

Agenda 2017

Wisconsin is advancing education reforms to ensure every child graduates ready for further education and the workplace. These reforms build on our nation-leading graduation rates, college entrance exam scores, and more students taking rigorous college-level courses. On this foundation, we are implementing new standards and higher expectations for students and their schools.

Setting goals and enacting strong reforms aim to prepare all children to graduate ready for future success and technological innovation. Making this a reality means facing serious issues. *We must close graduation and achievement gaps; reduce the number of students who drop out of school; and fix the broken school finance system.* Tackling these difficult issues and investing in public education help build our workforce and middle class prosperity.

By 2017, we need to reach target goals that prepare our students for success in further education and career:

- ✓ Further increase graduation rate from 85.7 percent to 92 percent.
- ✓ Increase career and college readiness from 32 percent to 67 percent.
- ✓ Close graduation and career and college readiness gaps by 50 percent.
- ✓ Increase the percentage of students scoring proficient in third-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics.
- ✓ Adopt the Fair Funding for Our Future plan to make school finance more equitable and transparent.

To achieve these goals and advance education for all students, we must focus around four simple, but powerful areas:

Standards and Instruction: *What and how should kids learn?*

Assessments and Data Systems: *How do we know if they learned it?*

School and Educator Effectiveness: *How do we ensure kids have highly effective teachers and schools?*

School Finance Reform: *How should we pay for schools?*

Public education in Wisconsin is one of our great economic and social strengths. This agenda provides direct actions to meet aggressive but achievable goals to improve student learning, promote safe and healthy school environments, and increase global competitiveness. Transforming our education system so that every child is a graduate ready for college and career will make a lasting impact and strengthen prosperity for all in Wisconsin.



“Every child must graduate ready for further education and the workforce. We must align our efforts so all our students are prepared to succeed in college or a career.”

– State Superintendent Tony Evers



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Tony Evers, PhD, State Superintendent



Standards and Instruction

- Implement *internationally benchmarked academic standards* to ensure students are globally competitive;
- Expand systems that promote *early interventions* in reading and mathematics, such as Response to Intervention and *early literacy screening in kindergarten*;
- Expand *innovative charter schools*;
- Use *digital learning* to change and *enhance instruction*; and
- Expand high school programs for *dual enrollment earning college credit* and *specific career skills* through industry certifications and youth apprenticeships.



Assessments and Data Systems



- Change state assessment proficiency levels, to reflect the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), providing *higher expectations for students* that reflect career and college readiness;
- Implement an online, adaptive *next generation assessment* system that *gauges student progress throughout the year*, and provides real-time data to teachers and parents;
- *Measure student college and career readiness* from the end of middle school through high school using the EXPLORE/PLAN/ACT tests and WorkKeys; and
- Launch *statewide student information and data systems* that support districts, streamline operations, and expand research.

School and Educator Effectiveness

- Replace broken No Child Left Behind requirements with a *new state accountability and support system* that includes all publicly funded schools, relies on multiple measures of student and school performance and growth, and focuses on college and career readiness;
- Replicate best practices from *high-performing schools* and provide direction, technical assistance, and support to *improve the lowest-performing schools*;
- Require Milwaukee Public Schools under corrective action to adopt a *uniform curriculum in reading and math*, implement *data-driven student intervention* systems, and ensure all *teachers are highly qualified*; and
- Advance a *fair and robust educator evaluation system* that incorporates student achievement data.



School Finance Reform



- Guarantee a *minimum amount of state aid* for every student;
- Incorporate a *poverty factor* into the formula, accounting for families' ability to pay—not just property value;
- Establish *sustainability* in state funding, while strengthening rural, declining enrollment, and negatively aided districts; and
- Redirect the school levy tax credit directly into school aids, *increasing transparency* and state support for classroom learning.



Every Child a Graduate College and Career Ready

Accountability for Schools

Using Multiple Measures and Supports



Wisconsin is launching a new school accountability system. The system will

provide balanced, descriptive information about school performance, using multiple measures.

To develop the system, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) worked closely with policymakers and education stakeholders, including parents, teachers, superintendents, and the business community. The work of the School and District Accountability Design Team, which included the Governor, the State Superintendent, and legislative leaders was the basis for the new system. DPI also consulted with the U.S. Department of Education and an expert Technical Advisory Committee.

The new accountability system applies to all public schools, including charter schools, and takes effect with new school report cards based on 2011-12 student performance. The goal is for this system to include the performance of private schools receiving publicly funded vouchers as well.

A Balanced Index for Measuring Performance

Each year, schools will receive one of five accountability ratings based on an overall score that results from performance in these priority areas:

- Student Achievement in reading and mathematics on state assessments
- Student Growth, measured by year-to-

year improvements in achievement

- Closing Gaps in performance between specific student groups (comparing English language learners, low-income students, students with disabilities, and members of racial or ethnic groups with their peers)
- On-Track to Graduation/ Postsecondary Readiness, using reliable predictors of high school graduation and postsecondary success

Also, poor test participation, dropout, and absenteeism rates can reduce priority area scores.

New School Report Card

The new school report card will show at which of the five levels the school is performing. It will provide detailed information about the priority areas and performance of student groups to help each school understand its score and carry out data informed improvements.

Recognizing and Supporting Schools

The DPI will recognize top-performers as Rewards Schools and work to disseminate their best practices to struggling schools. In struggling schools, interventions will be required including the development and execution of turnaround or improvement plans. Other schools will be connected with resources that meet their specific needs as part of a new, differentiated statewide system of support.

For more information go to:

dpi.wi.gov/oea/acct/accountability.html

Multiple performance measures and a five-tiered classification system make the new accountability system a more informative and constructive guide for school improvement.



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Higher Expectations

New College and Career Readiness Benchmarks for the WKCE



Each year in Wisconsin, public school students in grades 3-8 and 10 take the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations (WKCE) for mathematics and reading. The results of these annual assessments provide vital information for students, parents, and educators.

Starting in the 2012-13 school year, Wisconsin is raising the benchmark scores needed for students to reach the proficient or advanced performance levels. These new college and career readiness proficiency levels are based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Wisconsin is on a rapid trajectory toward higher standards. This includes implementation of the Common Core State Standards, upgraded curriculum standards for students with disabilities and English language learners, and developing next-generation assessments. Raising the WKCE benchmarks is part of a strategic effort to ensure our children are ready for college and careers in today's rapidly changing, global society and economy.

Because of these benchmark score changes, WKCE results will show a significant decline in the number of students considered to be "proficient" or "advanced." This does not reflect a change in the abilities of students, but rather reflects the higher standards and aspirations we have for our students and schools.

The higher college and career readiness benchmarks will be reflected in Wisconsin's new school accountability system. Under this new system, students' performance levels will be balanced with indicators regarding student growth, closing gaps between groups of students, and keeping students on track to graduation and postsecondary readiness.

Adjusting to higher aspirations and expectations will take some time, but this is a necessary change for a worthy purpose: to elevate the achievement of our students and their schools. Together, we can all work to make sure every child graduates ready for college and career.

For more information go to:
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Higher benchmarks have been established as a better measure of student progress toward being ready for college and careers.



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