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DRAFT LETTER NO. 3

December 17, 2012

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Evers
Department of Public Instruction
125 South Webster Street
Madison, WI 53707-7841

Dear Superintendent Evers:

We are writing in our capacity as Chair and Vice Chair of the Joint Legislative Council's Special Committee on Improving Educational Opportunities in High School. The Special Committee is directed to develop legislation to create and enhance opportunities for both lower and higher achieving students in high school. The Special Committee was specifically directed to evaluate current options available to high school students for both career and technical education and post-secondary enrollment, including the Youth Options Program; examine both career and technical education and post-secondary enrollment options available to high school students in other states; and determine how to promote coordination between high schools, technical colleges, universities, and employers to ensure that high school students have the skills necessary to meet the workforce needs of employers in this state.

The Special Committee received testimony from the Madison Metropolitan School District and the Monona Grove School District regarding the benefits of using the EXPLORE PLAN ACT (ACT Suite) and WorkKeys. In addition, the Special Committee received information regarding the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) proposal to require all high school students to take the ACT Suite and WorkKeys, as well as the DPI proposal to use a science test in 10th grade in order to comply with federal law, and a social studies test in 10th grade in order to meet state testing requirements. Therefore, it is the understanding of the committee that 10th grade students would take the PLAN test, which assesses math and reading, and the additional science and social studies tests.

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Among the many benefits of using the ACT Suite is that students and parents recognize that the ACT Suite of tests are more meaningful and relevant to a student's high school and post-secondary college or career plans. Therefore, the Special Committee recommends that DPI consider expanding the 10th grade PLAN test to include science, rather than developing a separate science assessment, in order to meet federal testing requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Senator Luther Olsen, Chair
Special Committee on Improving
Educational Opportunities in High School

Representative Paul Farrow, Vice Chair
Special Committee on Improving
Educational Opportunities in High School

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