



Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding

Recommendations of the Commission

**Representative Joel Kitchens, Assembly Chair
Senator Luther Olsen, Senate Chair**

January 4, 2019

BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON SCHOOL FUNDING

ASSEMBLY CHAIR
JOEL KITCHENS

312 North, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707-7882



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LUTHER OLSEN

122 South, State Capitol
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January 4, 2019

Representative Robin Vos, Speaker
Senator Scott Fitzgerald, Majority Leader
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Representative Vos and Senator Fitzgerald:

On December 6, 2017, you established the Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding. The Commission was charged with examining how tax dollars are distributed to schools and making recommendations to better meet the needs of students across the state.

This report contains the recommendations of the Commission.

The 16-member Commission consisted of nine legislators and seven individuals who hold leadership positions in the field of education in the state. Appendix I lists the members of the Commission.

The Commission held eight public hearings to receive testimony from the public and held two informational hearings in Madison to receive testimony and conduct Commission member discussion. The dates and locations of the hearings are identified in Appendix II.

Appendix III lists the memoranda and papers prepared by the Legislative Fiscal Bureau for consideration by the Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

Handwritten signature of Joel Kitchens.

Representative Joel Kitchens
Assembly Chair
Blue Ribbon Commission

Handwritten signature of Luther Olsen.

Senator Luther Olsen
Senate Chair
Blue Ribbon Commission

JK/LO/bl
Attachments

Commission Recommendations

Per Pupil Adjustment and Per Pupil Aid [Paper #10]

Increasing revenue limits through a per pupil adjustment and providing per pupil aid are two of the main methods of providing additional resources for school districts. Under the per pupil adjustment, school boards would have the ability to levy for any additional revenue limit authority, with the state providing support either through general school aids or the school levy tax credit to reduce the local levy. Per pupil aid provides each district an equal, fully state-supported payment per pupil, regardless of the level of property wealth in the district. This could be viewed as a way to ensure that all pupils in the state receive some amount of state support for their education and that all taxpayers in the state receive some level of benefit from the state to support the operations of their school districts.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature provide future increases in resources for school districts through increases in the per pupil adjustment under revenue limits.

Declining Enrollment [Paper #11]

Under current law, revenue limits are calculated using a three-year rolling average of pupil enrollment. There are two adjustments for districts with declining enrollment. Under the main declining enrollment adjustment, if a district's current year three-year average pupil enrollment is less than the prior year three-year average, the district receives a nonrecurring adjustment in a dollar amount equal to 100% of what the enrollment decline would have generated in revenue limit authority. The prior year base revenue hold harmless adjustment was created for districts with severe declining enrollment. Under this adjustment, a district's initial revenue limit for the current year is, in certain cases, set equal to its prior year's base revenue. This hold harmless applies if a district's initial revenue limit in the current year, after consideration of the per pupil adjustment and low revenue adjustment, but prior to any other adjustments, is less than the district's base revenue from the prior year.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature consider addressing the issue of declining enrollment with one or more of the following options, with a preference expressed for the second option:

1. Calculate revenue limits using five-year rolling averages of pupil enrollments.
2. Modify the current declining enrollment adjustment to, instead, account for long-term enrollment declines, and delete the current prior year base revenue hold harmless adjustment. Under this alternative, the 2018-19 three-year rolling average (adjusted to reflect any other changes in pupil weighting under other options recommended by the Commission) would serve as the base number

for all subsequent years in calculating a declining enrollment adjustment. Each year's three-year average would be compared to the 2018-19 average. If the current year average was less than the 2018-19 average, a district would receive an adjustment equal to what 90% of the decline would have generated. If a district loses more than 10% of the 2018-19 enrollment, the declining enrollment adjustment would be calculated as if the enrollment decline had equaled 10%.

Negative Tertiary Aid [Paper #12]

The three-tiered equalization aid formula operates under the principle of equal tax rate for equal per pupil expenditures. The formula aids costs on three tiers (primary, secondary, and tertiary), with a less generous state guarantee, and thus a lower state aid rate, moving from the primary to the secondary to the tertiary tiers. The tertiary tier is for all costs above the secondary cost ceiling (\$9,729 per pupil in aid year 2018-19). The tertiary guarantee is set at the statewide average equalized value per pupil (\$594,939 per pupil in aid year 2018-19). By law, negative tertiary aid can reduce positive secondary aid, but not positive primary aid.

The effect of additional aidable costs, such as from a referendum, differ based on the property value per pupil of the district. A district with costs at the tertiary tier and a property value per pupil below the statewide average would receive additional equalization aid for increased costs. A district with property value per pupil above the statewide average would lose aid for those costs. Districts with property value per pupil above roughly twice the statewide average would likely be subject to hold harmless provisions that would result in no aid change on additional costs.

The effect on district levies under revenue limits would also vary. As an example, if a below-average value district raises an additional \$100 under a referendum, it might receive \$20 of positive aid for those costs, meaning it would have to levy \$80 under revenue limits to fund the expenditures. If an above-average value (negative tertiary aid) district raises that additional \$100, it might lose \$30 in negative tertiary aid, meaning it would have to levy \$130 dollars to fund the expenditures. If a very high-value district raises the additional \$100, the hold harmless provisions would mean that its aid would likely be unaffected, meaning it would have to levy only the \$100 raised.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature consider addressing the issue of negative tertiary aid with one or more of the following options:

1. Recommend that any additional costs generated by a referendum (debt, operating, or both) would be excluded from aidable cost for negative tertiary aid districts.
2. Recommend that the secondary cost ceiling be set at 100%, rather than 90%, of the prior year average aidable cost per pupil.
3. Recommend that a secondary aid hold harmless be added to the formula.

Timing of School Aids Distribution [Paper #13]

Under current law, equalization aid is distributed to school districts according to the following statutory payment schedule: 15% on the third Monday in September; 25% on the first Monday in December; 25% on the fourth Monday in March; and 35% on the third Monday in June.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature consider modifying the disbursement schedule with one of the following options:

1. Modify the disbursement schedule for equalization aid so that school districts receive aid in twelve equal payments, beginning in July and ending in June, beginning in 2019-20. State general fund interest earnings would be reduced by an estimated \$15 million GPR annually.

2. Modify the disbursement schedule for equalization aid so that school districts would receive four equal payments of 25% in September, December, March, and June by 2023-24. Under this approach, the September payment would increase by two percentage points and the June payment would decrease by two percentage points each year for five years. State general fund interest earnings would be reduced by an estimated \$1.4 million GPR in the first year and \$2.8 million GPR in the second year.

School Levy Tax Credit Funding [Paper #14]

General school aids and the school levy tax credit are two of the main methods of state support for school districts. A major objective of the general aid formula is tax base equalization. The formula operates under the principle of equal tax rate for equal per pupil expenditures. Districts with lower per pupil property values receive a larger share of their costs through the formula than districts with higher per pupil property values.

The school levy tax credit is distributed based on each municipality's share of statewide levies for school purposes during the three preceding years. These amounts are apportioned within municipalities based on each property's assessed value as a percent of the corresponding municipality's total assessed value. The school levy tax credit could be characterized as neutral with regard to equalization, given that the levy reduction under the credit generally is proportionate for all districts and produces a similar reduction in tax rates.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature provide future increases in state support through the general school aid formula rather than through school levy tax credit.

Revenue Limit Adjustments [Paper #15]

Additional financial resources can be provided to school districts under revenue limits, either through the per pupil adjustment or through other adjustments to the revenue limit calculation. These include adjustments for low revenue, declining enrollment, transfer of service, carryover of unused

revenue limit authority. In addition, expenditures for community services activities and referenda-approved debt service have been exempted from revenue limits.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature consider providing revenue limit adjustments for energy efficiency measures, lead testing and abatement projects, mental health services, school resource officers, school safety expenditures, school nurse costs, and above-average transportation costs

Per Pupil Adjustment Inflation Indexing [Paper #16]

From 1998-99 through 2008-09, the per pupil adjustment under revenue limits was indexed for inflation each year. The inflation increase was the percentage change, if not negative, in the consumer price index for all urban consumers between the preceding March and second-preceding March. The inflationary adjustment was deleted in the 2009-11 budget act. From 2009-10 to 2014-15, the per pupil adjustment was set at a fixed amount or a fixed percentage reduction in each of the applicable biennial budget acts. The 2013-15 budget act specified that there would be no per pupil adjustment provided in 2015-16 and each year thereafter. This provision was maintained in the following two biennial budget acts.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature annually index any per pupil adjustment provided under revenue limits by inflation.

Special Education Categorical Aid [Paper #17]

The special education appropriation reimburses school districts, independent charter schools, cooperative educational service agencies (CESAs), and county children with disabilities education boards (CCDEBs) for a portion of the costs for educating and transporting pupils enrolled in special education. Base level funding for the appropriation is equal to \$368.9 million GPR, and the proration rate in 2018-19 will equal an estimated 24.5%.

Recommendation: The Commission believes that additional funding should be provided for special education aid, and recommends a range of options for consideration by the Legislature:

1. Increase funding by \$45.1 million GPR in 2019-20, so that the proration rate will equal an estimated 28%, and by \$81.3 million GPR in 2020-21, so that the proration rate will equal an estimated 30%.
2. Increase funding by \$74.7 million GPR in 2019-20, so that the proration rate will equal an estimated 30%, and by \$126.4 million GPR in 2020-21, so that the proration rate will equal an estimated 33%.
3. Increase funding by \$119.0 million GPR in 2019-20, so that the proration rate will equal an estimated 33%, and by \$381.5 million GPR in 2020-21, so that the proration rate will equal an estimated 50%.

4. Increase funding by \$75.1 million GPR in 2019-20, so that the proration rate will equal an estimated 30%, and by \$531.1 million GPR in 2020-21, so that the proration rate will equal an estimated 60%.

5. Modify the special education appropriation to be sum sufficient, and specify that the appropriation would reimburse 26% of eligible costs in 2019-20, and that percentage would increase by one percentage point in each of the next ten years, until it reaches 36% in 2029-30. This option would result in increased expenditures from the special education appropriation equal to approximately \$15.5 million GPR in 2019-20 and \$36.3 million GPR in 2020-21.

Bilingual-Bicultural Aid [Paper #18]

Under current law, bilingual-bicultural aid is provided to school districts that are required by state law to provide special classes to English language learner (ELL) pupils. These classes are required at schools that enroll 10 or more ELL pupils in a language group in grades K-3, or 20 or more in grades 4-8 or 9-12.

Recommendation: To address the cost of providing an appropriate education to ELL pupils, the Commission recommends weighting such pupils as 1.2 FTE in the general school aids and revenue limit formulas. Under the three-year rolling average pupil enrollment used under revenue limits, this approach would increase revenue limit authority for school districts by an estimated \$34 million in the first year, \$68 million in the second year, and by \$102 million annually thereafter. Weighting would only apply to pupils who have not yet reached English proficiency, based on the annual assessment of English language proficiency required under state and federal law.

Aid for Low-Income Pupils [Paper #19]

During public hearings, testimony was given regarding the increasing number of low-income pupils enrolled in public schools, and the additional costs of educating such pupils.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends weighting low-income pupils as 1.2 FTE in the general school aids and revenue limit formulas. This would increase revenue limit authority by \$215 million in the first year, \$430 million in the second year, and \$645 million once the increased weighting factor is fully reflected in the three-year rolling average of enrollment used under revenue limits. For general school aids, weighting low-income pupils would lower districts' equalized value per member, so that districts with disproportionate numbers of low-income pupils could receive additional aid.

High Cost Transportation Aid [Paper #20]

The high cost transportation aid program provides additional transportation aid to school districts with higher per pupil transportation costs compared to the statewide average. A district is

eligible for aid if it meets the following two criteria: (a) per pupil transportation cost exceeds 145% of the statewide average per pupil cost; and (b) pupil population density is equal to 50 or fewer pupils per square miles of the district's area. Aid is distributed to eligible districts based on the difference between the district's per pupil transportation cost and the aid threshold of 145% of the statewide average, with payments prorated if funding is insufficient to fully fund eligible costs. Additionally, a stop-gap provision provides aid to any district that qualified for high cost transportation aid in one year but is ineligible in the next school year. Each qualifying district is eligible to receive 50% of its prior year award, with the sum of all payments under the stop-gap measure limited to \$200,000 in any fiscal year. In 2017-18, high cost transportation aid payments were prorated at 84.8%, and payments under the stop-gap measure were prorated at 51.3%.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends the following change to increase the number of districts eligible for aid under the program, and the amount received by each district:

1. Modify the program to provide aid for transportation costs above 125% of the statewide average, rather than 145% as under current law. Provide an additional \$10.6 million GPR annually to maintain the current 85% proration rate.

Additionally, the Commission recommends that the Legislature consider adopting one of the following two options to increase the proration rate for districts qualifying for aid under the stop-gap provision:

2. Provide an additional \$130,000 GPR annually for the stop-gap provision. Based on 2017-18 data, this additional funding would have resulted in a proration rate of approximately 85% for the stop-gap provision, comparable to that of the program as a whole.

3. Eliminate statutory language limiting the stop-gap provision to \$200,000 annually. This would result in the proration rate for the stop-gap provision being the same as the proration rate for the program as a whole. (In 2017-18, this would have resulted in an overall proration rate of 82.7%, rather than 84.8% as under current law.)

Sparsity Aid [Paper #21]

Under the sparsity aid program, districts qualify for \$400 per pupil if they meet the following criteria: (a) an enrollment in the prior year of less than 745 pupils; and (b) population density of less than 10 pupils per square mile of district attendance area. If funding is insufficient, payments are prorated. Additionally, beginning in 2018-19, any district that qualifies for aid in one year but does not qualify the following year is eligible to receive 50% of its prior year award in the year in which it became ineligible for sparsity aid.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends a range of options for the Legislature to consider, with a preference for the second of the following alternatives:

1. Create an additional tier of aid under which school districts could qualify for \$100 per pupil if they meet the current density criteria and have an enrollment in the prior year of between 746 and 1,000 pupils. Provide an additional \$3.4 million GPR annually to fully fund the proposal.

2. Use an approach similar to that recommended by the Rural Schools Task Force in 2013, under which districts with a membership of less than 1,000 and population density of less than 10 pupils per square mile would qualify for the current aid payment and districts with a membership of between 1,001 and 2,700 and a population density of less than seven pupils per square mile would qualify for a payment of \$100 per pupil. Provide an additional \$16.5 million GPR annually to fully fund the proposal.

3. Increase the enrollment limit to 1,500 pupils, and maintain the current law population density limit of 10 pupils per square mile and the current law payment of \$400 per pupil for eligible districts. Provide an additional \$27.9 million GPR annually to fully fund the proposal.

4. Eliminate the enrollment limit, but maintain the current law population density limit of 10 pupils per square mile and the current law payment of \$400 per pupil for eligible districts. Provide an additional \$40.2 million GPR annually to fully fund the proposal.

Gifted and Talented Pupils [Paper #22]

State law requires school districts to provide access to a gifted and talented program for "pupils enrolled in public schools who give evidence of high performance capability in intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership, or specific academic areas and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided in a regular school program in order to fully develop such capabilities." Aid to support programming for gifted and talented pupils is provided in the form of competitive grants, which may be awarded to nonprofit organizations, CESAs, institutions within the University of Wisconsin System, and school districts, either individually or as collaborative projects. In 2018-19, \$237,200 GPR is appropriated for the program.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature consider adopting one of the following options to increase funding for gifted and talented grants:

1. Provide an additional \$2.5 million GPR for the grants annually.
2. Provide an additional \$1 million GPR for the grants annually.
3. Provide an additional \$500,000 GPR for the grants annually.

Mental Health [Paper #23]

Under 2017 Act 59, a community and school mental health collaboration grant program was created, under which grants are awarded to school boards and independent charter school operators for the purpose of collaborating with community mental health agencies to provide mental health services to pupils. Act 59 provided \$3,250,000 GPR for the program in 2018-19. DPI indicates that in the first year of the program, grant proposals were received from 141 applicants, representing 182 school districts and charter schools, and totaling approximately \$8 million in requested funding.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature consider the following options to provide additional funding for mental health in schools, with a preference for the second option:

1. Provide \$5 million GPR annually in additional funding for community and school mental health collaboration grants, which would have fully funded grant applications received in 2018-19.
2. Create a new categorical aid for mental health services, with payments calculated in a manner similar to per-pupil aid under current law. Restrict expenditures to those related to mental health. Funding payments equal to \$25 per pupil in the first year and \$50 per pupil in the second year would cost an estimated \$21.0 million GPR in 2019-20 and \$42.0 million GPR in 2020-21.

School District Consolidation [Paper #24]

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature consider the following options to provide incentives for school districts to consolidate, with the goal of either reducing costs or increasing educational opportunities in smaller rural districts:

1. Modify current law to allow two or more existing districts to jointly create new K-8/UHS districts. This would allow small districts to continue operating their own elementary and middle schools, but share a combined high school.
2. Provide an incentive of \$150 per pupil for up to five years for school districts that enter into a whole grade sharing agreement, and declare an intent to explore consolidation, and appropriate \$750,000 GPR annually for the program. Under current law, whole grade sharing allows two or more school districts to enter into a whole grade sharing agreement to consolidate pupils in a particular grade level by offering that grade in only one of the participating districts. No aid is currently provided for districts that enter into such an agreement.
3. Modify the current consolidation aid program to provide consolidating districts with a recurring revenue limit adjustment of \$150 per pupil, rather than the categorical aid under current law.
4. Provide one-time funding of \$250,000 GPR in a continuing appropriation for a grant program to fund feasibility studies of consolidation or whole grade sharing. Allow consortia of two or more school districts to apply for grants of up to \$10,000 each for a professional financial analysis of how consolidation or whole grade sharing would affect the district.
5. Reduce mill rates for consolidating school districts with disparate property tax rates by setting the newly consolidated district's mill rate equal to the lowest mill rate among the consolidating districts in the year prior to consolidation. To accomplish this, the revenue limit calculation could be made for the newly consolidated district and the mill rate and gross levy amount determined, under the assumption that the district chooses to levy the maximum allowable amount. The gross levy amount could then be compared to the gross levy that the new district would receive if its mill rate was equal to the lowest mill rate of the consolidated districts in the year prior to the

year in which the consolidation takes effect. Additional general aid could then be provided in an amount equal to the difference between the two levy amounts from a separate general aid appropriation established for this purpose. Such aid could be provided in the amount calculated in the first year after consolidation and gradually phased out over the next four years. In year two, the consolidated district would receive 80% of what it received in year one. In year three, the district would receive 60% of what it received in year one. These reductions would continue, until in year six, no additional aid would be received. To ensure that the additional aid would reduce property tax levies, the aid would be counted under the district's revenue limit.

Early Childhood [Paper #25]

Recommendation: The Commission recommends the following options to provide additional opportunities for early childhood education:

1. Allow districts that offer full-day 4K to count participating pupils as 1.0 FTE. Under current law, each 4K pupil is included in equalization aid and revenue limit counts as 0.5 member if the pupil attends for at least 437 hours, unless the program provides at least 87.5 additional hours of outreach activities, in which case the pupil is counted as 0.6 member.

2. Provide an additional \$1.0 million GPR annually for the state supplement for the Head Start program. State grants are provided as a supplement to the federal Head Start program that provides comprehensive educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services to economically disadvantaged preschool children and their families. Funds are distributed to federally designated Head Start agencies, to enable expansion of their programs to serve additional families. The state supplement is currently equal to \$6,264,100 GPR annually.

3. Modify the age at which a pupil can be enrolled in 4K with one of the following options (under current law, pupils must turn four by September 1 of the year they start attending 4K):

a. Specify that a pupil can begin 4K at any time during the school year on the day after his or her fourth birthday; or

b. Specify that a pupil can begin 4K in September if he or she turns four by December 31, and in January if he or she turns four between January 1 and the last day of the school year.

Incentives for Shared Services [Paper #26]

Recommendation: The Commission recommends creating a categorical aid incentive for districts that choose to share administrative positions such as human resources director, IT coordinator, or business manager, similar to that included under 2017 Assembly Bill 64/Senate Bill 30 (the 2017-19 biennial budget bill) and deleted from Act 59 through a gubernatorial veto. Under the program, two or more school districts could qualify for aid based on the following amounts for each position shared, with no limit to the number of positions that could be shared: (a) for a district administrator, \$40,000; (b) for a human resources director, information technology coordinator, or

business manager, \$22,500; (c) for any other non-faculty administrative position, excluding principals and assistant principals, \$17,500. Aid would be paid in full for the first three school years of the plan, with a 50% payment in year four, and no payment in the fifth year. The Commission recommends providing \$2 million GPR annually for the program.

Summer Learning Loss [Paper #27]

During its public hearings, the Commission heard testimony relating to the impact of the loss of academic skills and knowledge that can occur over the summer months if pupils do not have opportunities to practice skills learned during the school year, particularly for economically disadvantaged pupils and pupils residing in urban districts with high concentrations of poverty:

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature consider the following options to address this issue:

1. Expand the existing summer school grant program to other districts, allowing any district to apply for a competitive grant under the program to develop, redesign, or implement a summer school program, and provide an additional \$3.6 million GPR annually. (Under current law, only Milwaukee Public Schools is eligible for a grant under the program, and funding is equal to \$1.4 million GPR annually.)

2. Create a new grant program to support year-round schooling pilot programs. Allow districts to apply for grants to implement year-round schooling at one or more schools in the district. Provide \$3 million GPR for the grants beginning in 2020-21.

Educator Workforce Shortage [Paper #28]

The Commission heard repeated testimony regarding the difficulty of finding qualified teachers for many districts.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends consideration of the following options:

1. Create a teacher loan forgiveness program, modeled after the current-law minority teacher loan program. Under the program, a student enrolled in an educator preparatory program leading to teacher licensure in a shortage area could receive a loan of up to \$10,000 per year, with an overall maximum of \$30,000. After graduating, for each year the student teaches full-time in an urban or rural school district, the student would be eligible for forgiveness of 25% of the loan. If the student does not meet the forgiveness criteria, the loan would be repaid at an interest rate of 5%. Provide \$1.5 million GPR for the program beginning in 2020-21.

2. Restore pre-2013 Act 20 law regarding rehiring annuitants, including the 30-day break-in-service requirement and the choice of whether to terminate the annuity or continue to receive it. Under 2013 Act 20, changes were made to the law regarding rehiring annuitants, including increasing the number of days a WRS participant must wait between termination of his or her

employment and returning to covered employment with any WRS employer from 30 days to 75 days. Additionally, under prior law, an individual who terminated employment and received an annuity could choose one of the following options: (a) terminate the annuity and become a WRS participating employee again; or (b) continue to receive the annuity in addition to the earned wages from covered employment. Under Act 20, for any individual who is expected to work at least two-thirds of full-time employment in a WRS-covered position, the annuity must be terminated and no annuity payment can be made until the individual terminates their covered employment.

Two-Thirds Funding

From 1996-97 to 2002-03, the state had a commitment to fund two-thirds of K-12 partial school revenues. Under two-thirds funding, a statutory process was put in place under which the sum of state general and categorical school aid appropriations and the school levy tax credit was set equal to two-thirds of estimated partial school revenues, which was the sum of state school aids and, with certain exceptions, property taxes levied for school districts. The 2003-05 biennial budget act eliminated the two-thirds funding provisions. General school aids funding is currently provided in a sum-certain appropriation, with the funding level is determined through the budget process similar to most other state appropriations.

Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the Legislature restore the two-thirds funding commitment to mitigate the levy impacts of the other recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Commission Members

The following 16 individuals served as members of the Commission:

Representative Joel Kitchens (Co-Chair)	Sturgeon Bay
Senator Luther Olsen (Co-Chair)	Ripon
Senator Alberta Darling	River Hills
Senator Howard Marklein	Spring Green
Senator Kathleen Vinehout	Alma
Representative Cody Horlacher	Mukwonago
Representative Romaine Quinn	Rice Lake
Representative Sody Pope	Mt. Horeb
Representative Jason Fields	Glendale
Ted Neitzke	Agency Administrator/CEO, CESA 6
Dr. Michelle Langenfeld	Superintendent, Green Bay Area Public Schools
Dr. Joni Burgin	Superintendent, Grantsburg School District
Dan Rossmiller	Director of Government Relations, Wisconsin Association of School Boards
Lori Saqer	Director of Business Operations, Messmer Catholic Schools, Inc.
Dr. Julie Underwood	Professor, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, UW-Madison
Dr. Bill Hughes	Chief Academic Officer, Seton Catholic Schools

APPENDIX II

Commission Hearings

- **December 14, 2017, Madison.** The Commission held an informational hearing at the State Capitol to hear invited testimony from the Department of Public Instruction and the Legislative Fiscal Bureau.
- **February 2, 2018, Milwaukee.** The Commission held a public hearing at James Madison Academic Campus and heard invited testimony from Milwaukee Public Schools, Southeast Wisconsin Schools Alliance, and School Choice Wisconsin, and testimony from members of the public.
- **March 19, 2018, La Crosse.** The Commission held a public hearing at North Woods International School and heard invited testimony from Sparta Public School District, Onalaska School District, and CESA 4, and testimony from members of the public.
- **March 26, 2018, De Pere.** The Commission held a public hearing at Foth and heard invited testimony from CESA 7 and the Green Bay Chamber of Commerce-Partners in Education and testimony from members of the public.
- **April 9, 2018, Fennimore.** The Commission held a public hearing at Southwest Technical College and heard invited testimony from CESA 3 and Potosi, River Valley, and other area school districts, and testimony from members of the public.
- **April 23, 2018, Oshkosh.** The Commission held a public hearing at CESA 6 and heard invited testimony from CESA 6 and the Appleton, Neenah, Lomira, and Kettle Moraine school districts, and testimony from members of the public.
- **May 7, 2018, Tomahawk.** The Commission held a public hearing at Tomahawk School District's elementary school auditorium and heard invited testimony from Tomahawk, Florence, Northland Pines, and other area school districts, the Wisconsin Fab Lab Cooperative, and the Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance, and testimony from members of the public.
- **May 21, 2018, Turtle Lake.** The Commission held a public hearing at Turtle Lake School District's auditorium and heard invited testimony from Birchwood, Cameron, and Turtle Lake School Districts and CESA 11, and testimony from members of the public.
- **June 4, 2018, Madison.** The Commission held a public hearing at the State Capitol and heard invited testimony from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the Wisconsin School Administrators Alliance, the Education Commission of the States, and EdBuild, and testimony from members of the public.
- **December 19, 2018, Madison.** The Commission met for discussion and recommendations at the State Capitol.

APPENDIX III

Legislative Fiscal Bureau Publications Prepared for the Commission

As part of Commission proceedings, members requested a number of memoranda and option papers from the Legislative Fiscal Bureau. The papers are listed below, and can be found on the Bureau's website (<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lfb>).

Background Memoranda

- School Finance Data -- Memorandum #1 (January 22, 2018)
- School District Equalization Aid Categories -- Memorandum #2 (January 22, 2018)
- Special Education Aids and Costs -- Memorandum #3 (January 22, 2018)
- School District Boundary Modifications -- Memorandum #4 (January 22, 2018)
- Funding for Special Education, Economically - Disadvantaged, and English Language Learner Pupils -- Memorandum #5 (April 30, 2018)
- Percentage of Special Needs, English Language Learner, and Low-Income Pupils in Each District -- Memorandum #6 (April 30, 2018)
- Options to Provide Additional Special Education Funding -- Memorandum #7 (April 30, 2018)
- Transportation Costs and Transportation Aid -- Memorandum #8 (April 30, 2018)
- General Aid, Tax Levy and Levy Credit Data for School Districts -- Memorandum #9 (April 30, 2018)

Option Papers (all dated November 16, 2018)

- Per Pupil Adjustment and Per Pupil Aid -- Paper #10
- Declining Enrollment -- Paper #11
- Negative Tertiary Aid -- Paper #12
- Timing of School Aids Distribution -- Paper #13
- School Levy Tax Credit Funding -- Paper #14
- Revenue Limit Adjustments -- Paper #15
- Per Pupil Adjustment Inflation Indexing -- Paper #16
- Special Education Categorical Aid -- Paper #17
- Bilingual-Bicultural Aid -- Paper #18
- Aid for Low-Income Pupils -- Paper #19
- High Cost Transportation Aid -- Paper #20
- Sparsity Aid -- Paper #21
- Gifted and Talented Pupils -- Paper #22
- Mental Health -- Paper #23
- School District Consolidation -- Paper #24
- Early Childhood -- Paper #25
- Incentives for Shared Services -- Paper #26
- Summer Learning Loss -- Paper #27
- Educator Workforce Shortage -- Paper #28