secretary of the Departments of Revenue and Administration.

Judith Crain: Green Bay, retired. Crain served on the Green Bay Board of Education for 16 years, including five years as president. She is currently the President of the Board of Directors of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families.

Timothy Cullen: Janesville, Cobalt Corporation Senior Vice President. Cullen is a former Secretary of the Department of Wisconsin Health and Social Services (now DHFS).

Jerry Deschane: Stoughton, Wisconsin Builders Association Executive Vice-President. Deschane is the current President of the Stoughton Area School Board.

John Drew: Milwaukee, Autoworker, DaimlerChrysler Kenosha Plant. Drew has been with UAW Local 72 since 1979, and has served as President since 1996. He is member of the Kenosha AFL-CIO Council, the NAACP, and the UAW Wisconsin State CAP Executive Board.

Neil Duresky: La Crosse, retired. Duresky serves on the La Crosse School Board and is the current President of Wisconsin Association of School Boards, representing Region 6.

Jim Forbes: Milwaukee. Forbes is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Badger Meter Corporation.

Lois Glover: Milwaukee, retired. Glover is the current President of WISDOM, a statewide organization of congregations working for justice.

Andrew Gokee: Stevens Point, Outreach Specialist for the Native American Center at UW-Stevens Point. Gokee also serves as an advisor for two Native American student organizations at UWSP.

Kim Lentz Grau: Wausau, court reporter in Marathon County. Lentz Grau is involved in Parent Teacher Organization at two schools in Wausau.

Tom Hall: Rice Lake, retired. Hall is the former director of Special Education and Pupil Services for the Rice Lake School District.

Mark Hanna: Sheboygan, Investment Consultant at Ziegler Investment Services. Hanna is a member of the Sheboygan School Board.

David Hase: Mequon, attorney at Cooke & Franke S.C. Hase was a member of the Mequon-Thiensville School Board for 22 years.

Pam Johnson: Oconomowoc, registered nurse at Children's Hospital. Johnson is a member of the Oconomowoc Area School District Parents Advisory Council.

Willie Jude: Milwaukee, Principal of Custer High School. Jude has over 30 years of experience working in Milwaukee Public Schools.

Thai Lee: Appleton, teacher, English as a Second Language. Lee also teaches Hmong Literacy in Appleton.

Bruce Meredith: Madison, General Counsel for the Wisconsin Education Association Council. Meredith was one of the attorneys involved in *Vincent v. Voight*, a school finance case that established a new set of constitutional standards for Wisconsin public schools.

Cecilia Millard: Racine, elementary school teacher. Millard is a third grade teacher at Julian Thomas Elementary School.

Dean Ryerson: Wisconsin Rapids, District Administrator of Wisconsin Rapids School District. Ryerson also served as an assistant principal in Beaver Dam.

Tim Scobie: Chippewa Falls, general counsel for Mason Shoe Company. Scobie works with Boy Scouts of America and Big Brothers & Big Sisters.

Regina Siegel: La Crosse, Principal at Emerson Elementary School. Siegel is the Wisconsin Federal Relations Coordinator for the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), and is a member of the School Administrators Alliance and the Association for Wisconsin School Administrators.

Jay Smith: Middleton, former President of the UW Board of Regents. Smith is currently CEO of JLS Investment Group, which is the owner of Teel Plastics in Baraboo. Smith has two grown children who graduated from the Madison public schools.

Jeffrey Smith: Brunswick, owner of Bob Smith Window Cleaning. Smith founded the Eau Claire Area School District's parent advisory committee, Parents Advocating on Behalf of Children. Smith has two children in the Eau Claire School District and is Chairperson for the Town of Brunswick.

Rita Tenorio: Milwaukee, teacher at Fratney Elementary School. Tenorio chaired the Urban Education Task Force under Superintendent Benson mid 1990s, which resulted in the creation of the Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE) small class size program.

Note: The task force will be staffed by a variety of individuals in state government, including the Bob Hanle, Paul Ziegler, and Steve Milioto of the State Budget Office, Jason Helgerson of the Department of Revenue, Kirk Brown and Jessica Clark of the Governor's Office, and Brian Pahnke of the Department of Public Instruction.