

WHEREAS, a significant proportion of Wisconsin's child population suffers from learning handicaps caused by physical disability, emotional instability or an adverse socio-economic background that severely limits their ability to learn in the classroom with the average child; and

WHEREAS, these children with learning disabilities represent a serious waste of human resources and a significant loss to society if their handicaps are not overcome and if they are not able to develop their abilities and character to their greatest potential; and

WHEREAS, 95% of Wisconsin's child population with special learning problems are not now being adequately treated and, as a result, are lagging far behind the average child in academic achievement and in many situations are leaving the educational process at an early age; and

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to assist these disadvantaged children so that they may advance properly through the educational system to eventually become productive members of society, and that this assistance could best be realized and effected through a new state policy of special education with emphasis placed on the prevention of learning handicaps through programs of assistance within the regular school program; and

WHEREAS, the prevention, early identification and proper treatment of learning deficiencies among children during the regular school program is the most economically desirable use of state and local resources and could reduce by more than one-half the cost of present special education programs that have traditionally been conducted outside of the public school classroom; and

WHEREAS, the Preliminary Report of the Governor's Commission on Education recommended that a committee be established to implement and test the feasibility of new assistance programs through which children with learning handicaps may be identified and served.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WARREN P. KNOWLES, Governor of the State of Wisconsin, do hereby order and direct:

I. The establishment of a Committee on Special Learning Needs for the purpose of developing a practical prototype program of special assistance to children with learning disabilities in selected communities or school districts in Wisconsin.

II. That Mr. Robert L. Manigold serve as Chairman of this Committee with the responsibility of recruiting sufficient Committee members from among relevant political, social, economic, and ethnic groups while maintaining a proper balance between citizen and professional participants.

III. That this Committee on Special Learning Needs cooperate extensively with interested public officials, state and local medical leaders, educators, state agency administrators, and representatives of funding agencies to determine appropriate target school districts for the program, to establish the organizational format of the project, to develop the parameters of the plan, and to secure sufficient federal, state, local, and private funding for the experimental program.

IV. That this Committee, working in cooperation with concerned citizens and knowledgeable professionals, initiate an operational plan of educational assistance within the selected school system by recruiting needed personnel to operate the program and developing the administrative apparatus to carry out the project.

V. That this Committee on Special Learning Needs prepare periodic progress reports for the Governor on the practicality of the new concepts tested in this prototype plan so that the State of Wisconsin can eventually establish new policies and effective programs to help the children in our state who are handicapped with learning disabilities.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this third day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and seventy.

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GOVERNOR



By the Governor:

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SECRETARY OF STATE