WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE HEARING RECORDS

2005-06
(session year)

Senate
(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on Education (SC-Ed)

File Naming Example:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP
- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01a
- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01b
- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt02

Published Documents

- > **Committee Hearings** ... CH *(Public Hearing Announcements)*
- > **

- > **Committee Reports** ... CR
- > **

- > **Executive Sessions** ... ES
- > **

- > **Record of Comm. Proceedings** ... RCP
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Information Collected For Or Against Proposal

- > **Appointments** ... Appt
- > **

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- > **Hearing Records** ... HR *(bills and resolutions)*
- > **

- > **Miscellaneous** ... Misc
- > **05hr_SC-Ed_Misc_pt02**

Luther S. Olsen

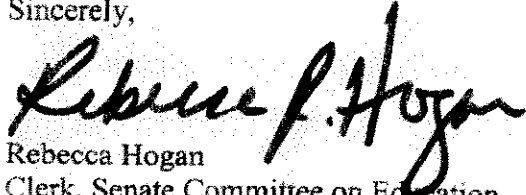State Senator
14th District

July 14, 2006

Amy Hetzner
Waukesha Bureau
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
1801 Dolphin Drive
Waukesha, WI 53186

Response to Open Records Request

Dear Ms. Hetzner:

In response to your open records request I have enclosed copies of any correspondence between the Senate Education Committee and/or Senator Luther Olsen and Anthony Evers, Michael Thompson, Richard Grobschmidt, Deborah Mahaffey, Brian Pahnke, Margaret Planner, and Carolyn Stanford Taylor since January 1, 2005.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Hogan
Clerk, Senate Committee on Education

SENATE HEARING SLIP

(Please Print Plainly)

DATE: 2/14/06

BILL NO. 529/945

or
SUBJECT Special Ed.
Law

Carolyn Taylor/Stephanie
(NAME) Petska
125 S. Webster St.
(Street Address or Route Number)

Madison 53707
(City and Zip Code)

DPI
(Representing)

Speaking in Favor: ☑

Speaking Against: ☐

Registering in Favor:
but not speaking: ☐

Registering Against:
but not speaking: ☐

Speaking for information
only; Neither for nor against: ☐

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New Wisconsin Promise

State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

Joint Committee on Education
February 14, 2006

Department of Public Instruction
Testimony on 2006 Senate Bill 529/Assembly Bill 945

My name is Carolyn Stanford Taylor. I am the Assistant State Superintendent, Division for Learning Support: Equity and Advocacy, at the Department of Public Instruction. On behalf of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, thank you, Chairpersons Olsen and Towns and members of the Joint Committee for the opportunity to be here today to testify on Senate Bill 529/Assembly Bill 945. This bill would amend Wisconsin special education law. The department is so pleased to support this bill.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) was reauthorized and became effective in July 2005. In response to a number of new provisions, the department established a stakeholder group to provide

input, advice and multiple perspectives in the implementation of the new law. The group includes representatives from major education groups—School Administrators Alliance, Wisconsin Education Association Council, Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Cooperative Education Service Agencies, Department of Health and Family Services, Department of Corrections as well as individuals representing principals, large urban districts and classroom teachers. Parent organizations, including Wisconsin Coalition for Advocacy, Family Assistance Center for Education, Training and Support, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Wisconsin Statewide Parent Educator Initiative and Quality Education Coalition also are members.

This group has provided valuable input and advice to the department around many of the new provisions in federal law. These include data collection and reporting, establishment of goals to improve results for children with disabilities, the focus of the department's monitoring role, and, in addition, an examination of state special education law to determine what additional state law requirements should be maintained in Wisconsin.

From the outset, the State Superintendent's position regarding state special education law has been the department would not support legislation without stakeholder consensus. The large stakeholder group worked hard to reach consensus. When the stakeholder group was struggling to move ahead, State Superintendent Burmaster responded by appointing a smaller representative group from the larger group and the department contracted with a seasoned arbitrator to mediate the process.

SENATE HEARING SLIP

(Please Print Plainly)

DATE: 3-1-06

BILL NO. SB-628

or

SUBJECT_____

Richard Grobschmidt
(NAME)

125 So Webster
(Street Address or Route Number)

Madison WI
(City and Zip Code)

DPI
(Representing)
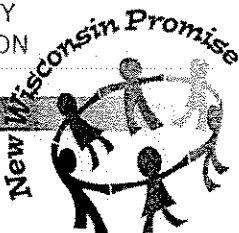
Speaking in Favor: ☐

Speaking Against: ☒

Registering in Favor:
but __not__ speaking: ☐

Registering Against:
but __not__ speaking: ☐

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State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

Senate Committee on Education
March 1, 2006

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Testimony on SB 628

Good morning, my name is Rick Grobschmidt. I am the Assistant Superintendent at the Department of Public Instruction for the Division for Libraries, Technology and Community Learning. On behalf of the state superintendent I thank you Chairperson Olsen, and members of the committee, for the opportunity to testify before you today in opposition to Senate Bill 628.

The department has many concerns with SB 628, but the most troublesome proposal in the bill is to redefine and diminish the role of licensed teachers and the practice of teaching in a virtual charter school to only mean the assignment of grades or credits. Wisconsin has a long history of requiring licensed teachers in our public schools. We have had a teacher certification requirement in the statute books since 1849. We require our public school teachers to be licensed to ensure that the people assigned to teach our children are qualified to do so. Our state, and more recently the federal government in the No Child Left Behind Act, or NCLB, both recognize the strong link between qualified teachers and student achievement. Specifically, NCLB requires that students receive instruction from highly qualified teachers in the core subject areas. This bill would permit unlicensed individuals to provide the vast majority of instruction to public school children enrolled in virtual charter schools. This would place Wisconsin out of compliance with NCLB.

The department has concerns that the definition of "assigning grades and credits to pupils" does not include enough of the core teaching functions to ensure a quality experience for all students. DPI believes that core teacher functions include planning instruction, diagnosing learning needs, prescribing content delivery, assessing student learning, reporting outcomes to parents and administrators, and evaluating the effects of instruction. Further, there must be sufficient contact between the teacher and the student to permit these core teaching functions to occur. According to the 2002 California Virtual School Report: A National Survey of Virtual Education Practice and Policy, two of the main challenges that can impede the success of online learning programs are 1) courses designed with limited contact with instructors and other students, and 2) the instructor does not know how to teach in a way that aligns curricula, standards and assessments. Because we are committed to ensuring that all our children receive instruction from highly qualified licensed teachers, we must strongly oppose this provision of the bill.

The bill, as drafted, would also appear to provide that a student may attend a virtual charter school regardless of the pupil's school district of residence, in effect creating statewide charter schools. Since a student may already attend school in a virtual charter school under the open enrollment program, it is assumed that this provision would either replace or add to inter-district

transfers under the open enrollment program. We assume that, in most cases, parents would enroll directly in virtual charter schools, rather than apply through the open enrollment program.

The open enrollment statute specifies that for each open enrolled student, the student's resident school district counts an open enrolled student in membership, and a flat state-set amount follows the student from the resident to the nonresident school district. Current statute also provides that a school district may count students enrolled in a charter school (other than a (2r) charter school). Thus, under this bill, students who attend a virtual charter school could be counted in membership by the school district of attendance, not the school district of residence.

As a result, there may be significant local fiscal effects to this bill, including:

1. An increase in membership in districts operating virtual charter schools could increase the total allowable revenue in those school districts. In addition, by increasing the school district's aid membership, the addition of those students could reduce the school district's equalized value/member and the school district cost/member.
2. The bill may decrease membership in school districts losing students to virtual charter schools and, thus, could decrease the total revenue in those school districts. In addition, by decreasing the school district's aid membership, the reduction of these students could increase the district's equalized value/member and the district's cost/member.
3. These first two effects would have a re-distributional effect on general state school aids.
4. The bill could also increase property taxes in districts operating virtual charter schools due to the transfer of full revenue limit authority from the resident districts, the value of which exceeds the current open enrollment transfer payment of $5,745.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I would be glad to answer any questions.

SENATE HEARING SLIP

(Please Print Plainly)

DATE: 2/7/06

BILL NO. SB519

or

SUBJECT_____

Margaret Planner (Tony Evers)
Janice Zmrazek

(NAME)

DPI

(Street Address or Route Number)

(City and Zip Code)

(Representing)

Speaking in Favor: ☐

Speaking Against: ☐

Registering in Favor:
    but <u>not</u> speaking: ☐

Registering Against:
    but <u>not</u> speaking: ☐

Speaking for information
only; Neither for nor against: ☒

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SENATE HEARING SLIP
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DATE: 9/15/05

BILL NO. SB 324
or

SUBJECT

Brian Pantke
(NAME)

(Street Address or Route Number)

(City and Zip Code)

(Representing)

Speaking in Favor: [X]

Speaking Against: [ ]

Registering in Favor:
but not speaking: [ ]

Registering Against:
but not speaking: [ ]

Speaking for information
only; Neither for nor against: [ ]

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Madison, WI 53707–7882

SENATE HEARING SLIP
(Please Print Plainly)

DATE: 9/15/05

BILL NO. SB 323
or

SUBJECT

Brian Pantke
(NAME)

(Street Address or Route Number)

(City and Zip Code)

(Representing)

Speaking in Favor: [X]

Speaking Against: [ ]

Registering in Favor:
but not speaking: [ ]

Registering Against:
but not speaking: [ ]

Speaking for information
only; Neither for nor against: [ ]

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DATE: 9/15/05

BILL NO. SB 322
or

SUBJECT

Brian Pantke
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(Street Address or Route Number)

(City and Zip Code)

(Representing)

Speaking in Favor: [X]

Speaking Against: [ ]

Registering in Favor:
but not speaking: [ ]

Registering Against:
but not speaking: [ ]

Speaking for information
only; Neither for nor against: [ ]

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SENATE HEARING SLIP

(Please Print Plainly)

DATE: 2/7/06

BILL NO. AB 700

or

SUBJECT Autism

Stephanie Petska or

Carolyn S. Taylor

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Madison 53707

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DPI

(Representing)

Speaking in Favor: ☐

Speaking Against: ☒

Registering in Favor:

but <u>not</u> speaking: ☐

Registering Against:

but <u>not</u> speaking: ☐

Speaking for information
only; Neither for nor against: ☐

Senate Committee on Education

February 7, 2006

Department of Public Instruction

Testimony on 2005 Assembly Bill 700

My name is Carolyn Stanford Taylor. I am the Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Learning Support: Equity and Advocacy at the Department of Public Instruction. On behalf of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, thank you, Chairperson Olsen and members of the Committee for the opportunity to be here today to testify on Assembly Bill 700. This bill would require the Department of Public Instruction to award scholarships to parents of eligible children with autism. The department opposes this bill for a number of reasons.

classroom in the child's home district. It is our understanding that some programs would be delivered in the home on a one-to-one basis; this generally would not be considered an inclusive setting for children with disabilities.

An IEP team may determine that placement in the school setting is appropriate for that child, yet a parent could apply for a scholarship which would be implemented outside of the school setting under this program. However, the responsibility for a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment continues to be the school district's.

In regard to in-home programs, we should note that in January 2004, Wisconsin began covering intensive in-home therapy services under a federal Medicaid waiver, the Children's Long Term Support Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services Waivers (CLTS Waivers). This resulted in a reduction of services for children and families, with a final reduction in funding from $38 M to $26.5 M. The CLTS Waiver states, "Intensive In-Home Autism Treatment

potential conflict with federal law and could invite litigation on the
issue.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and I would be
happy to answer any questions you may have.

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New Wisconsin Promise

State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

March 7, 2006

To: Senator Luther Olsen, Chairperson
                Senate Committee on Education

From: Richard Grobschmidt, Assistant Superintendent
                Division for Libraries, Technology and Community Learning

Subject: SB 628 – virtual schools and the definition of teaching

Thank you for taking time to meet last week with myself and Mike Bormett to discuss the teacher definition created in SB 628. Following the meeting, I shared the important points of our conversation with department leadership.

We do appreciate your concern about establishing a standard for licensed teacher involvement in the virtual school setting, and your concern has merit. However, we continue to believe that the standard provided for in SB 628 (and companion AB 1060) is too low and too narrow. Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, the statutory definition requires a "highly qualified teacher" to: hold at least a bachelor's degree, be fully certified by the state and demonstrate subject-matter competency in ways the law permits in each core academic subject the teacher teaches [sec. 9101(23)]. In addition, when used with respect to an elementary, middle or secondary school teacher who is not new to the profession, it means that the teacher holds at least a bachelor's degree and demonstrates competence in all the academic subject which the teacher teaches based on a high objective uniform state standard of evaluation that is set by the state for both grade appropriate academic subject matter knowledge and teaching skills.

It would seem illogical for NCLB to have highly qualified teacher standards that clearly reflect areas beyond "grading", such as the delivery of content, etc., and then for the state to legalize the teaching function to reflect such a narrow realm. Whereas NCLB does not specifically define "teacher", Wisconsin's definition is framed by the standards found in PI 34. Teacher is not defined in NCLB, most likely because we have hundreds of years of a common understanding as to the role of teachers. Where the plain meaning of a statute is unambiguous, the words of the statute must be given their obvious and intended meaning. It is highly improbable that the federal government would permit states to legislate their way out of NCLB by simply redefining well-established and understood terms such as "teacher" and "teach". Reframing our definition of a teacher as a "grader" for virtual schools will be inconsistent with PI 34 as well as the intent of NCLB.

We do not dispute the need to address some of the unique issues being presented by the expansion of virtual schools. The department would be interested in looking more comprehensively at the virtual school issues in the future, including training and other issues that have been identified by the advisory group.

Feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

WHITE PAPER
How Can Virtual Schools Be a Vibrant Part of Meeting the Choice Provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act?

No Child
LEFT BEHIND.

How Can Virtual Schools Be a Vibrant Part of Meeting the Choice Provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act?

Bryan C. Hassel, Michelle Godard Terrell, Public Impact

Choice and the No Child Left Behind Act

School Choice: Requirements and Benefits

The accountability provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) expand school choice opportunities for those attending public schools that are not meeting their state's expectations. Local school districts are required to provide children enrolled in low-performing Title I schools—identified as not making "adequate yearly progress (AYP)" for two or more consecutive years—the opportunity to attend an adequately performing public school while the original school is undergoing improvement. Choice must be offered to families in an eligible Title I school until the school is no longer identified for improvement.[1]

All students in a school identified for improvement must be given the opportunity to transfer to another public school, with priority given to the lowest-achieving children from low-income families. For example, if not all students can attend their first choice of schools, priority in assigning spaces would be allocated to the low-achieving low-income students. The types of educational choice options permitted by the legislation include transfers to higher-performing public schools within the district, charter schools, and virtual schools (as long as they are not Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action or restructuring or identified by the state as persistently dangerous). If more than one eligible school is available, the LEA must offer more than one choice to eligible students.

While NCLB's requirements are one impetus for districts to offer more choices, the drive to increase options pre-dates the law. It rests on the accumulating evidence that school choice can deliver important benefits for children – especially disadvantaged children. Wealthy and middle class families have long exercised school choice, either by sending their children to private schools or buying into communities with better public schools. But the choice option is now becoming available to low-income families stuck in schools in need of improvement.

Research is beginning to show that school choice can be a very useful tool in improving educational opportunities for all, and particularly for disadvantaged public school children. One line of research focuses on gains made in choice systems that allow private school enrollment as part of the choice menu (e.g. scholarships and vouchers). Taken together, these studies suggest positive effects of choice for low-income African-American students.[2] Studies of choice among *public* school options have also shown benefits to children, including the children who "stay behind."[3] Since NCLB's choice requirements are so new, there is less research specifically on its effects. But one recent study found that students in Chicago who transferred to higher-performing public schools saw much stronger achievement gains overall during the first year in their new schools than the year before.[4]

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1

Challenges to Meeting Requirements

While most districts are complying to some degree with the law, many districts have not been able to meet the demand for transfers. In a recent report about the early implementation of the public school choice provisions in NCLB, researchers found that while parents express a strong interest in transferring their children to better-performing schools, many districts use the lack of school capacity to deny families choices of some or all higher performing schools.[5]

Capacity issues continue to be a challenge for many districts. Though that exemption was eliminated in 2002, capacity issues continue to be a defense of many districts. Some districts simply deny NCLB transfers outright because of lack of capacity, while others put parents on notice that lack of capacity might cause their transfer requests to be denied.[6] In many cases, these capacity and supply issues are real, particularly in rural districts, districts with limited transportation options, and districts with many schools in need of improvement and few high-performing ones. As a result, it is imperative to consider new ways to supply better options for children seeking transfers.

Virtual Schools as a Solution to Capacity and Supply Challenges

Online learning grew quickly over the past decade in universities and corporations, and more recently has become increasingly available to K-12 learners. While the exact number of virtual schools that are operating is unclear, a new brief from the Education Commission of the States about cyber schools presents the following statistics:

- The Southern Regional Education Board estimates that over 100,000 students were enrolled in online courses during the 2002-03 school year.

- Fifty-seven cyber charter schools were operating during the 2002-03 school year.

- The Washington State Office of Public Instruction found that 25% of Washington secondary schools had students enrolled in online courses

during the 2001-02 school year and expected that number to triple by 2008.[7]

- Almost a third of school district leaders in a 2002 survey predicted that more than one in five of their students would be receiving a "substantial portion" of their daily instruction online by 2005.[8]

The main differences between online learning and a traditional classroom are location and accessibility. Online learning—simply defined as the use of multimedia technologies and the Internet for educational content—can take on many forms. It can be purely online, with no face-to-face meetings, or provide blended learning, a combination of online and face-to-face learning. It can be synchronous (students working together and/or with instructors "live") or asynchronous (students working largely on their own). Instruction can be provided by a subject matter expert, or a teacher guide, through collaborative exploration or largely through self-directed study. Instruction can also be facilitated by a "learning coach," often the role played by lab attendants in virtual high school classes and parents in K-8 settings, who provides the face-to-face counterpart for a virtual teacher.

One subset of online learning options is the "virtual school" or "cyber school." While "online learning" could involve a single course or even a single lesson or project, a virtual school is a complete educational institution that delivers its instruction primarily through online means. To fulfill the choice requirements of NCLB, a district must allow students to enroll in other *schools*. Supplementing their current school's work with online enrichment, though potentially valuable, would not meet that requirement. As a result, the remainder of this paper focuses specifically on virtual *schools* as an approach to providing options under NCLB. Districts that truly suffer from lack of capacity and supply may find that virtual schools are a viable solution for meeting the choice requirements of NCLB.

Forms of Public Virtual Schools
Virtual schools serving K-12 public students generally fall into one of the following categories:

2

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Increasing Options Through e-Learning

- **Schools operated by regional agencies and consortia of educational entities, nonprofit and for-profit organizations**
At least eight virtual schools that serve multiple states are in operation across the nation. The Virtual High School[9] in Massachusetts allows 6,000 students from around the country to participate in high school coursework in a self-paced environment. It offers full-year and semester-length courses, summer school courses for enrichment or credit recovery, and dual credit courses. Class size is limited to no more than 25 students and and "memberships" are offered to districts, collections of schools, individual schools and individual students. Member schools offer one or more faculty members to join the network of teachers to provide instruction, and in exchange for each teacher released by the school to teach a VHS course, the school is able to register 25 students per semester to choose from VHS's catalog of courses. Each school must also identify a site coordinator who is trained to act as an advisor and administrative contact for VHS students in their school.

- **Schools operated by state education agencies**
At least 15 states are operating virtual schools. Typically, state-run virtual schools provide advanced coursework or supplementary services to middle and high school students. An example is the Illinois Virtual High School[10] which is designed to provide Illinois students enrolled in state public high schools increased equity and access to high-quality educational opportunities no matter where they live. The IVHS courses are aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards. Any Illinois high school student enrolled in a public, nonpublic or home school can participate with approval from a local participating school IVHS Building Administrator. Students can take semester-length courses, summer term courses, Advanced Placement (AP) review courses, and ACT preparation courses.

Nearly all virtual schools target middle and high school students. Florida, however, has embarked on a pilot program to see if full-time virtual schools are adequate for the younger population

and currently is funding two virtual elementary schools. The Florida Connections Academy[11] and the Florida Virtual Academy[12] each serve approximately 500 K-8 students under contract with the state department of education. For every student enrolled, the companies providing the educational program get a $4,800 voucher. Students get a loaned computer and free Internet access, and the schools send them supplies and books. They speak with a teacher over the telephone for progress reports, but parents or guardians serve as the primary instructors.

- **Schools operated by universities**
At least seven universities are providing online learning opportunities to K-12 students. The University of California Online College Prep Initiative (UCCP)[13] receives university and state funding to provide online college preparatory courses that are aligned to California content standards, and fulfill admission requirements to the University of California. The initiative offers AP and honors courses, plus tutoring and AP Exam Review to over 2,500 students at California high schools where college preparatory curricula are underdeveloped. One of the initiative's primary goals is to provide opportunities to rural and low-income students to help them compete effectively for admission to leading universities.

- **Schools that are operated by local public school districts and other local education agencies**
At least 36 districts are operating virtual schools. These include the Evergreen Internet Academy (EIA)[14] which has been in operation for five years as an alternative education opportunity in the Evergreen School District. For the first three years, teachers in the 7-12 grade school provided both online and traditional classroom instruction, but now full virtual instruction is provided, with courses offered to students beyond the boundaries of the district. The school serves large numbers of students who were formerly home schooled, as well as students in need of an alternative to the traditional brick-and-mortar program. Students can receive di-

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3

plomas issued by the district or a Washington state diploma. Those outside the state of Washington or enrolled in another school full-time can attend if they pay tuition.

- **Schools that receive a charter from a local district, state board, university or other sponsor**
  The cyber charter school model of online learning is the most prolific in the nation. At least ninety cyber charters are in operation, with Arizona, Ohio, and Pennsylvania leading other states in the number of virtual charter schools authorized. The 21st Century Cyber Charter School[15] is chartered through the West Chester Area School District in Pennsylvania (but established through the cooperative efforts of the school districts in Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties). This school has performed particularly well, exceeding averages on state tests in more than half of their tested grades.

Virtual Schools Are a Legitimate Option Under NCLB

In February 2004, the U.S. Department of Education issued guidance specifically defining virtual schools as a legally acceptable way to create additional capacity for students wishing to transfer.[16] The Department views virtual education as a powerful technology innovation expanding opportunities for "learning any time, any place" in support of the No Child Left Behind Act. As long as the virtual school is a public elementary or secondary school (as defined by state law) and has not been identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, a district may offer it to students eligible to transfer from schools in need of improvement. If a virtual school is not operated by the district, the legislation allows the district to enter into a cooperative agreement with the school so that its students can enroll.

Possible Benefits of Online Learning

There are numerous hypothetical benefits of online learning. Some have been researched well, while others need further exploration. Among the benefits most commonly touted by online education advocates are:

- **Enhanced communication among students and between students and teachers**
  Because of the increased anonymity and the different ways to communicate (discussion boards, instant messaging, emails, online presentations, etc), there may be increased communication between class members and teachers. Students may feel more empowered to share their ideas and less afraid to pose questions. There may be a leveling of the playing field, as students interact with less regard to others gender, race, dress, and other factors.

- **Accommodation of different learning styles**
  Materials can be presented in different ways (example: online notes and slides for the visual learner and teleconferencing for the auditory learner). Students with attention deficit disorder and anxious students can benefit from having the additional time to attend to and reflect on the subject matter before responding. Students may get more one-on-one attention and work in smaller groups than in the traditional classroom.

- **Unlimited, flexible, access to curriculum and instruction (any time, any place)**
  Students who are learning off-site can download materials and work on the curricula at any time. Continual access to course documents lets students obtain materials at any time.

- **Frequent assessment**
  Some online learning programs allow for daily assessment of how well as student has learned course content. Immediate feedback allows instructors to change their delivery of the content, as well as highlight weaknesses and strengths for students.

- **Increasing the supply of teachers**
  Online learning allows students in different locations to "share" top instructors, rather than limiting those instructors' benefits to one place. In addition, teachers who have left the traditional system may find working in an online learning situation to be particularly desirable due to scheduling, health issues, or work style.

A 2001 survey of virtual schools found that access to an expanded curriculum was one of the most

4

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frequently stated objectives of virtual school pro-grams.[17] Virtual schools were found to have the capability to extend equitable access to high quality education to students from high-need urban and rural districts, low-achieving students, and students with learning challenges.

Other research has produced similar findings. A 2001 cyber charter review prepared by KPMG Consulting for the Pennsylvania Department of Education suggested that virtual charter schools are able to provide an education to children who have been historically under-served by traditional school environments and programs.[18] The nation's first publicly-funded Virtual High School (originally known as the Concord Virtual High School), a national consortium of high schools offering online courses taught and designed by cooperating teachers who are accredited in their respective states, has been seen as fostering independent learning and leveling the playing field for minorities, low-income students, and those in low-income areas.[19]

Harnessing Online Learning Options to Meet Choice Requirements of NCLB: Three Models

How would a district actually offer its students virtual school options? We present three models of how this could work in practice and adequately meet the choice requirements of the legislation.

Off-site Online Learning

The first model is the more "traditional" off-site virtual school, where students access educational materials and instruction online from sites of their own choosing. This works particularly well for high school students who can work well without supervision. However, it does present problems for elementary-age school children who are from families where parents are working outside the home and cannot supervise their children, and for students who do not have ready access to the Internet or a quiet place to work.

On-site Virtual School: Distinct "School Within A School"

The second model creates a new school, which is housed within the old school building– a virtual school within a physical school. The old school could provide services such as the cafeteria, gym

classes and other non-academic coursework. Students would continue to get on buses in their neighborhoods, eat lunch with their friends, and join their peers in art and music classes, etc., but core academic instruction would be provided online in a different room or structure located on the school site. This model is allowed by the NCLB legislation as long as it is a distinct school with its own governance structure.[20]

"Third Place" Virtual School

In between those ideas is a type of online learning based not at a school or at home, but at an offsite facility in conjunction with a nonprofit organization, such as a community center. A teacher or administrator would be onsite to help monitor students; however, most instruction would be online. The energy and perhaps funding of the nonprofit organization could be tapped, possibly beyond just the provision of the facility.

Any of these three models could serve as an allowable option for students under No Child Left Behind. Integrating them into a district choice program, however, could present numerous challenges for state, LEA, and federal policymakers.

Challenges and Possible Solutions for Districts and States Using Virtual Schools to Fulfill NCLB Choice Requirements

While online learning is an emerging approach for K-12 instruction, few states and districts have made the effort to develop and enforce policies that address the issues that are unique to virtual schools. States and districts interested in pursuing this option should first conduct a thorough analysis of existing policies to see if they support the implementation of virtual schools. If they do not, then new policies should be developed and adopted quickly.

District and state policymakers and planners have numerous factors to consider in creating and operating virtual schools, particularly under the framework of the NCLB legislation. These components include:

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- supply and capacity;
- funding;
- housing;
- enrollment boundaries;
- teachers; and,
- accountability.

Supply and Capacity

For a virtual school to be eligible to receive students under NCLB's choice provisions, it must be a duly authorized public school under the laws and policies of the state and/or district. While the number of virtual public schools has grown in recent years, overall very few of them exist, especially those that provide a full instructional program. In addition, many existing virtual programs target secondary students. More elementary programs would be needed in order to meet the needs of younger students seeking transfers. Districts and states seeking to offer virtual school options therefore will need to attend to "supply": ensuring that there are enough spaces in virtual schools to meet the likely demand.

Broadly speaking, there are two ways supply could arise. First, virtual schools could be created new. Second, pre-existing virtual schools could be authorized as legitimate public school options within the state or district.

New Virtual Schools

A district or state could create new virtual schools itself. Alternately, it could issue a Request-for-Proposals (RFP) inviting nonprofits, universities, groups of teachers, or other potential providers to submit applications to create new virtual schools. These could be charter schools, if the state's charter law was hospitable to such schools, or they could operate under some kind of charter-like contract with the district or state. Either approach would require substantial investments on the part of the state or district. In the case of starting schools itself, the district or state would need to invest significant resources and develop the expertise necessary to create virtual schools. In the case of an RFP process, the district or state would need to develop criteria for selection and a review process. If these were already in place for a charter

schools program, the challenge would be reduced, but the existing mechanisms might need to be adapted for the specific context of virtual schools.

Pre-Existing Virtual Schools

A district or state could also enact a process by which it authorizes existing virtual schools to become legitimate public school options. For example, a private virtual school could become a public school option if it contracted or chartered with a district or state, agreeing to abide by critical public school laws and regulations. Or, a public virtual school serving another district or state could become an authorized public school for a given jurisdiction. As with new-school creation, this authorization process would require the establishment of an RFP, along with selection criteria and a review process.

Recommendations to SEAs

It is addressing the supply and capacity issue where states can take on the greatest leadership role. In particular:

- States can ensure that the legal processes exist for the creation of new virtual schools and the authorization of existing virtual schools as eligible public school options. This could involve enacting a charter school law, amending a charter law to ensure that it allows virtual schools, or enacting or amending policies that allow the state and districts to contract with outside entities to manage public schools.

- Districts could benefit by state education departments' providing technical expertise in designing a program or providing guidance to district officials in choosing "ready made" programs that would work well with local student populations and within their budget. State department officials could provide assistance with grant-seeking for districts seeking start-up funds or ongoing operation funding.

Recommendations to LEAs
- Districts can begin by assessing the likely demand for virtual school spaces in their community. Such a needs assessment can then inform supply-creation efforts.

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- A critical decision for the LEA is whether to provide virtual schooling directly, to rely on outside providers, or to utilize some combination of in-house and outside supply. The key factors in this decision are the district's expertise in online learning (or access to such expertise), the resources available to develop in-house capacity, and the viability of potential outside providers.

Funding

Determining who funds online learning programs and at what level is a key challenge for districts considering online learning program choices. One of the touted benefits of online learning is that it can be less expensive than providing instruction in "brick-and-mortar" structures. Virtual schools, for example, do not typically have the same costs in areas of transportation and facilities. The cost structure of virtual schooling would depend upon the particular model in use. All of the models would involve costs including computer and internet provision, instructor salaries and benefits, technology support, and per pupil licenses for any commercial products. An administrative staff, which could be headed by a lead teacher, a district or state official, or another designated individual, would need to be responsible for shaping policy, hiring/monitoring/firing teachers, ensuring that content meets local, state, and federal requirements, making sure that delivery is high-quality, managing students (registering, scheduling, ensuring that they are participating, etc), ensuring that any technological problems are remedied quickly, and making themselves available (sometimes for extended hours) to deal with day-to-day issues. The "third place" model would also involve some facility expense. The onsite "school within a school" model could involve additional facility expense, unless existing space could be reconfigured to accommodate the virtual program. The school-within-a-school would also incur additional costs, such as the resources (human and financial) required to provide food service, non-core classwork, etc.

Some educators point out that start-up costs (developing curriculum, learning the systems, and integrating the program) is the area where most virtual school planners can be overly optimistic about their capacity. Others point out that virtual learning does not necessarily decrease overall costs, rather expenses just are shifted to different areas.

It is unclear how much funding is required to run a virtual school. A 2001 study of virtual schools suggested that state-run online learning costs an average of $3,000 per student a year.[21] K12, a for-profit organization that provides a virtual curriculum to homeschoolers and cyber charters, however estimates that approximately $4,800 to $5,000 per student needs to be allocated to adequately support virtual schools.[22]

Typically, virtual schools run by states receive funding based on enrollments, but many states are still working through average daily attendance ("seat-time") issues as they relate to virtual schools. State appropriations and state grants are a common funding source for state-sanctioned, state-level virtual schools, and districts can also tap into such funds if available by state legislation. State, federal and foundation grants, and funding from districts receiving services, are also common. External funders often support virtual schools in order to promote equitable access to key curricula. "Barter" methods are used by some regional networks or consortia, where members may trade a teacher-led course for student enrollments, and share consortium costs.

Recommendation to SEAs and LEAs

- Consider funding implications early on, including the level and funding mechanisms required by each of the three models presented. Per-pupil funding levels must reflect real costs of a quality non-classroom-based model.

- Ensure that the costs of special education services to students who require them, including IEP modifications for the virtual environment and contracting expenses of any required face-to-face services are considered in the funding model.

- Seek to identify as early as possible the most sustainable funding mechanisms for the program.

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Housing

A primary challenge to districts required to provide another public school choice to students is where to place them physically. The models presented in this paper offer three housing options: online instruction in the home (or other location arranged by the student's family); online instruction in an area set aside in the old school; or, online instruction in a third-party structure.

The onsite online learning program allows districts to use existing space if available. Districts do not have to rethink transportation provision and other student services. The third place online learning program, though requiring negotiation with another organization, can access additional space if facilities are limited at the old school, and can bring the added benefit of partnership with a community organization. The offsite online learning program can tap into "free" support from parents and eliminate all costs associated with a facility, but presents a major challenge to children who do not have parents or guardians at home during the school-day.

Recommendations to SEAs and LEAs
- Consider how best to deliver instruction to the specific population. Several questions must be addressed, including: If students are to receive instruction on their computers at home, how are elementary students to be cared for in families with both parents work outside the home? If students are to receive instruction at a "third place" facility, will a bus be provided to carry students there? Will the district provide virtual school students additional services, beyond core academic programs? If students go to school off-site or at a "third place," will they be free to return to school for additional programs?

Enrollment Boundaries

Virtual schools often serve students from a wide geographic area, crossing districts, spanning across the state, and even multi-state areas. This can present confusion as to who is ultimately responsible for oversight and per-pupil payment flow with the expanded enrollment boundaries.

Another issue that arises is that previously homeschooled students may want to enroll in the new virtual school. These students would not have been counted previously as students by the district and would not have received funding. If these students enroll, then the state needs to ensure that adequate funding is available to educate them.

Recommendations to SEAs and LEAs
- Determine enrollment boundaries for any virtual schools. If district-run and funded, would there be benefits in opening up the online learning program to additional students from outside the district? Could the district earn revenue (from fees and tuition) from such outside enrollment?

- Develop policies, based in law, that clearly spell out who may be enrolled in the program and who is responsible for monitoring and funding the program.

- For schools serving students in multiple states, clarify how individual state standards, accountability provisions, and teaching quality requirements will be handled.

Teachers

The delivery of the educational program online can be significantly different from teaching in a typical K-12 classroom. The instructor's role switches from presenting content and providing in-person instruction, to engaging in communication through a variety of instruments, ongoing assessment, and feedback. Critics of online learning programs for K-12 students rightly are concerned that competency and accountability of online faculty can be worrisome. The NCLB requirement that, by 2005-06, all public school teachers be "highly qualified" can help to allay those worries, as these requirements would also affect online instructors.[ ] At the same time, these requirements can pose challenges of their own. State certification systems were built around the assumption of the teacher providing instruction to an identified group of students in a particular location. Do these adequately measure the competencies needed to teach in an online environment? Do they impose

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restrictions that make little sense in such a setting (such as requirements that make it difficult to become certified in multiple states?)

Another challenge is that districts, particularly small or rural ones, may find difficulty in accessing local teachers to provide online instruction in any of the three models we present. Virtual schools could, however, make it easier for these districts to hire teachers from anywhere in the state and, if state law allows, from anywhere in the country or world.

Recommendations to SEAs and LEAs
- In addition, to ensuring that online instructors meet the NCLB requirements of being "highly-qualified," LEAs and SEAs should consider implementing policies that require new online teachers to complete an approved professional development curriculum ensuring their competency as online instructors prior to teaching students online and require experienced online teachers to demonstrate that they have the design and implementation knowledge necessary to deliver quality instruction to students in the new school. Personnel policies should take into account the need for administrators of virtual schools to have a specific skill set and professional development training which includes leading a teaching staff that may itself be completely virtual.

- SEAs could also inventory their teacher licensure requirements to ensure they do not impose restrictions that would constrain virtual schools in ways not related to teaching quality. For example, states could reconsider policies that make it difficult for a teacher certified in another state to teach local students, since virtual schools may want to employ out-of-state teachers.

- Use the new instructional delivery model as a way to tap into labor pools that otherwise might not be available. Sources could include retired teachers and other teachers who are out of the system, possibly because they have young children, are pregnant, or live in locations that do not have job openings in their subject areas. Consider if trained paraprofessionals could pro-

vide face-to-face supervision for students and assistance to virtual teachers in the "onsite" and "third place" models.

Accountability
Beyond meeting the requirements of NCLB, LEAs and SEAs will need to determine the accountability requirements of the virtual schools. Because the teachers, instructional delivery method, and housing of an online learning program may be completely different than the district's traditional schools, traditional accountability standards may not work smoothly. For example, a system that relies on site visits and classroom observations to gather data about schools would need to be adapted to the online context. A system of enrollment counts may need to be adjusted for the fact that a school's students will not all be sitting in the same room in a certain day in October. An online learning charter school might be freed from many rules and regulations to which district schools would adhere, but the model that stays within the district may need to adhere to many of the same rules and regulations. How would compliance accountability work in this new setting? How would state testing work? Virtual schools often have much more individual student performance data than traditional schools – easy to document time on task, lesson completion, ongoing feedback, etc. Virtual schools, however, may need to arrange for face-to-face, proctored exam settings for state assessments, until the state system is more comfortable with online administration of standardized tests.

Recommendations to SEAs and LEAs
- Develop and implement a contract that spells out all expected educational, operational, and financial expectations, and provides a specific process and consequence for failing to meet the agreed upon goals.

- Consider identifying additional assessment methods or adapting existing methods so that they are appropriate to the online learning setting.

- SEAs may choose to take on a supporting role and developing a list of goals so that all online

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![No Child Left Behind logo]

WHITE PAPER
How Can Virtual Schools Be a Vibrant Part of Meeting the Choice Provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act?

learning in the state is held to the same level of scrutiny.

Recommendations for Federal Policymakers

The federal government could also play important roles in making virtual schooling work as an NCLB choice option, including:

- Using non-regulatory guidance to describe what counts as a "virtual school" (for purposes of NCLB choice). This definition is especially important in the onsite online model, in which the district is offering a virtual school-within-a-school. Without clear guidance about requirements for separate faculty and separate governance of the virtual school, this model could easily degenerate into something other than a real choice for families. For example, giving students the chance to spend an hour a day in a computer lab working unsupervised on Internet research would not constitute a "virtual school." But in less extreme cases, the line would be more difficult to draw. Federal guidance would help.[24]

- Provide start-up funds for new virtual schools.[25] These new online learning programs may experience many of the same challenges experienced by start-up charter schools. The federal government should consider developing start-up grants for online learning programs that helps the school to plan and launch its inaugural year. For virtual charter schools, federal public charter school funds are already available for this purpose. Federal officials could review other existing federal programs to determine whether starting up virtual schools would be an eligible use of these funds.

- Serve as an information-clearinghouse on solutions to the challenges discussed above. As states and districts develop solutions to problems such as those related to supply, funding, housing, teaching quality, and accountability, the federal government could play an important role in gathering and disseminating promising prac-

tices, as it has already with district choice and supplemental services programs more generally.

Conclusion

Virtual schools are an acceptable, legal option for districts and states seeking to increase their capacity to meet the choice requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. Research demonstrates that they can offer high-quality instruction to K-12 learners regardless of location, family income, background, or learning differences. While this research is too new and tentative to warrant any kind of large-scale shift to virtual schooling, it is strong enough to suggest that districts and states should be experimenting to a much greater degree with virtual schools.

If districts and states decide to use virtual schools to meet NCLB's choice requirements, however, they need to address a panoply of issues related to the implementation of this option. Ideally, virtual schools would be part of a coherent districtwide or statewide choice program. According to a U.S. Department of Education's publication, promising practices in district choice programs include: competent leaders and staff, a true partnership with parents and the community, the perspective that accountability and competition are positive, and a strong strategy with appropriate resource allocation, strong infrastructure, and proactive communication.[26]

Key Terms

Asynchronous communication: Communication in which students and instructors interact at various times (examples include e-mail, threaded online discussions, and homework message boards).

Brick-and-mortar school: An educational organization that enrolls students primarily in classroom-based courses located in a school facility.

Online learning: Instruction and content delivered primarily via the Internet.

Online learning program: An educational organization that develops and offers online instruction and content. An online learning program may be a virtual school, or it may provide only supplementary services for students enrolled in brick-and-mortar schools or virtual schools.

Supplemental online program: A part-time online learning program that offers courses or other learning opportunities to students who are otherwise enrolled in brick-and-mortar schools or virtual schools; credit for successful completion of these learning opportunities is awarded by the brick-and-mortar school or virtual school in which the student is enrolled.

Synchronous communication: Communication in which students and instructors interact at the same time (via instant message, telephone calls, face-to-face meetings, chatrooms, videoconferencing).

Virtual school or cyber school: An online learning program in which students enroll and earn credit towards academic advancement (or graduation) based on successful completion of the courses provided by the school. Credit for successful completion of these learning opportunities is awarded by the virtual school.

Online Resources

Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace: Taking the Lead on Online Learning Policy
National Association of State Boards of Education, October 2001
www.nasbe.org/Educational_Issues/Reports/e_learning.pdf

Beyond Brick and Mortar: Cyber Charters Revolutionizing Education.
Center for Education Reform, January 2002.
www.edreform.com/index.cfm?fuseAction=document&documentID=1001

Choosing Better Schools: A Report on Student Transfers Under the No Child Left Behind Act
Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights, May 2004
www.cccr.org/ChoosingBetterSchools.pdf

Cyber and Home School Charter Schools: How States are Defining New Forms of Public Schooling
National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education
www.ncspe.org/publications_files/Cyber%20and%20Home%20Charters.pdf

Distance Learning for K-12 Students
Distance Learning Resource Network
www.dlrn.org/k12/index.html

Electronic School
www.electronic-school.com/

E-School News
www.eschoolnews.org/

Trends and Issues. A Study of Virtual Schools in the United States
Distance Learning Resource Network and The Center for the Application of Information Technologies, 2001
www.wested.org/online_pubs/virtualschools.pdf

Virtual Learning and Charter Schools: Issues and Potential Impact
Southern Regional Education Board
www.sreb.org/programs/EdTech/pubs/PDF/Virtual_Learn_Charter_School.pdf

Virtual School List
Distance Learning Resource Network
www.dlrn.org/k12/virtual_list.html

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About the Authors

Bryan C. Hassel, Ph.D. is co-director of Public Impact. He consults nationally on charter schools and the reform of existing public schools. In the charter school arena, he is a recognized expert on state charter school policies, accountability and oversight systems, and facilities financing. Other areas of education reform in which he has worked extensively include school district restructuring, comprehensive school reform, and teaching quality. President Bush appointed him to serve on the national Commission on Excellence in Special Education, which produced its report in July 2002. In addition to numerous articles, monographs, and how-to guides for practitioners, he is the author of "The Charter School Challenge: Avoiding the Pitfalls, Fulfilling the Promise and co-editor of Learning from School Choice," published by the Brookings Institution Press in 1999 and 1998. He recently co-authored the "Picky Parent Guide: Choose Your Child's School with Confidence," a guide that leads parents through the school choice decision-making process. Dr. Hassel received his doctorate in public policy from Harvard University and his masters in politics from Oxford University, which he attended as a Rhodes Scholar.

Michelle Godard Terrell is an independent consultant who has been working with Public Impact since 1999. She has been involved in extensive research and writing about accountability issues and other charter school topics. She served as coordinator for the Charter Friends National Network's Accountability Initiative, managed a two-year federally-funded national project on "Building Excellence in Charter School Authorizing" for the National Association of Charter Schools, and helped to develop the application and accountability processes for charter schools authorized by the Mayor of Indianapolis. In addition to her work with Public Impact, Michelle creates the weekly Charter Schools News Connection and monthly resource updates for USCharter-Schools.org. Prior to devoting her attention to charter schools, she worked as Director of Policy Research at the Public School Forum, an education think tank in North Carolina, as well as in education-related positions at the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction and Harvard University. She holds a Masters in Public Administration from North Carolina State University and received a B.A. in political science from Guilford College.

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[1] Students whose original school is no longer identified as in need of improvement, as well as students who change schools and then move out of the attendance zone served by a school in improvement status, must be permitted to continue attending their new school until they have completed the highest grade in that school. Transportation, however, in these situations, is not required to be provided by the LEA.

[2] Brian P. Gill, P. Michael Timpane, Karen E. Ross, and Dominic J. Brewer, Rhetoric Versus Reality: What We Know and What We Need to Know About Vouchers and Charter Schools, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Education, 2001.

[3] Hoxby, Caroline Minter. School Choice and School Productivity (Or Could School Choice Be A Tide That Lifts All Boats?), National Bureau for Economic Research, February 2001

[4] Robelyn, Eric. Chicago Data Suggest Transfer Students Gain, Education Week, May 5, 2004. http://edweek.com/ew/ew_printstory.cfm?slug=34Transfer.h23 (Note: The Chicago analysis, first reported by the Chicago Sun-Times on April 25, used the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills to gauge how much academic improvement some students showed during the 2001-02 school year compared with 2002-03. In 2001-02, the transfer students studied averaged 24 percent below the expected gain in reading, and 17 percent below the expected gain in math, when compared with the national average on the Iowa tests. But, when tested a year later at the higher-performing school, those students showed gains of 8 percentage points above the national average in both subjects.)

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[5] Brown, Cynthia. Choosing Better Schools: A Report on Student Transfers Under the No Child Left Behind, Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights, May 2004, page 62, http://www.cccr.org/ChoosingBetterSchools.pdf (Note: The Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights is a bipartisan organization established in 1982 to monitor the civil rights policies and practices of the federal government and to seek ways to accelerate progress in the area of race relations and on other civil rights issues. For this study, the Commission's researchers collected and analyzed transfer data from 47 states and 137 school districts to determine what effect NCLB has had on student transfers, how school districts are enforcing and implementing the provision, and the level of parental interest in the provision.)

[6] Brown, Cynthia. Choosing Better Schools: A Report on Student Transfers Under the No Child Left Behind, Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights, page 62.

[7] Long, Arika. Cyber Schools. State Notes: Technology. Education Commission of the States, April 2004. http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/51/01/5101.doc

[8] Are We There Yet? National School Boards Association, June 2002. *http://www.nsbf.org/thereyet/online.htm*

[9] Virtual High School website, http://www.govhs.org/website.nsf

[10] Illinois Virtual High School website, http://www.ivhs.org/index.learn?action=other

[11] Florida Connections Academy website, *http://www.connectionsacademy.com/state/home.asp?sid=fl*

[12] Florida Virtual Academy website, *http://www.flva.org/*

[13] University of California Prep Initiative website, http://www.uccp.org/

[14] Evergreen Internet Academy, http://eia.egreen.wednet.edu/

[15] 21st Century Cyber Charter School, http://www.21stcenturycyber.org/

[16] Public School Choice: Draft Non-Regulatory Guidance. U.S. Department of Education, February 2004. http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolchoiceguid.pdf

[17] Clark, Tom and Zane Berge. Virtual Schools and eLearning: Planning for Success. Paper presented at the 19th Annual Conference on Distance Teaching and Learning, July 2003.

[18] Cyber Charter Schools Review. Prepared by KPMG Consulting for the Pennsylvania Department of Education, October 2003. http://www.pde.state.pa.us/charter_schools/cwp/view.asp?a=3&Q=75169

[19] Hayes, K. Paying to Take Online Classes. The Boston Globe, November 2004, p. B11

[20] Public School Choice: Draft Non-Regulatory Guidance. U.S. Department of Education, February 2004. http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolchoiceguid.pdf

[21] Clark, Thomas. Virtual Schools Trends and Issues: A Study of Virtual Schools in the United States. Distance Learning Resource Network, WestEd, October 2001.

[22] Virtual School Costs Under Siege. Wired News, April 1, 2004. http://www.wired.com/news/politics/0,1283,62890,00.html
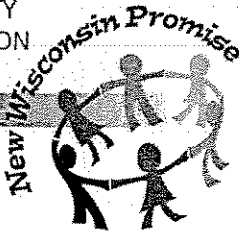
[23] The NCLB Act requires that by 2005-06, every public school teacher in the nation who teaches a core academic subject be "highly qualified." A "highly qualified" teacher is one who: (1) has obtained full state certification as a teacher or passed the state teacher licensing examination and holds a license to teach in the state, and does not have certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary or provisional basis; (2) holds a minimum of a bachelor's degree; (3) and, has demonstrated subject-area competence in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches, in a manner determined by the state. For charter schools, including cyber charter schools, NCLB defers to state charter school legislation when it comes to certification. (If the state charter school law exempts charters from teacher certification requirements, then charter teachers do not have to be certified in order to be "highly qualified" under NCLB.) However, there is no exception for charter schools for the requirements that a teacher must hold a bachelor's degree and demonstrate subject-matter competence.

[24] Note: this concern applies more generally to any use of "schools within schools" to create choice options, not just virtual schools.

[25] The federal government may want to encourage districts and states not to reinvent the wheel. Not every virtual school will have to create all of its own curriculum from scratch-- customization may make more sense in many cases.

[26] Creating Strong District Choice Programs. Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, May 2004. http://www.ed.gov/admins/comm/choice/choiceprograms/index.html

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A QUALITY
EDUCATION
FOR
EVERY
CHILD

New Wisconsin Promise

State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

February 2, 2006

Representative Debi Towns
43rd Assembly District
State Capitol Building, Rm. 302-N
P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative Towns:

I hope you had a chance to review the April 15, 2005, WCER description of what our present SAGE Program Evaluation looks like. We are very confident that the present design will serve as a useful template for SAGE Evaluation.

During our recent meeting, you asked us to consider what "tweaking" should be done to AB 937/SB 519 to address our technical concerns. Dr. Robert Meyer, who is heading the present evaluation of SAGE, reviewed the technical aspects of the proposed 118.43(7)(b) and provided a detailed analysis which is attached. Dr. Meyer concurred with our initial analysis of the limitations the proposed legislation imposes. While he suggests some changes (pages 4-5), he also concludes his comments by stating the present design (April 15, 2005) will accomplish your goals as well as sound research principles.

Given this analysis it is indeed difficult to suggest "tweakings." Possibly the proposed language in 118.43(7)(b) could be replaced with a general reference to a longitudinal study that measures the effects of the SAGE program and leave it at that. Additionally, we believe that the current $250,000 annual allocation be maintained.

As we discussed, we are in a new era of program evaluation with the use of student identifiers. It appears that present WCER design will provide the Legislature, schools, and the State Superintendent the information needed to support this important program.

Sincerely,

Anthony S. Evers
Deputy State Superintendent

Att: comments from Dr. Robert H. Meyer
cc: State Senator Luther Olsen

Comments on the Proposed Legislation to Conduct an Evaluation of the SAGE Program

Dr. Robert H. Meyer, Director
Value-Added Research Center
Wisconsin Center for Education Research
University of Wisconsin-Madison

The major features of the proposed evaluation study are as follows:

1. Evaluate the average effect of the SAGE program by comparing the average achievement of two groups: a sample of students who participated in the SAGE program, the SAGE *treatment* group sample; and a sample of students who did not participate in the SAGE program; the non-SAGE *control* (comparison) group sample.
2. Select the SAGE treatment group sample as a random sample of 500 students from the population of all students who attended SAGE schools. Select the non-SAGE control group sample as a random sample of 500 students from the population of all students who attended non-SAGE schools.
3. Evaluate the average effect of the SAGE program with respect to the following student outcomes:
    a. Student achievement on the statewide assessments in grades three, four, eight, and ten;
    b. Graduation from high school versus not completing high school.
4. Retain all students in the analysis, including students who transfer to different schools or districts.

The Objectives of Program Evaluation

Educational program evaluations generally have one or more of the following major objectives:

1. Estimate the *average* causal (unbiased) effect of the program overall and possibly by student type (for example, high, medium, or low poverty) and school type (for example, rural/urban, large/small).
2. Estimate the variability and range in causal effects overall and possibly by student and school type. (This analysis allows us, for example, to identify programs that may be more effective on average than alternative programs or the status quo, but possibly less effective than status quo programs for some schools.)
3. Document (measure) the fidelity of program implementation and school instructional practices, inputs, resources, and policies that determine (or are associated with) educational productivity.
4. Identify "what works," the "production function" that identifies effectiveness of program components and other instructional practices, inputs, resources, and policies with respect to student achievement. This objective can be described as looking inside the "black box" of educational and program performance.

The proposed legislation focuses on the first of these evaluation objectives. Below, I present a discussion of scientifically-based methods of program evaluation and comments on the proposed legislation.

Scientifically-Based Methods of Program Evaluation

The two major challenges of all program evaluations are to produce effect estimates that are statistically unbiased (valid) and statistically precise (reliable).

Valid (Unbiased) Program Effect Estimates

In order to obtain unbiased (valid) program effect estimates it is necessary to statistically control for (eliminate) differences in outcomes between treatment and control groups that are due to factors other than program effectiveness. In the present context, the primary threats to validity are (1) differences between the treatment and control groups due to (non-school) student factors such as parental education and income, educational attitudes, and participation in pre-school education and (2) differences between the treatment and control groups due to school factors unrelated to the SAGE program such as staff quality, curriculum, and other educational resources. These two potential sources of bias are referred to as student selection bias and school selection bias, respectively.

There are essentially three scientifically-based strategies for eliminating student and school selection bias: randomized control trials, statistical control models, and before and after models. The first approach, the randomized control trial (RCT), requires that program status – participation in the SAGE program versus nonparticipation in the SAGE program – be randomly assigned to schools. (Note that this is different from randomly selecting a sample of students from schools that have made their own decision about whether to participate in the SAGE program.) Given random assignment of program status, it is reasonable to expect that treatment and control schools will not differ with respect to student and school factors unrelated to the SAGE program. As a result, the average effect of the SAGE program can validly be estimated as the difference in average student outcomes between the treatment and control groups (the strategy suggested in the proposed legislation). The random assignment approach (also called a randomized control trial – RCT) has long been accepted as a "gold standard" for program evaluation. (See, for example, the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse at http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/reviewprocess/standards.html.) Unfortunately, in order to use the random assignment approach to evaluate the SAGE program, it would be necessary to terminate participation in the SAGE program for some schools (randomly selected) who are currently participating in the program.

The second scientifically-based program evaluation approach is a quasi-experimental study in which a statistical model is used to control for student and school selection bias (the statistical control model). This approach is more demanding in terms of data collection than a randomized control trial since it is necessary to collect (1) information on student and family characteristics that are associated with student achievement and student achievement prior to program participation (that is, at the beginning of kindergarten or first grade) and (2) information on staff quality, curriculum, and other school characteristics unrelated to the SAGE program.

This data is used in a statistical model to, in effect, match SAGE and non-SAGE schools that are identical with respect to *observed* student and school characteristics. If the student and school control (matching) data used in the analysis is extensive (with kindergarten and first grade student achievement being one of the most important control variables), the program effect estimates obtained from the analysis will generally be regarded as meeting acceptable standards for scientifically-based research. Nonetheless, there is always the possibility that treatment and control schools could differ in ways that are not captured by observed student and school data.

One limitation of this approach is that it may not be feasible to evaluate program effects for schools, classified by student and school characteristics, where the rate of participation in the program is so high that it is not possible to construct a matching control group. In the case of the SAGE evaluation, for example, it may be impossible to use the statistical control model to evaluate the effectiveness of the SAGE program for high-poverty urban schools (since most such schools are probably participating in the SAGE program or in a related program, the P5 program). (A comparative evaluation of the SAGE and P5 programs might, of course, be very useful to policy makers.) It is likely that the only way to generate a suitable control group for high-poverty urban schools would be to terminate participation in the SAGE program for some of these schools. (Note: The evaluation approach described below can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the SAGE program for high-poverty urban schools.) If it proves to be impossible to form suitable control group for high-poverty urban schools, this does not preclude the option of estimating the effectiveness of program components and other instructional practices, inputs, resources, and policies with respect to student achievement (evaluation objective #4 above).

The third scientifically-based program evaluation approach is a quasi-experimental study in which student outcome data from cohorts *before* implementation of SAGE and *after* implementation of SAGE is used to control for student and school selectivity (the before and after model). The idea behind this approach is that a positive program effect will show up as an increase in average student achievement immediately after a program is implemented as long as student and school factors unrelated to the SAGE program stay constant over the before and after periods. (In the generalized before and after model, it is only necessary that it is possible to predict student and school selectivity in the after period, given the pattern of selectivity observed during the before period.) The advantage of this approach over the statistical control model discussed above is that it controls for all constant (or predictable) sources of student and school selectivity across student cohorts even if these sources cannot be directly measured or are unknown. As a result, program effect estimates based on this method are generally regarded as more than meeting minimum standards for scientifically-based research. The disadvantage of this approach is that it can generally be used only once to evaluate a given program – at the point in time that the program is implemented.

Comments on the proposed legislation. The evaluation strategy in the proposed legislation does not meet the criteria for any of the three accepted evaluation approaches discussed above. The proposed approach, if modified in the following three ways, would meet the criteria for the statistical control model:
1. For one or more cohorts, administer assessments to students prior to participation in the SAGE program (that is, at the beginning of kindergarten or first grade) or collect test data from schools that are already assessing students in these grades. As a bonus, assess students

in the fall of second grade so that it is possible to evaluate the cumulative effects of the SAGE program at each grade level. In conjunction with the demographic data collected as part of the administered assessments and the new State WSLS/ISES data system, the pre-program test data will make it possible to control for student selectivity.

2. Design and administer a survey to collect school and classroom-level information on staff quality, curriculum, and other school characteristics. This data will make it possible to control for school selectivity. As a bonus, this information can also be used to investigate the school and classroom factors that are the sources of differences in classroom and school productivity with respect to student achievement (evaluation objectives #3 and #4 above).

As mentioned above, an important limitation of this evaluation approach is that it may be impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of the SAGE program for high-poverty urban schools without terminating participation in the program for some of these schools. Note, however, that the before and after model can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the SAGE program for high-poverty urban schools, with the important caveat that the effect estimates pertain to the time period in which the SAGE program was first implemented in these schools.

Statistically Precise Program Effect Estimates

The statistical precision (reliability) of program effect estimates for all of the approaches discussed above depends on the degree to which student achievement is determined by student and school factors unrelated to the SAGE program. Based on previous studies of the determinants of school achievement, we know that the magnitude of these non-SAGE factors is large. As a result, in order to obtain precise program effect estimates, it is necessary to draw a sample of schools and students that is relatively large. The proposal to evaluate the SAGE program from the Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER) indicated that it would desirable, based on preliminary calculations, to draw a sample of approximately 8000 students and 100 schools per cohort of students. Thus, the sample suggested in the proposed legislation – 500 treatment plus 500 control students – would probably be insufficient to produce reliable program effect estimates.

Other Comments

Parts #3 of the legislative proposal (as listed above) requires that the SAGE program be evaluated using student test scores from grades three, four, eight, and ten and whether or not a student graduates from high school. Part #4 requires that all students be followed and included in the outcome analyses, including students who transfer to different schools or districts. These are very reasonable requirements. In fact, it should be possible using the new State WSLS/ISES data system to evaluate the SAGE program using test scores at grades three to eight and ten since this data will be readily available in the State data warehouse. In addition, the Wisconsin Student Locator System (WSLS), implemented in 2005 should make it possible – for the first time – to track students across schools and districts. Finally, the WSLS/ISES data and the State data warehouse is being designed to record high school graduation status, so it should be straightforward to evaluate the SAGE program with respect to this outcome.

4

Comments on the Ongoing SAGE Evaluation Being Conducted by the Wisconsin Center for Evaluation Research as it Related to the Proposed Legislation

Two of the most important features of the proposed legislation are the objective of (1) estimating the average effectiveness of the SAGE program relative to non-SAGE schools and (2) estimating the effectiveness of the SAGE program with respect to both short term student outcomes such as third and fourth grade achievement and long term student outcomes such as eighth and tenth grade achievement and high school graduation status. The above analysis suggests that to accomplish the first objective for both high-poverty and other SAGE schools it probably is necessary to use two approaches: an ongoing longitudinal evaluation using a statistical control evaluation strategy and a before and after analysis (focused on the years just before and after the SAGE program was implemented). WCER's ongoing SAGE evaluation proposes to do exactly this. In fact, our proposal presents a framework for addressing all four of the evaluation objectives listed at the outset of this report. We would be happy to provide additional information on our proposed work and how it meets the objectives of the proposed legislation.

From:	Weber, Mary E. DPI on behalf of Mahaffey, Deborah DPI
Sent:	Thursday, December 22, 2005 3:02 PM
To:	Weissenburger, Fred; Arnesen, Katie; Beattie, Tom; Beglinger, Bob; Behn, Donna; Blackdeer-Mackenzie, Barbara; Blazkovec-Johnson, Amy; Bojar, Anthea; Bootz, Jeanne; Brandes, JoAnne; Bronston, Jordan; Brown, Carole; Burley, Phillip; Burmaster, Elizabeth A DPI; Champeau, Ryan; Chickering, Doug; Chung Jayson; Collins, Jaci; Conner, Nancy; Crane, Cindy; Doyle, Jessica; East, Christopher; Ellingson, Veronica; Ellingson, Veronica; Endress, Sue; Erickson, Terry; Erkins, Gloria; Evert, Tom; Fisher, William; Garb, Fran; Giese, Georgianna; Goldrick, Liam - Office of Governor Jim Doyle; Grady, Mike; Graff, Michael; Grego, Dan; Guertler, Margaret; Haase, Larry; Hartley, Steve; Henegar, Jim; Henegar, Jim; Huismann, Cindy; Kaukl, Kimbert; Kerhin, Patricia; Kersten, Brian; Koerper, Amanda ; Lexmond, Marty; Lor, Pao; Lynch, Jim; Martin, Kristine; Martinez, Jose; May, Susan; Meissen, Michael; Meuler, Andrew; Moore, Shelly; Morgan, Jim; Muse, Jeff; Newcomb, Joel; Ojeda, Diego; Ojeda, Diego; Sen.Olsen; Olson, Kent; Parks, Kendra; Perkins, Megan - Office of Governor Jim Doyle; Pfeiffer, Mary; Phelps, Al; Pitel, Vonna; Rep.Pope-Roberts; Satre, Tami; Schultz, Dean; Stanton, Greg; Starling-Ratliff, Nola; Swartz, Richard; Tackmann, Dave; Thomas-Boyd, Teresa; Vang, Ker; Waupoose, Lori
Cc:	Wiltrout, Daniel DPI; Castro, Anita J. DPI; Dibble, Nic DPI; Fischer, Gerhard DPI; George, Michael G. DPI; Grinde, Jane L. DPI; Heibel, Jane DPI; Peppard, Judy L. DPI; Roseland, Denise L. DPI; Sandrock, S. Paul DPI; Solberg, Peggy DPI; Thompson, Michael DPI; Ellibee, Margaret A. DPI; Evers, Anthony S DPI; Planner, Margaret DPI; Russell, Lynette K DPI; Sullivan, Diane M. DPI; Blasdel, Shari J DPI; Haas, Janet DPI; Kniess, Beverly DPI; Motiff, Debra DPI; Nowakowski, Karen DPI; Parman, Mary Jo DPI
Subject:	High School Task Force January Meeting *RSVP*
Importance:	High
Attachments:	Agenda Draft 12-21-05t.doc; SummaryMASTER 12-22-05.doc; Core Principles MASTER 12-22-05.doc

Agenda Draft   SummaryMASTER   Core Principles
12-21-05t.doc (43...12-22-05.doc (11... MASTER 12-22-0...

On Behalf of Debbie:

The next meeting of the High School Task Force will be held on Thursday, January 26, 2006, from 8:30am to 4:00pm at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in Madison. A block of rooms has been held for a limited time at the Hilton Madison Monona Terrace Hotel (connected via walkway to the Monona Terrace). Please make your reservations as soon as possible. Be sure to ask for the $62/night state government rate and identify yourself as a High School Task Force Meeting attendee.

Please rsvp your attendance by responding to this e-mail.

Attached is a preliminary agenda and summary materials from small group work at the last task force meeting for your review.

For driving/parking directions for the Monona Terrace and Hilton Madison Hotel, click on the following links:
http://www.mononaterrace.com/information/location.html
http://www.hiltonmadison.com/additions/directions.htm

Thank You and Happy Holidays! -Mary

Mary Weber
Executive Staff Assistant
Division for Academic Excellence
Department of Public Instruction
phone 608-267-7101

State Superintendent's
HIGH SCHOOL TASK FORCE MEETING

Thursday, January 26, 2006
Monona Terrace Convention Center– Madison
8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Preliminary Agenda

8:30 a.m.   Welcome and Overview of the Day

  ° Task Force Co-Chairs:

  JoAnne Brandes, Executive Vice President, CAO & General Counsel, Johnson Diversey, Inc.

  Ryan Champeau, Principal, Waukesha North High School

8:45 a.m.   Wisconsin Quality Educator Initiative – PI 34

  ° Educator Preparation Programs
  ° Educator Licensing and Professional Development

10:00 a.m.   Break

10:15 a.m.   Remarks from State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster

10:30 a.m.   Panel on Educational Options:
  Youth Options, Youth Apprenticeship, Work–Based Learning, Alternative High Schools

11:45 a.m.   Lunch

12:30 p.m.   Academy Approach – What makes Them Meaningful?

1:45 p.m.   Break

2:00 p.m.   Group Work on Drafting Recommendations

3:30 p.m.   Summarize Work and Next Steps

4:00 p.m.   Adjourn

~~ FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY ~~

STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S
HIGH SCHOOL TASK FORCE
December 2005

SUMMARY NOTES – SMALL GROUP WORK:
STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES
(duplication minimized – otherwise unedited)

Strengths – As Prioritized by Small Groups:
- Multiple student opportunities for involvement (clubs, athletics, co-curriculars)
- Dedicated and committed teachers and administrators
- Choices/opportunities of classes and curricular rigor
- Involved parents
- Community involvement
- Diverse and empowered students
- Commitment to excellence

Details:
- Dealing with health issues
- Dedicated administration
- Involved parents
- On-line grading
- Funding
- Students:
    - Diversity of our student bodies
    - Highly motivated students
    - Student empowerment
    - Students are very tolerant and accepting
- Curricular rigor and variety
    - Distance Education
    - Open enrollment for students
    - Transition programs
- Strong alternative schools
- School-to-work programs that build school/community (business/industry) partnerships
- Accelerated and articulated learning opportunities
    - Wide range of AP/Honors Courses
    - Youth Options
- Testing forces learning
- Community and parental support is strong
- Mission to serve all students equitably:

- o Meet needs of individual learners
- o Special education programs
- Teachers:
  - o High-qualified Teachers
  - o Individualized Faculty/Staff interactions with students (one-on-one, mentoring), advising
  - o Teachers expect high standards
  - o Caring Teachers
  - o New staff is open to ideas and change
- Opportunities for student involvement
  - o Extra-curricular activities: clubs, sports, and co-curriculars
- Students feel safe; schools are safe, well-organized, and orderly; facilities
- Pride for school; positive media; positive work environment
- Students stay in humanities, social sciences, and world languages

* * * * * * * *

Weaknesses – As Prioritized by Small Groups:

- Carnegie system of grades and credits de-values learning and growth
- Lack of rigor in coursework
- Social issues
- Time
- Traditions (fear of change); "old habits die hard"
- Unfunded mandates/politics
- Mind set of unwillingness to pay/help the next generation
- Lack of respect for oneself, others and property

Details:
- Budget/Funding:
  - o Mindset of some unwilling to pay for the next generation
  - o Revenue controls = serious cuts in programs and services
- Educating the public:
  - o Special interest groups
  - o Social issues
  - o Disconnect between community and schools
- Students learning responsibilities:
  - o Pressure relating to test scores-teaching to the standard
  - o Keeping students interested
  - o Pressures on students
    - Too much pressure on students to get done (get through) at expense of learning
    - Demands on students (work, athletics, class prep)
- Lack of respect
- Apathy to schools from parents
- Outdated schools
- Government regulations

- Gaps between haves and have nots
- Technology
- Low expectations
- Course selection vs. grades (weighted classes)
- Standards based curriculum
- Educating those new to the cultures that make up a community
- Carnegie system or grades and credits de-values learning and growth
- Lack or rigor in coursework
    o Students under-prepared in math for postsecondary study
    o Rigor of college and tech prep
- Lack of community involvement
- Traditions
- Teachers and Staff:
    o Lack of opportunities for professional development
    o Unions protect poor teachers
    o Sometimes seniority trumps quality
- Teaching of diversity in the curriculum
- Lack of leadership
- Need freshman transition programs for all students
- Variety of classes in small (rural) high schools
- Scheduling difficulties:
    o Not enough one-on-one time with teachers
    o AP, Art, Technology classes require longer class times
- Student empowerment
- "One size fits all" mentality
- Lack of instructional materials…Books, computers, etc.
- Limited library hours

* * * * * * * *

Opportunities – As Prioritized by Small Groups:
- Enhance connections with community, volunteering, technical colleges, internships, businesses
- Student leaders
- Youth options
- Community involvement
- Professional development
- Flexible scheduling i.e. before and/or after school
- Ballot box

Details:
- Enhance connections with community
    o Youth options program
    o Community work
    o Look for more meaningful community-based learning
    o Need enhanced connections to university and technical schools

- o Partner with businesses, technical colleges
- o Internships
- o Volunteer opportunities
- Teach some subjects or have students go elsewhere for others
- Build upon relationships to help students learn about relationships:
  - o Get kids connected to school
  - o Youth opportunities to lead
- More AP classes
- Dedicated staff
- Extra-curricular tied to attendance
- Ballot box
- English language learners
- Recruitment of quality staff/retention
- Freshman transition program
- Charter schools
- Community involvement
- Listening sessions
- Professional development
- Make better use of facilities
- Common planning time
- To learn how to diversify instruction within and among content areas to meet student needs
- Youth opportunity to lead
- To develop learning communities within schools that result in increased learning and achievement and connectedness:
  - o Big dollar grant motivates
- To commitment to meeting the needs of all students
- Democratic schools
- Diversity
- To integrate subject areas to help students become better prepared for the future
- To develop better assessment methods
- Using technology to full advantage (e.g., global awareness)
- Youth options and articulated classes for technical college credit
- A way to finance education that allows for various pathways to PK-16+ education
- To consolidate administrative structures to retain rural high schools

* * * * * * * *

Challenges – As Prioritized by Small Groups:

- Financing public education:
  - o Competing demands
  - o Inadequate funding – property tax limits
  - o Not equal
- Lack of flexibility from state required days and hours of instruction, limiting district creativity
- Gap between haves and have- nots

- Disconnect between community and school
- Declining student morals
- Government regulations
- Size of high schools and staff

Details:
- Reading Literacy-access to resources
- Negative media
- Paperwork
- Geographic distance
- Student Pressures:
    - Peer pressure
    - Pressures to cheat (to get ahead- i.e. College admission)
    - Students focusing on accumulated credits for college, rather than on learning
    - Student stress levels and need for increased access to mental health services
    - Student confidence in ability to succeed
- Differentiating in large classes
- Tracking
- Lack of parent support-awareness
- Busy work
- Bullying and harassment
- Comprehensive high schools:
    - Overcrowding and space issues
    - Size of the high school
- Budget
- Student behavior:
    - Students not sufficiently motivated and don't try hard enough
    - Disruptive students hurt learning process
    - Entertainment-oriented culture breeds anti-intellectual environment
- Apathy
- No diversity in some areas
- Language
- Keeping communities invested (e.g., referenda defeats)
- Administrator need for control
- Teachers fear to challenge status quo
- Students backgrounds—poverty, single parent, etc.
- Survival of career/technical education
- Maintaining adequate, equitable access to technology
- Subtle (and not subtle) cultural biases
- Teachers who try to teach too much
- To meet the varying needs of students that extend beyond academics
- White flight from urban schools
- Public education is too political

~~ FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY ~~

STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S
HIGH SCHOOL TASK FORCE
December 2005

PRELIMINARY AREAS OF CONSIDERATION
CLUSTERED AROUND CORE PRINCIPLES

Personalized Learning Environments:
- Suggest class sizes appropriate to instruction/topic; looping; teaming; lunch alternatives for students and staff
- Funding/other supports to enable formation of small high schools comprised of no more than 400 students
- Develop collaborative opportunities for staff and students
- Climate that respects and nurtures all learners
- Flexibility in use of time/space necessary to ensure student learning
- Diversity – respect and embrace
- Student empowerment for learning (ownership); high expectations for all students
- Student-Staff relationships that focus on each student's personal learning needs

Empowered Educators:
- Instructional/teaching staff need to create structures for staff collaboration to address helping all students to succeed academically (support mentoring, use connections to the community, explore use of and access to time).
- Coordinate professional development at all levels to deliver relevant curriculum through effective instructional strategies:
  - Pre-service
  - New teachers and mentoring (dedicate 20% of teaching assignment to mentor/mentee collaboration time; do not give extra assignments)
  - Veteran teachers
  - Educational support personnel
- Link with staff recognition and celebration by community, and building community's respect for teachers
- Develop programs to attract and retain the best teachers; teacher induction program alternatives (pre-service connection); "grow our own teachers" program, including field experiences for high school students.

- Ability to use multiple instructional methods and to develop appropriate assessment instruments geared to success for all students

Accountable Leaders:
- Develop systems to support and mentor new and experienced administrators (identify, support, train)
- Develop an understanding of political issues for administrators ("community savvy")
- Need to address changing nature and needs of society and schools
- Identify ways to address social issues that take focus off of educational issues
- School board accountability (how? what criteria?)
- Teacher leaders: how to develop and support them?
- Explore ways to address political agendas/decisions that detract from support of students in schools
- Accountability for funding (bottom line: funding dollars for students)
- Authentic instruction and assessment and requirement that teacher training institutions are instilling the knowledge, skills, and dispositions in their graduates to ensure same

Integrated Systems of High Standards, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessments, and Supports:
- Mission to serve all students equitably
- Require DPI/legislature/unions to revisit laws/administrative rules eliminating barriers to innovation
- Need local flexibility to allow a variety of schedules: addressing days and hours of instruction (e.g., year-round schooling); providing successful examples; provide flexible scheduling for staff development), due to the changing nature of schools and society
- Youth options and articulated classes for technical college credit
- Money-equity and adequacy
- DPI communications plan to educate on multiple forces driving high school reform
- Seamless PK-18 system, including data
- NCLB—testing forces learning

Engaged Community and Youth:
- Focus on what administrators, parents, teachers, and students can do for the community; develop strategies to show how education is both a community responsibility and opportunity
- Administration: open up library, school hours
- Staff: invite parents into classrooms, use community resources
- Parents: recognize important role for high school student involvement
- Students: volunteer in their community
- Enhance learning opportunities for educational experiences in connections with technical colleges, 2 and 4-year colleges and universities, other high schools.
- Develop (create, identify) meaningful ways for increased community involvement in schools; parent and community volunteers

- Promote positive media connections in new ways (e.g., media luncheons, personal relationships with reporters).
- Need parent power to affect change.
- Communicate changing nature and needs of society and schools.
- Develop strategies for addressing and changing high school climate that may resist or fear involvement with the community
- Ongoing education, involvement and collaboration of community stakeholders to increase success of all students
- Expand awareness of global economic and political issues
- Funding education; endowment funds
- School-to-Work programs (co-ops) for business partnerships

Academic Engagement of All Students:
- Highly qualified and intrinsically motivated teachers who believe that all students can learn and do everything to ensure student success
- Respect for multiple pathways to rigorous curriculum and individualized learning for all students

SENATE HEARING SLIP

(Please Print Plainly)

DATE: 03/22/05

BILL NO. SB 17

or

SUBJECT _____

_____

Brian Phanke

(NAME)

_____

(Street Address or Route Number)

_____

(City and Zip Code)

DPI

(Representing)

Speaking in Favor: [X]

Speaking Against: [ ]

Registering in Favor:
    but **not** speaking: [ ]

Registering Against:
    but **not** speaking: [ ]

Speaking for information
only; Neither for nor against: [ ]

Please return this slip to a messenger PROMPTLY.
    Senate Sergeant–At–Arms
    State Capitol – B35 South
    P.O.Box 7882
    Madison, WI 53707–7882

SENATE HEARING SLIP

(Please Print Plainly)

DATE:_____ 9/15/05 _____

BILL NO. _____ AB 167 _____
  or
SUBJECT _____ Fund 78 _____

_____ BRIAN PAHNKE _____
(NAME)

_____
(Street Address or Route Number)

_____
(City and Zip Code)

_____ DPI _____
(Representing)

Speaking in Favor: ☒

Speaking Against: ☐

Registering in Favor:
    but <u>not</u> speaking: ☐

Registering Against:
    but <u>not</u> speaking: ☐

Speaking for information
only; Neither for nor against: ☐

<u>Please return this slip to a messenger PROMPTLY.</u>

Senate Sergeant–At–Arms
State Capitol – B35 South
P.O.Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707–7882

Lipp, Elizabeth

From: Lipp, Elizabeth
Sent: Monday, June 12, 2006 12:25 PM
To: Grobschmidt, Richard A. DPI

Senator Olsen wanted me to let you know that he thanks you for the invitation to a meeting in MN in July, I believe on the 10th, but he talked to his wife, and they will not be able to make it there any earlier before the Education Commission of the States meeting on the 11th.

If you have any questions, let me know. Thank you.

Elizabeth Lipp
Office of Senator Luther Olsen

Hogan, Rebecca

From: Grobschmidt, Richard A. DPI
Sent: Monday, June 12, 2006 2:29 PM
To: Lipp, Elizabeth
Subject: RE:

Elizabeth -- Please thank Luther for his consideration. -- Rick

> -----Original Message-----
> **From:** Lipp, Elizabeth [mailto:Elizabeth.Lipp@legis.state.wi.us]
> **Sent:** Monday, June 12, 2006 12:25 PM
> **To:** Grobschmidt, Richard A. DPI
> **Subject:**
>
> Senator Olsen wanted me to let you know that he thanks you for the invitation to a meeting in MN in July, I
> believe on the 10th, but he talked to his wife, and they will not be able to make it there any earlier before
> the Education Commission of the States meeting on the 11th.
>
>
> If you have any questions, let me know. Thank you.
>
> Elizabeth Lipp
> Office of Senator Luther Olsen

Hogan, Rebecca

From:	Thompson, Michael DPI
Sent:	Tuesday, May 30, 2006 2:59 PM
To:	Clancy, Dan; Hutchison, Connie; Reilly, Kevin - UW; Olsen, Luther; Harsdorf, Sheila; Shilling, Jennifer; Goldrick, Liam - Office of Governor Jim Doyle; Kreibich, Robin; 'rolf.wegenke@waicuweb.org'; Sen.Breske; 'rsinger@uwsa.edu'; 'swilhelm@uwsa.edu'; 'jayson.chung@wtcsystem.org'; 'paul.nelson@waicu.org'; Evers, Anthony S DPI; Ellibee, Margaret A. DPI; Mahaffey, Deborah DPI; Spear, Gary L. DPI; Ingram, Kevin N. DPI-Milw
Cc:	Haas, Janet DPI; Gensler Santistevan, Kari A. DPI; Weber, Mary E. DPI; Moholkar, Mohini S DPI-Milw; Motiff, Debra DPI
Subject:	Academic Competitiveness Grant
Attachments:	5 24 06 Margaret Spellings.doc

5 24 06 Margaret
Spellings.doc...

Per our discussion and input at the meeting on May 16, Libby has advanced the attached proposal to the U.S. Department of Education.

Thank you for your input. We will keep you posted on the outcome of our request. If you have any questions, please contact myself or Deborah Mahaffey.

A QUALITY
EDUCATION
FOR
EVERY
CHILD
New Wisconsin Promise

State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

May 24, 2005

The Honorable Margaret Spellings
Secretary of Education
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Ms. Spellings:

We are pleased to know Congress has established new scholarship opportunities for students to help pay for higher education; and we applaud the Department of Education for taking swift action to implement the Academic Competitiveness program and to make the scholarships available to Pell eligible students enrolling in college for the 2006-07 academic year.

As you are aware, Wisconsin has not created a statewide honors or advanced diploma program or implemented the State Scholars Initiative. We will, therefore, have individual students demonstrate their completion of a rigorous course of study based on other options, two of which you stipulated in your May 2, 2006, letter to states. We are also requesting approval of two alternative rigorous secondary programs to demonstrate students' eligibility.

Department of Education approved programs affirmed for Wisconsin.

- *A set of courses similar to those required under the State Scholars Initiative.* A significant number of our high school graduates will demonstrate completion of a set of courses that are similar to the courses required under the State Scholars program.
- *Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses and test scores.* This program requires a minimum of two Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in high school and a minimum passing score on the exams for those classes. Wisconsin high school graduates may be eligible under this standard.

Wisconsin alternative rigorous secondary school programs of study submitted for recognition by the Secretary.

- *A set of courses similar to those required under the State Scholars Initiative with a variance on foreign language.* Wisconsin would request a modification of this eligibility option that includes students who have completed a rigorous course of study, including

four years of English, three years of Math, three years of sciences, three years of social studies, and one year of foreign language. We would request inclusion of a student who had taken at least one year of fine arts **or** at least one year of technical education, **in lieu** of the requirement for one year of foreign language.

Rationale: Students make course enrollment choices based on availability of offerings in their school. In rural Wisconsin foreign language choices may be somewhat limited. Further, students are encouraged to pursue elective courses that challenge and advance their talents and provide career exploration. For example, advanced level pre-engineering courses provide an excellent opportunity to explore the field of engineering, and engage the student in rigorous, high-level math-based curriculum and preparation for college entrance. Similarly, advanced and demanding courses in fine arts prepare students for academic success as they pursue higher education. While we do not advocate a departure from the core academic requirements, English, science, math, social studies, and foreign language, outlined in this option, we contend that higher level courses in the arts and technical education are also a valid and meaningful option for pursuit of challenging and rigorous course work.

Further, given that fall 2006 is the first year that the Academic Competitiveness Grant is available; students were not informed of the standards for eligibility for this new scholarship. This presents an equity issue. Several of our fine colleges and universities do not require foreign language for admission; rather students may fulfill a foreign language requirement while in college. Clearly, Wisconsin has been a strong advocate for world languages and internationalizing the curriculum. At the same time, we must advocate that all students who have pursued a rigorous secondary program, demonstrated wise choices in course selection, and are undoubtedly prepared for success in higher education, deserve to be eligible for this scholarship opportunity.

- *Dual Enrollment participation and demonstrated academic success in college rigor course.* Wisconsin requests that high school students who complete at least two college-level courses that also count toward high school graduation, but are not admitted into a formal program of study, be eligible for the Academic Competitiveness Grant, Students would demonstrate achievement of a 3.0 or higher in the college-level course.

Rationale: Wisconsin is among approximately forty states that have a dual enrollment program for high school students. Dual enrollment courses provide students a rigorous high school education and expanded opportunities to take challenging and advanced level courses that may not be offered by individual high schools or are not available through Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses. In Wisconsin, opportunities for students to take AP courses are not universal; about one quarter of Wisconsin's public high schools do not offer a single AP or IB course and numerous others offer only limited options. Dual enrollment courses help to fill the gap. Students are taking college -level courses to fulfill their high school graduation requirements. Students who have demonstrated the motivation and ability to excel should not be punished because of limitations of school offerings. They have found a way to pursue rigor that deserves to

be recognized. Wisconsin requests that high school students who complete at least two college-level courses and earn a 3.0 or higher in the college-level courses would be eligible for the Academic Competitiveness Grant. These students are not being admitted into a formal program of study but rather are taking courses that count toward high school graduation. This option would extend a level of fairness in eligibility to students similar to the Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate programs.
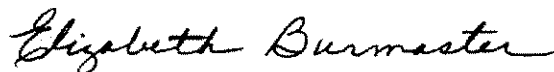
Under both of these proposed alternative rigorous programs, Wisconsin's higher education partners have affirmed that students would be considered college-ready. The proposals were, in fact, developed at the recommendation of representatives from the Governor's office, University of Wisconsin System, Wisconsin Technical College System, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, the legislature, and the Higher Educational Aids Board. Members of the business community have also affirmed these alternative programs are important and necessary to recognize and reward students who have excelled in rigorous coursework through the various options we have worked hard to make available to students in Wisconsin.

We urge you to endorse these alternative programs in the start-up years of the Academic Competitiveness Grant to ensure a measure of fairness to all students who have pursued rigorous course work. We are confident the programs have merit and provide a valid measure to ensure that students will be exposed to rigorous high school coursework that prepares them for academic success in college.

If you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Michael Thompson, Executive Assistant, Michael.thompson@dpi.state.wi.us or 608.266.3584.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Burmaster

Elizabeth Burmaster
State Superintendent

EB:dm

From:	Thompson, Michael DPI
Sent:	Friday, June 30, 2006 4:44 PM
To:	Thompson, Michael DPI; Clancy, Dan; Hutchison, Connie; Reilly, Kevin - UW; Olsen, Luther; Harsdorf, Sheila; Shilling, Jennifer; Goldrick, Liam - Office of Governor Jim Doyle; Kreibich, Robin; 'rolf.wegenke@waicuweb.org'; Sen.Breske; 'rsinger@uwsa.edu'; 'swilhelm@uwsa.edu'; 'jayson.chung@wtcsystem.org'; 'paul.nelson@waicu.org'; Ellibee, Margaret A. DPI; Mahaffey, Deborah DPI; Spear, Gary L. DPI; Evers, Anthony S DPI; Ingram, Kevin N. DPI-Milw; Chung, Jayson
Cc:	Haas, Janet DPI; Gensler Santistevan, Kari A. DPI; Weber, Mary E. DPI; Moholkar, Mohini S DPI-Milw; Motiff, Debra DPI; Haas, Janet DPI
Subject:	RE: Academic Competitiveness Grant

We received word from the US Department of Education that our request for two alternative rigorous secondary programs to demonstrate students eligibility for the academic competitiveness grant have been approved with one qualifier. Our two alternatives were:

- A set of courses similar to those required under the State Scholars Initiatives with a variance on foreign language. Wisconsin would request a modification of this eligibility option that includes students who have completed a rigorous course of study, including four years of English, three years of Math, three years of sciences, three years of social studies and one year of foreign language. We would request inclusion of a student who had taken at least one year of fine arts or at least one year of technical education, in lieu of the requirement for one year of foreign language. **Approved**

- Dual Enrollment participation and demonstrated academic success in college rigor course. Wisconsin requests that high school students who complete at least two college-level courses that also count toward high school graduation, but are not admitted into a formal program of study, be eligible for the Academic Competitiveness Grant, Students would demonstrate achievement of a 3.0 or higher in the college-level course. **Approved**, but only courses deemed core academic subjects by USED. The term core The term core academic subjects' means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.

We should receive official word soon and will pass that along. Below is a press release from the US Department of Education regarding Academic Competitiveness and SMART Grants.

FOR RELEASE
June 29, 2006
Contacts: Samara Yudof, Casey Ruberg
(202) 401-1576

$790 MILLION IN NEW GRANTS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS AVAILABLE JULY 1 Rigorous high school course work and majors in math, science or critical languages pay off for college students with Academic Competitiveness and National SMART Grants

U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced the upcoming availability of, and the state-by-state requirements for, Academic Competitiveness Grants and the National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grants. Starting July 1, qualified Pell Grant-eligible students can begin applying for these new grants that provide $790 million in funding for the 2006-07 academic year and $4.5 billion over the next five years. These grants provide further incentive for students to take more challenging courses in high school and to pursue college majors that are in high demand in the global economy, such as science, math, technology, engineering and critical foreign languages.

Nationwide, it is estimated that approximately 500,000 students will qualify to receive Academic Competitiveness and SMART Grants. The Academic Competitiveness grants will provide college students who completed a rigorous course of study in high school with additional funds of up to $750 during their freshman year and up to $1,300 during their sophomore year; this is in addition to Pell Grant funds students are already receiving. College juniors and seniors who are eligible for SMART grants will automatically receive up to $4,000 in additional aid next year.

"Math, science and critical foreign language skills are the new currencies in our global economy," said Secretary Spellings. "These new grant programs will not only enable more students to attend college but also better prepare our

students for today's world. Justin Blahnik, a computer science student and SMART grant qualifier I met last week in Minnesota, put it best when he said these grants would enable students 'to borrow less, work less and study more.'"

To receive an Academic Competitiveness Grant, rising college freshmen and sophomores must be Pell Grant-eligible and have completed a program of rigorous high school course work as defined by their state and recognized by Secretary Spellings (visit www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov for more details). Academic Competitiveness Grants provide additional funds of up to $750 for first-year college students and up to an additional $1,300 for second-year students who complete rigorous high school course work, are enrolled full-time and maintain a 3.0 GPA in college.

For SMART Grants, third- and fourth-year Pell Grant-eligible students who meet the requirements, major in designated science, technology, math or critical foreign languages and maintain a 3.0 GPA will automatically receive up to an additional $4,000 during the 2006-07 school year. A complete list of eligible majors is available at www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov.

Students who have never applied for federal student aid should go on-line to www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov or call 1-800- 4FEDAID (or 1-800-433-3243) for more information on eligibility and application information for both of these grant programs, as well as all other federal student aid programs. Students who have previously applied for federal student aid and who may be eligible for the Academic Competitiveness Grant will receive a notification from the Federal Student Aid office, either by email or regular mail with application instructions. The Federal Student Aid office will begin sending these notifications on July 1.

The Academic Competitiveness and SMART Grants continue President Bush's historic levels of support for college students. Funding for Pell grants has risen from $8.8 billion in 2001 to a proposed $13 billion in the coming fiscal year. Overall, the U.S. Department of Education will make or guarantee almost $62 billion in new student loans this year - a $4 billion increase over last year.

For a fact sheet on the Academic Competitiveness and SMART Grants, please visit:
http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/competitiveness/ac-smart2.html.

Students may determine their eligibility for Academic Competitiveness Grants or SMART Grants, at http://federalstudentaid.ed.gov.
<< File: 5 24 06 Margaret Spellings.doc >>

From:	Thompson, Michael DPI
Sent:	Monday, July 03, 2006 9:32 AM
To:	Thompson, Michael DPI; Clancy, Dan; Hutchison, Connie; Reilly, Kevin - UW; Olsen, Luther; Harsdorf, Sheila; Shilling, Jennifer; Goldrick, Liam - Office of Governor Jim Doyle; Kreibich, Robin; 'rolf.wegenke@waicuweb.org'; Sen.Breske; 'rsinger@uwsa.edu'; 'swilhelm@uwsa.edu'; 'jayson.chung@wtcsystem.org'; 'paul.nelson@waicu.org'; Ellibee, Margaret A. DPI; Mahaffey, Deborah DPI; Spear, Gary L. DPI; Evers, Anthony S DPI; Ingram, Kevin N. DPI-Milw; Chung, Jayson
Cc:	Haas, Janet DPI; Gensler Santistevan, Kari A. DPI; Weber, Mary E. DPI; Moholkar, Mohini S DPI-Milw; Motiff, Debra DPI; Haas, Janet DPI
Subject:	RE: Academic Competitiveness Grant
Attachments:	Untitled; Wisconsin Attachment.doc

Untitled

Wisconsin
tachment.doc (22 K

Here is our official notice.

1

Hogan, Rebecca

June 29, 2006

Honorable Elizabeth Burmaster
Superintendent of Public Instruction
State Department of Public Instruction
125 South Webster Street
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, Wisconsin 53707

Dear Superintendent Burmaster,

This letter is in response to Wisconsin's proposal for an alternative rigorous secondary school program of study for the new Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) program for the 2006-07 school year.

On May 2, 2006, Secretary Spellings sent a letter outlining four options that she has recognized as rigorous secondary school programs of study for purposes of student eligibility for the ACG program. States were given until June 1, 2006, to propose additional options.

The Department is recognizing the proposal from Wisconsin for the 2006-07 school year. In addition, students from your State will be eligible for the ACG program through the options previously outlined in the Secretary's letter. The options for students in your State for the 2006-07 school year are identified in the attachment to this letter. Also, States have an opportunity to submit proposals for additional rigorous programs of study for the 2007-08 school year. Proposals for this purpose should be sent to the Department by November 1, 2006, pursuant to the details provided in the earlier letter.

There is no further action needed from your State Educational Agency in order for students from your State to become eligible for funding under the ACG program. On or around July 1, 2006, we will begin to notify potentially eligible students by email or letter that they may be eligible for an ACG. Students will be directed to submit additional information to the Department demonstrating their eligibility. College financial aid offices will be notified and, after verifying the student's eligibility, will award and disburse the ACG.

We look forward to a smooth implementation of this exciting new grant program, and we appreciate your support in continuing to communicate with students, parents and colleges and universities about this program.

Should you have any further questions about the ACG program, please do not hesitate to contact us at the Department by emailing ACGrants@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

Tom Luce

cc: State Higher Education Executive Officer
       Governor

07/13/2006

<<Wisconsin Attachment.doc>>

Wisconsin

The options for eligibility for the 2006-07 school year for a student from Wisconsin are:

- *A set of courses similar to the State Scholars Initiative.* This program of study requires passing grades in the following:
    - Four years of English;
    - Three years of Math (including Algebra I and a higher level course such as Algebra II, Geometry, or Data Analysis and Statistics);
    - Three years of science (including at least two courses from biology, chemistry or physics);
    - Three years of social studies; and
    - One year of a foreign language.

- *Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses and test scores.* This program requires a minimum of two Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in high school and a minimum passing score on the exams for those classes. Students must score 3 or higher on AP exams and 4 or higher on IB exams.

- *Wisconsin Coursework Requirements.* This program requires:
    - Four years of English;
    - Three years of Math (including Algebra I and a higher level course such as Algebra II, Geometry, or Data Analysis and Statistics);
    - Three years of science (including at least two courses from biology, chemistry or physics);
    - Three years of social studies; and
    - One year foreign language, fine arts, or technical education.

- *Wisconsin Dual Enrollment Program.* High school students who complete at least two college-level courses in core subject areas that also count toward high school graduation, but are not admitted into a formal program of study, and demonstrate achievement of 3.0 or higher in the college-level course are eligible for Academic Competitiveness Grants.