



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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May 29, 2001

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #771

Reorganization Plan (DPI -- Administrative and Other Funding)

[LFB 2001-03 Budget Summary: Page 566, #18]

CURRENT LAW

Current law requires the State Superintendent to annually identify those school districts that are low in performance and those schools in which there are pupils enrolled who do not meet the state minimum performance standards on the statewide pupil assessments. The State Superintendent is required to make recommendations regarding how the programs and operations of the identified school districts and schools may be improved and periodically assess school district implementation of the recommendations.

The Division for Learning Support and Instructional Services (DLSIS) within the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) consists of eight teams that are responsible for a variety of programs and services. The services relate to general or regular education and include consultation with parents, administrators, teachers, lay public, and legislators about assessment, teacher preparation and licensing, professional development, career and lifework education, opportunities for minority students, issues related to urban education, advanced placement and the development and implementation of academic standards and curriculum materials in a variety of subject areas. The Division also administers state and federal funds supporting activities related to increased student achievement. Teams within the Division are the following: content and learning, education options, lifework education, office of educational accountability, office of urban education, teacher education and licensing teams, and the Wisconsin education opportunity programs team (WEOP).

The Division for Learning Support, Equity and Advocacy (DLSEA) in DPI consists of five teams, the Wisconsin School for the Deaf (WSD) and the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI). The Division provides technical assistance, leadership, advocacy, and staff development, training, and education to help meet the cultural, emotional, social, health, and educational needs of pupils. The Division, through WSD and WCBVI,

provides direct instruction to students and technical assistance through outreach to local educational agencies (LEAs), communities, and families statewide. The DLSEA includes the following teams: special education; student services, prevention and wellness; equity; Title I; WSD; WCBVI; and school improvement.

GOVERNOR

Require the State Superintendent, in consultation with the Secretary of Administration, to develop a plan for reorganizing the Division for Learning Support and Instructional Services in DPI in order to enhance DPI's ability to support the improvement of schools. Require the plan do all of the following: (a) establish a Bureau for School Improvement composed of staff in the Division for Learning Support and Instructional Services and federally funded staff in the Division for Learning Support, Equity, and Advocacy in DPI; (b) organize the Bureau into multidisciplinary school improvement teams to provide on-site technical assistance to schools and school districts, especially those that are identified as low-performance by the State Superintendent; and (c) include on each school improvement team at least one licensed teacher employed by a school district and temporarily assigned to DPI under agreements formed for this purpose. Require DPI to submit the reorganization plan to the Governor and to the Secretary of Administration by March 15, 2002.

Establish the Bureau statutorily including the requirements itemized in (b) and (c) under the plan. Specify that the provision creating the Bureau would not apply unless the Governor approves the plan for reorganization of DPI. The agreements temporarily assigning teachers to DPI would not be subject to approval by the Secretary of Employment Relations.

Provide \$700,000 GPR in 2002-03 in DPI's largest state operations appropriation and require DPI to allocate the funding to contract school districts for the services of teachers. Prohibit DPI from encumbering or expanding the money so allocated unless the Secretary of Administration determines that the reorganization plan has been implemented.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Teams within the DLSIS are responsible for a variety of programs. In general, the content and learning team works with schools to develop curriculum. The education options team administers such programs as youth options, the student achievement guarantee in education program (SAGE), charter schools, and Goals 2000. Programs under lifework education include vocational-technical education. The office of educational accountability currently handles the Wisconsin student assessment system, assessment results reporting, and the annual school performance reports. The office of urban education primarily assists schools in the areas of Beloit, Racine, Milwaukee, and Kenosha, and is located in Milwaukee. The teacher education and licensing teams work to ensure quality preparation and continuing professional development of educators, providing information about education programs for teachers and other educators, licensing requirements and procedures, and programs related to education careers. WEOP works to encourage pupils to go on to higher education and administers such programs as the minority precollege

scholarship program, the talent incentive program, and the early identification program.

2. Teams within the DLSEA are generally responsible for programs addressing the special needs of pupils. The special education team administers IDEA grants, provides guidance to schools and parents about special education eligibility and rights, and monitors compliance. The student services, prevention and wellness team administers the alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA), safe and drug-free schools, school-aged parent, and youth violence prevention programs, among others. The equity team handles general equity concerns, including bilingual and English as a second language (ESL) education, gender equity, and minority student achievement. The Title I team is responsible for administration of the basic grants, as well as more focused program areas such as even start family literacy, migrant education, and neglected and delinquent youth. The WSD is a residential school for deaf and hard of hearing students ages 3 to 21 throughout the state. The WCBVI operates the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped, a residential school for blind and visually impaired students, and through its campus/school and regional sites provides a wide array of statewide services, assessments, summer/weekend programs, resources, and professional opportunities.

3. In addition, under the DLSEA, the school improvement team provides support to schools identified as in need of improvement. The team coordinates the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) program, the Title II Eisenhower professional development program, and the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program. The team also coordinates the Title VI Innovative Education Program and facilitates federal initiatives including the Education Flexibility Partnership Act.

4. Proponents of the reorganization initiative argue that additional services are needed to help failing schools improve. This reorganization would focus the Department's attention on failing or low-performing schools. The level of on-site technical assistance provided to schools through such a reorganization might lead to improvement in failing schools or fewer schools being identified as low-performing in the future. For 2000-01, DPI identified 23 schools as low in performance, based on data for 1998-99 and 1999-00. There are approximately 2,080 individual schools in the state.

5. Some have argued that it is necessary to provide funds to pay for teacher input on school improvement teams since the revolving nature of teacher participation would result in the teachers having recently been employed in schools. Therefore, these teachers would be versed in the current issues and problems being addressed by their counterparts in low-performing schools. Some argue that successful teachers are a better resource to fellow teachers than state consultants who may not have recently worked in schools. Through the school improvement teams, these teachers could provide insight to both the consultants working for DPI and their counterparts in schools.

6. On the other hand, some argue that it would be undesirable to require a reorganization that adds costs to DPI's state operations. Although each teacher would work for the Department for a limited period of time, the costs of contracting for their services would be ongoing. Some might also note that a school improvement team is currently operating with resources available within the existing DPI staff and budget to meet the statutory requirements that

schools low in performance be identified and assisted.

7. A new State Superintendent will assume her duties in July of this year. It may be desirable to allow the new State Superintendent an opportunity to assess the current activities of DPI before statutorily reorganizing the Department. The State Superintendent could request a restructuring, if needed, as part of separate legislation or in the agency budget submission in the 2003-05 biennium. Alternatively, the State Superintendent could be required to develop a reorganization plan for submission to the Legislature as part of DPI's 2003-05 agency budget request.

8. One can question whether a new initiative, such as this proposal, should be funded in the 2001-03 budget given the limited resources available to the Legislature. New GPR may be better spent directly on school resources or existing programs.

ALTERNATIVES TO BASE

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to require the State Superintendent to develop a plan for reorganizing the Division for Learning Support and Instructional Services in DPI in order to enhance DPI's ability to support the improvement of schools. Require the plan do all of the following: (a) establish a Bureau for School Improvement composed of staff in the Division for Learning Support and Instructional Services and federally funded staff in the Division for Learning Support, Equity, and Advocacy in DPI; (b) organize the Bureau into multidisciplinary school improvement teams to provide on-site technical assistance to schools and school districts, especially those that are identified as low-performance by the State Superintendent; and (c) include on each school improvement team at least one licensed teacher employed by a school district and temporarily assigned to DPI under agreements formed for this purpose. Require DPI to submit the reorganization plan to the Governor and to the Secretary of Administration by March 15, 2002. Specify that the provision creating the Bureau would not apply unless the Governor approves the plan for reorganization of DPI. The agreements temporarily assigning teachers to DPI would not be subject to approval by the Secretary of Employment Relations. Provide \$700,000 GPR in 2002-03 in DPI's largest state operations appropriation and require DPI to allocate the funding to contract with school districts for the services of teachers.

| Alternative 1 | GPR |
|--|-------------------|
| 2001-03 FUNDING (Change to Base) <i>[Change to Bill]</i> | \$700,000 \$0] |

2. Delete the Governor's recommendation and instead require the State Superintendent to develop a plan for reorganizing the Division for Learning Support and Instructional Services and Division for Learning Support, Equity, and Advocacy in DPI in order to enhance DPI's ability to support the improvement of schools. Require DPI to submit the reorganization plan as part of its agency request for the 2003-05 biennial budget.

| Alternative 2 | GPR |
|---|---------------------|
| 2001-03 FUNDING (Change to Base) | \$0 |
| <i>[Change to Bill]</i> | <i>- \$700,000]</i> |

3. Maintain current law.

| Alternative 3 | GPR |
|---|---------------------|
| 2001-03 FUNDING (Change to Base) | \$0 |
| <i>[Change to Bill]</i> | <i>- \$700,000]</i> |

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