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Official publication of the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Inc.

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# WISCONSIN SchoolNews

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## Eight Wisconsin Schools Named 2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools

Eight Wisconsin schools recently received National Blue Ribbon School honors from the U.S. Department of Education:

- **Bayfield Elementary School**  
Bayfield School District
- **Cedar Hills Elementary School**  
Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District
- **Lakeview Technology Academy**  
Pleasant Prairie, Kenosha School District
- **Marcy Elementary School**  
Menomonee Falls, Hamilton School District
- **Star Center Elementary School**  
Lake Geneva J1 School District
- **Tiffany Creek Elementary School**  
Boyceville Community School District
- **Van Hise Elementary School**  
Madison Metropolitan School District
- **Winneconne Middle School**  
Winneconne Community School District

Nominated by the state superintendent in January, the schools completed an application and underwent a national review process. Nationwide, 362 schools will be recognized at the Nov. 14-15 awards program in Washington, D.C. Schools are honored as Exemplary High Performance Schools, which are each state's highest performing schools as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests, or as Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools, which are each state's highest performing schools in closing achievement gaps between a school's subgroups and all students. □

## Secret Service Releases Findings of Study on School Shooters

A new report from the U.S. Secret Service detailed the findings of a study of violent attacks in schools over the last decade. It found that most attacks were committed by students who telegraphed their intentions beforehand and that many of the schools had implemented physical security measures (such as cameras, school resource officers, lockdown procedures, etc.).

The report recommends a multi-disciplinary threat assessment team,

in conjunction with the appropriate policies, tools and training, as the best practice for preventing future tragedies. It emphasizes the importance of schools establishing comprehensive, targeted violence prevention programs that identify students of concern, assess their risk for engaging in violence or other harmful activities, and implement strategies to manage that risk. Visit *the WASB Legislative Update blog* for a link to the study. □

### STAT OF THE MONTH

# 87%

Percentage of rated schools that met or exceeded expectations on state report cards

Source: Department of Public Instruction

## Most Schools and Districts Meet Expectations on 2018-19 Report Cards

According to information provided by the Department of Public Instruction, "The percentage of public and private schools and public school districts meeting expectations on state report cards remains high. On state report cards issued for the 2018-19 school year, overall 87% of rated schools met or exceeded expectations as did 96% of the state's 421 public school districts.

"This is the fourth year the report cards used legislatively required calculations, and the fourth year private schools in the Milwaukee, Racine and statewide parental choice programs received report cards. For 2018-19, 2,112 public schools and 322 private choice schools received report cards. Of choice schools, 106 exercised the

option to receive an all student report card in addition to the required report card for choice students only.

"For 2018-19 report cards, 40 districts were rated at the highest accountability level, a five-star rating, meaning they significantly exceed expectations. Forming the largest group are 198 districts achieving four stars, which means they exceed expectations. The three-star, meets expectations, rating was given to 163 districts. Seventeen districts were rated two stars, meets few expectations. One district failed to meet expectations, the one-star category. No districts were rated using the alternate accountability measures this year." □



## Staff Retention is Central to Educational Excellence and Equity

Some connections are intuitive and natural, like winter and snowfall in the Upper Midwest. Leaders in education can add another one to the list: the connection between retaining and hiring quality staff and the achievement of students.

Holding on to high-quality teachers and other educators is one of the single best strategies for a district to help its children reach their potential.

The urgency of this conversation in districts across Wisconsin led us to create a workshop, held before each of our regional meetings this fall, that gave attendees suggestions for how to keep and compensate staff.

As attendees learned, compensation is an important element. Median starting salaries among all college graduates well outpace starting teacher salaries in Wisconsin. But money is far from the only factor. Teachers and staff also care about working conditions, which include how their time is used and the equitable consistency of discipline.

The workshop also highlighted the role of principals in creating the kind of schools that staff want to stay in.

Though the connection between retaining good teachers and student success is intuitive, we sometimes

forget to add principals to the mix. In this issue of Wisconsin School News, we expand the conversation about educator retention to school leaders.

A growing body of research finds that a school's working conditions greatly affect a teacher's decision to stay or leave. Principals may be in the single best position to influence those working conditions. A principal who can create a school culture that supports and values teachers can help retain them. That has powerful implications for the achievement of our students.

One study found the effect of school leaders is responsible for 25% of the school's influence on students' academic performance. This finding is highlighted in a column in this issue authored by Association of Wisconsin School Administrators Executive Director Jim Lynch.

Even when they have a vision for school transformation, principals are often hard-pressed to find the time to put it into practice, as Lynch describes. Only one in four principals stays in a given leadership position longer than five years. In his column, Lynch describes in detail five strategies to promote retention and growth among principals.

Staff retention and hiring is also an equity issue. A 2018 study found that black students who had a black

teacher were 13% more likely to go to college than peers who did not have a black teacher. Similarly, a 2017 study in North Carolina found that black males were 18% less likely to experience exclusionary discipline — like suspension or expulsion — when they had a black male teacher when compared to a white male teacher.

As a school board member, you're in a position to influence how these challenges are met in your district.

Your next opportunity for in-depth professional development is at the State Education Convention in January in Milwaukee. At the convention, you'll have an opportunity to hear from inspirational keynote speakers and attend a variety of different breakout sessions that can influence how you approach improving the culture and climate of your schools.

It is also a chance for board members around the state to share what works — and, yes, what doesn't — when attempting to hire and keep the best staff. As with so many other elements of school improvement, the details matter, and there's no better person to give you the guidance you'll need than your fellow board members.

We look forward to seeing you in January and having you join us in this conversation. ■

A principal who can create a school culture that supports and values teachers can help retain them. That has powerful implications for the achievement of our students.



# Stirring Up New Opportunities

## 2019 WASB BUSINESS HONOR ROLL

Each year, the WASB invites school boards across the state to nominate local businesses to be recognized for their efforts to bolster public education in their communities. This year, 50 school districts nominated 166 businesses that provided a wide range of services and support for their local schools and students.

The WASB is proud to share a few of these local stories. The complete 2019 Business Honor Roll list is available on the WASB website.

### BERLIN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

#### Renewable World Foundation

When Bill Harris of the Renewable World Foundation comes into Berlin

Area School District classrooms, he breathes life into abstract concepts. For example, he sets up a bike that generates electricity to power a coffee maker in order to show the connection between work and energy.

Harris and his foundation also collaborate with the district to take these lessons into the wild.

Each fall, a group of seventh-graders visits the Lake Superior wilderness of Isle Royale National Park, where they experience nature while seeing their lessons from another angle.

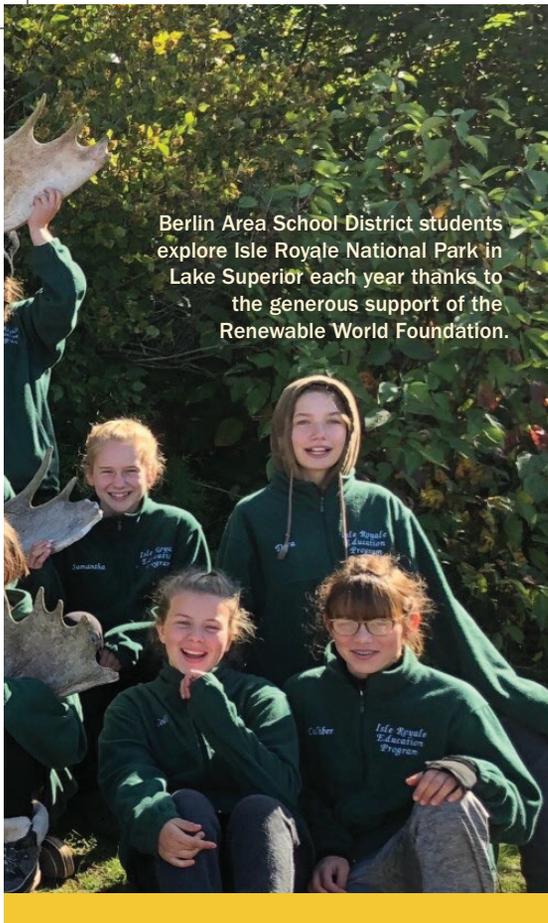
Understanding how energy cycles through a system is critical to both ecology and renewable energy. Harris makes those lessons more concrete, says Angela Beck, a

seventh-grade environmental science teacher at Berlin Middle School.

“He shows them how solar panels work and how wind turbines work,” Beck says.

It’s one thing to learn about solar panels in the classroom but another to survive off their energy alone during a low-impact backpacking trip. These camping expeditions help students understand the challenges that can come from living solely off renewable power.

“Some kids have never been on a camping trip and come back with a different appreciation for nature,” says Beck, also noting the camping trips drive home classroom messages about sustainability. “We’re trying to teach students about renewable



Berlin Area School District students explore Isle Royale National Park in Lake Superior each year thanks to the generous support of the Renewable World Foundation.

resources and wise daily choices and their effect on the environment. Some students return from their camping trips with a more environmental ethic.”

Seeing the real-world applications of their classroom lessons can make that instruction more engaging, according to Berlin District Superintendent Carl Cartwright.

“You’re able to get them applying their classroom content on a grander scale,” Cartwright says.

#### SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ELMBROOK

##### ■ Waukesha County District Attorney’s Office

As a high school senior with a three-month placement in the Waukesha County District Attorney’s Office, Kevin Jacobson confirmed his suspicion that a career in law might be a good fit for him.

More surprising was that he found himself doing work that really mattered.

Jacobson, who graduated from Brookfield Central High School in June, spent part of his placement listening to phone calls made by jail

inmates. Though this task can be considered tedious by full-time staff, these calls can uncover evidence of new crimes.

“I found evidence of additional crimes and charges were filed based on the work I’d done,” says Jacobson, who is now pursuing degrees in political science and economics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Amie Farley, director of college, career and life readiness in the Elmbrook School District, helps coordinate LAUNCH, the district’s experiential learning program. About 250 students have internship opportunities through the program.

Some of them are interested in law or politics, though it can be harder to find placements in legal settings.

Farley, who formerly taught criminal justice, asked the Waukesha County District Attorney’s Office if they’d be willing to invite a handful of students into their workplace.

“It’s a professional setting, so they interview students beforehand,” Farley says. “They give them a really immersive experience.”

Students spend time in the courtroom to see firsthand how the legal process plays out. Even the judges join in, explaining to the students how the system works.

Julie Moelter, the office services coordinator in the district attorney’s office, said the students placed in their office have been eager, hard-working and punctual. She sees it as an opportunity to show the next generation of legal professionals what their career might look like.

“When you really see it hands-on, it’s an eye-opener,” Moelter says. “People walk away saying they love this profession.”

Jacobson also noted how the courts were driven by procedure and process — such as motions and brief appearances — instead of dramatic jury trials like on television.

“It helped him understand the reality that these cases aren’t wrapped up in 45 minutes,” District



Kevin Jacobson

Attorney Susan Opper says. The students also add something intangible to the rhythms of the office.

“They bring in fresh lives, fresh perspectives. They want to be here,” Opper says. “We’re proud to play a small role in

helping them make good decisions for their future.”

Jacobson appreciated how the placement rewarded his sense of curiosity.

“If you don’t have an independent mindset, you won’t get as much out of it,” he says. “You get to go where you’re interested.”

#### OCONTO FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT

##### ■ Riverview Quick Mart

Jerry Moynihan (below left), the director of school and community engagement at the Oconto Falls School District, is used to soliciting donations. This time he didn’t even have to ask.

Robert Seeber (below right), the owner of Riverview Quick Mart — an Oconto Falls gas station — came to Moynihan with an offer. He would donate 2 cents per gallon from one of his gas pumps.



Naturally, Moynihan accepted. The experience was seamless for Moynihan, the district and the donors. Participating is as simple as using the bright orange “Panthers Pride” pump (its fuel costs the same as the others). Two cents per gallon automatically goes to the district.

Unlike donations that are earmarked for a specific purpose, the money from the Pride Pump — about \$5,000 over the last two years — can go wherever the district needs it.

It has helped to support a variety of initiatives, such as a STEM symposium, an All Arts Show at the library and new wrestling mats.

“We really spread the wealth around so it’s not just going into one particular area,” Moynihan says.

The practice of designating a pump to support local schools didn’t begin in Oconto Falls. The idea has been showing up in northern Wisconsin cities in the past few years.



“It’s caught on in other places, for sure,” Moynihan says.

It’s the kind of community support that keeps a school vibrant.

“We really do appreciate his support, because we can’t do it alone,” Moynihan says. “It takes a village. We need the support of everybody.”

**MINERAL POINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Shake Rag Alley Center for the Arts**

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The Shake Rag Alley Center for the Arts in Mineral Point provides a unique creative outlet for students.

those possibilities into closer view through a partnership with the Shake Rag Alley Center for the Arts.

Writers from around the country come to the arts center for weeklong residencies, presenting opportunities for them to plant artistic seeds in the minds of young students.

“They visit students and teach them about their craft,” says Joelle Doye, the district’s communications director. “They’re living proof that students can be a writer, illustrator or poet.”

Hearing firsthand from artists is a way to make the craft come to life, says Kris McCoy, library media technology specialist at Mineral Point middle and high schools.

“They’re not the dead white poets we study in English class,” she says. “They can humanize literature that can feel stodgy.”

The district has a reciprocal relationship with Shake Rag Alley with students helping to spruce up their

grounds in the spring and fall.

“We give back to them almost as much as they give us,” Doye says.

Bob Hay, Shake Rag’s former board president, says last year’s rainfall and the region’s valley-filled topography led to flood damage. The kids stepped up.

“The kids moved tons of gravel and whipped the place back into shape,” Hay says.

Holding graduations and other events at the arts center also exposes parents and community members to what the nonprofit has to offer.

“It’s given Shake Rag more visibility, which it can always benefit from,” Hay says.

The partnership shows the value of a school being part of its community rather than separate.

Doye says Mineral Point is a small, diverse city with a mix of Native Americans, artisans from the Chicago area and a farming community.

“You can’t have a school be

isolated from the community, but if we didn’t build these bridges we’d be an island,” Doye says.

#### RACINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

##### PPG Industries

Advanced construction students at Park, Horlick and Case high schools in the Racine Unified School District typically demonstrate their mastery by building a shed.

One recent semester, they showed their skills in a different way. Veterans Outreach of Wisconsin was building tiny homes for vets near Horlick High School, and it asked for some help.

The district and its construction students stepped up, providing transitional housing to veterans and a meaningful experience to the teens.

“The students who worked on the homes felt a sense of giving back to the community,” says Chris Neff, the district’s director of career and technical education. “They were



With the help of PPG Industries, advanced construction students at Park, Horlick and Case high schools in the Racine Unified School District came together to help build tiny homes for veterans.



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— **MORE INFO** —

Visit the communications services at [WASB.org](http://WASB.org) for more information about the Business Honor Roll and the recent nominees. The WASB provides certificates to participating districts to present to their nominated partners.

The **2020 WASB Business Honor Roll** opens in June. Nominations are due in September 2020.



The Middleton-Cross Plains Area School Board recognized the five area businesses they nominated for the 2019 Business Honor Roll at a recent board meeting. School Board President Bob Green and Superintendent Dana Monogue are pictured above presenting certificates to representatives from Paragon Development Systems, Integrated Technology Solutions, Ice Age Trail Alliance and Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute.

building homes to help people who had helped them, and they felt honored to help.”

One of the student builders was an Air Force ROTC student for whom helping a veteran provided a special sense of purpose. Another student, sophomore Raishein Thomas, told the local newspaper that he “slowly became addicted to helping (the veterans).”

The district brought together

several partners for the tiny home project, including the workforce training nonprofit SkillsUSA and PPG Industries, a large paint and coatings company that donated the interior paint used in the tiny homes.

The district began working with PPG when it applied for a grant, and the relationship has been cemented by the families who work at its Oak Creek plant.

The partnership with PPG has been incredibly fruitful, as the Pittsburgh-based company has provided

roughly \$150,000 in grants to RUSD schools. One of them established gardens at schools whose produce was used by culinary arts students. In addition to giving the young cooks fresh food, it exposed them to the larger movement around restaurant sustainability.

PPG has also supported the district's participation in the FIRST Robotics Competition, in which students design and build game-playing robots from scratch. ■

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## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT

# Attracting, Retaining and Growing

## GREAT SCHOOL LEADERS

by Jim Lynch

**S**chool principals influence the school culture and the instructional quality of whole systems of teachers.<sup>1</sup> A leader's effect on students contributes to 25% of the total school influences on students' academic performance.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, school districts have an enormous interest to attract, retain and continually improve strong school leaders.

### Principal Turnover: Our National Problem of Practice

While developing student-centered cultures as well as attracting and retaining high-quality teachers are critical for school leaders to improve their schools, there is another essential element principals must possess: time. Typically, creating meaningful and lasting change in a school is equivalent to turning an oil tanker. Research says that it takes five to 10 years for a principal to have a meaningful impact on a large school.<sup>3</sup> Thus, school leaders need sufficient time to get the job done. Unfortunately, they do not often get it.

According to the School Leaders Network, only one in four principals stay in a given leadership position longer than five years.<sup>4</sup> Of those who are brand new to principalship, 50% do not make it past year three. Besides losing talented people from the profession, the costs of principal turnover are high in terms of real dollars and in its effect on learning environments. For example, the national average to prepare and onboard a new principal costs \$75,000. Furthermore, student performance in math and English language

arts falls the year after a principal leaves, with the next principal needing up to three years to make up the loss.

The Association of Wisconsin School Administrators is a member of the School Leader Collaborative, a consortium of state principal associations dedicated to addressing principal growth and longevity. The consortium believes that in order to keep student performance on a positive trajectory and save school districts' needed



**Besides losing talented people from the profession,** the costs of principal turnover are high in terms of real dollars and in its effect on learning environments.

## 5 REASONS principals leave their jobs

- Inadequate preparation and professional development
- Poor working conditions
- Insufficient salaries
- Lack of decision-making authority
- Ineffective accountability policies

## 5 STRATEGIES to promote retention & growth

- High-quality professional learning opportunities
- Support from strong administrative teams with adequate school-level resources
- Competitive salaries
- Appropriate decision-making authority in the school context
- Evaluations characterized by timely, formative feedback

resources, a two-prong approach of supporting principals must be taken: 1) increase their longevity in the schools they have been hired to lead; and 2) accelerate their effectiveness as school leaders. Principals must have time to create positive, lasting change in their schools. However, since most principals do not benefit from the time needed to transform their buildings, they must be provided support to get better faster.

### Causes of Turnover and Strategies for Retention

To increase understanding of principal turnover and determine which policies and practices might stem the tide, the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the Learning Policy Institute have partnered to conduct a study of principal turnover. This research has identified five main causes of turnover and five keys to promoting longevity. The turnover causes are listed above. The retention strategies include:

### 1 High-quality professional learning opportunities.

Wisconsin schools have never been better positioned to provide leaders with the professional learning opportunities they need. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act — better known as ESSA — provided new opportunities for states to invest in school and district leadership and support. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction is using this opportunity to build the capacity of, and coherence for, school leaders through a collaborative partnership. This effort is providing opportunities along three tiers — conferences, academies and coaching — of professional learning to systematically enhance the leadership capacity throughout the state:

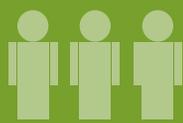
- **Tier 1:** “Conferences” provide professional learning, information and networking opportunities across the administrator standards (breadth). The DPI, CESA Statewide Network, Wisconsin Association of School

District Administrators and AWSA are working collaboratively to provide coherent professional learning for Wisconsin’s educators. Beginning this year, the partners transitioned three stand-alone professional learning activities into a coherent, jointly planned conference series called the Wisconsin Leading for Learning Summit and Series. This approach was designed in response to strong input from the field encouraging state and regional organizations to better coordinate events.

- **Tier 2:** “Academies” provide focused training to improve leadership practice in high-leverage competencies (depth). Wisconsin school leaders are being reimbursed 75% of the registration fee for completing an academy. In 2019-20, approved academies include New Building Administrators, Building Effective Leadership

## ONLY 1-out-of-4 PRINCIPALS

remains in the same building after five years



5  
YEARS



IT TAKES  
5 to 10 YEARS

for a principal to  
turn around a  
large school.



(years 2-5),  
Leading for  
Equity, Impactful  
Coaching, Data  
Leadership,

Leading Professional Learning  
Communities, and Mental  
Health and Resilience.

- **Tier 3:** “Coaching” to further equip leaders with tools and strategies to lead effectively (reflection). School leaders engaged in the New Building Administrators Academy or the Building Effective Leadership Academy are able to work with a certified coach. The cost of this high-quality coaching is supported through this collaborative partnership.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals and the Learning Policy Institute research also found that principals praised preparation programs that offer robust field experiences with strong mentors and/or internships. Last year, AWSA, DPI and the Wisconsin Association of Colleges for Teacher Education began convening meetings among Wisconsin’s principal

preparation programs. The group is working collaboratively on strengthening the practicum experiences for Wisconsin principal candidates.

## 2 Support from strong administrative teams with adequate school-level resources.

Wisconsin’s school principals report largely positive relationships among principals, with district leadership and the school board. In 2018, AWSA members reported having good to great relationships as follows:

- **92%** among all the principals in the district
- **89%** between the superintendent and all the principals
- **83%** between the school board and all the administrators

These healthy relationships provide fertile ground to develop high-performance leadership teams. There are excellent resources for districts to use when assessing the current state of their administrative team. One example is “The District: How Leadership Influences Student Learning,” published by the Wallace Foundation.

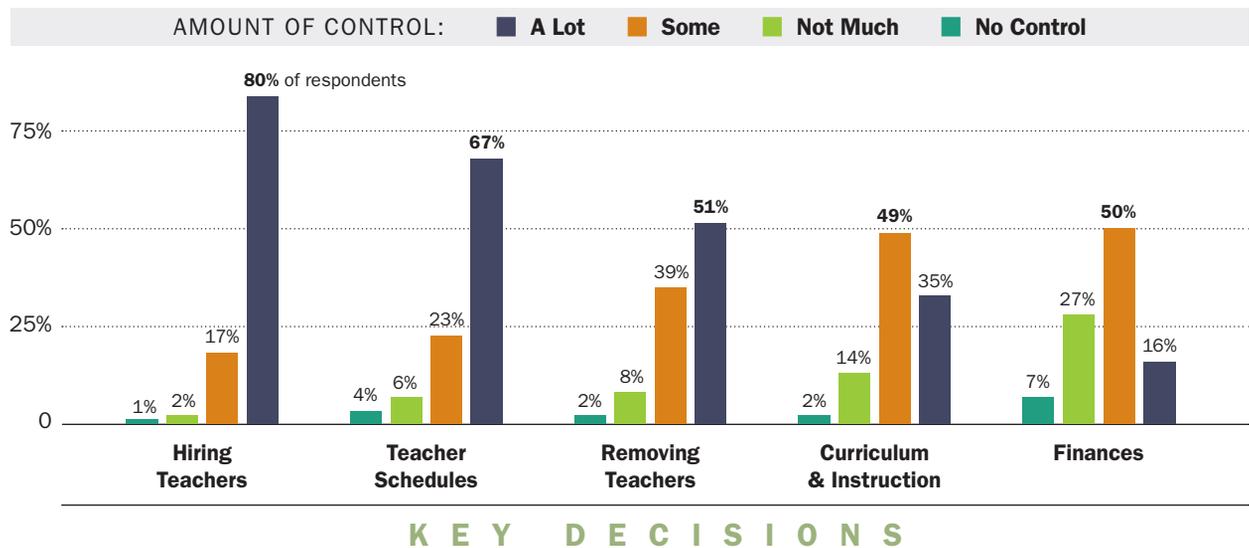
## 3 Competitive salaries.

Administrator contracts lay out the shared goals of both the leader and the district. These shared goals include stability, comparability and professional growth. School districts should periodically review contracts related to each of these goals.

- **Stability Goals.** One can address stability through the length of a contract and well-thought-out longevity incentives. Many contracts automatically extend each year and include a benefit that promotes longevity.
- **Comparability Goals.** Both parties are interested in ensuring that the overall compensation is typical within the market. Districts can select comparable schools based on athletic conferences or similarly sized schools in a region.
- **Personal Growth Goals.** The school district and the administrator want to ensure that the leader is continuing to learn and grow professionally. Contracts should support the leader’s membership in professional associations and participation

## HOW MUCH CONTROL?

How much control do school leaders have in making key decisions?



in professional learning, including conferences, academies, courses and professional coaching.

**4 Appropriate decision-making authority within the school context.**

Nationally, principals frequently report a lack of decision-making authority on key issues impacting school performance. Wisconsin school leaders have reported having some, or a great deal of, control over many of these key decisions (see table on page 12). This is a topic for administrative teams to reflect upon on a regular basis.

**5 Evaluations characterized by timely, formative feedback.**

Today’s principals need thoughtful support from district leaders. It is important that evaluation systems are focused on the right areas of leadership and that feedback is provided skillfully. In Wisconsin,

districts have access to high-quality evaluation tools and professional learning opportunities to ensure that both of these objectives are met.

The Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership is a standards-based leadership rubric used by over two-thirds of Wisconsin’s districts. A recent study demonstrates evidence of validity of the rubric based on analysis of performance ratings to independent measures of principal leadership from the annual Educator Development, Support and Retention Survey (Jones, et al., 2018). In other words, the framework is focused on the elements of leadership that matters for teachers and students.

Last year, WASDA and AWSA began offering the Supporting Principal Excellence Academy designed for district leaders to develop the skills to provide ongoing, high-quality feedback to school leaders. The first

cohort was extremely well-received. The second cohort began in October.

If your district would like any assistance in promoting principal longevity and growth, feel free to contact AWSA at any time. ■

*Jim Lynch is the executive director of the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators.*

**END NOTES:**

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GET TO KNOW THREE OF THE

# Convention Keynotes

**THE ANNUAL WISCONSIN STATE EDUCATION CONVENTION** provides a wonderful opportunity to hear from inspirational and thought-provoking keynote speakers at each of the three general sessions and the WASB Breakfast. The following is a glimpse at three of this year's speakers.



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22  
**Scott McLeod**



**Author of** "Harnessing Technology for Deeper Learning," Dr. Scott McLeod is an associate professor of educational leadership at the University of Colorado Denver and is widely recognized as one of the nation's leading experts on preK-12 school technology leadership issues.

Sponsored by United Healthcare, Scott will be the keynote speaker at the opening general session on Wednesday, Jan. 22.

The following is an excerpt from Scott's recent work...

**W**hat value do human workers in the developed world add that software, robots or less-expensive workers from the developing world don't? It's imperative that we answer this question if we want to prevent our students from joining the ever-increasing pool of graduates who don't have the necessary skills to do higher-wage, irreplaceable professional work. As educators, we cannot continue to pretend that there are viable high-paying jobs for large numbers of low-skill graduates.

If we want different learning and life outcomes for students, we have to design for them. Accordingly, deeper learning schools make most (and usually all) of the following four big shifts in their approaches to schooling:

**Higher-level thinking:** The shift from an overwhelming emphasis on lower-level thinking tasks, such as factual recall and procedural regurgitation, to tasks of greater cognitive complexity, such as creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving and effective communication and collaboration. The shift away from lower-level thinking helps foster graduates' economic, citizenship, college and life readiness.

**Student agency:** This is a shift from classrooms that teachers control to learning environments that enable greater student agency over what, how,

when, where, who, with and why they learn. Student agency allows for greater personalization, individualization and differentiation of the learning process. As a result, student disengagement diminishes because they have greater autonomy and ownership over more of their own learning.

**Authentic work:** The shift from isolated academic work to environments that provide students opportunities to engage with and contribute to local, national and international interdisciplinary learning communities. This shift helps combat student motivation concerns since they can better see the direct connections between their learning and the world around them, asking less often why they need to know what is being covered in class and what relevance or meaning it will have for their future lives.

**Technology infusion:** The shift from local classrooms that are largely based on pens and pencils, notebook paper, ring binders and printed textbooks to globally connected learning spaces that are deeply and richly technology-driven. Robust technology integration efforts also combat equity concerns, allow students to master current information landscapes, and increase relevance to rapid, technology-driven societal innovations. □



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**THURSDAY, JANUARY 23**  
**Yong Zhao**

**An expert on** global-ization and education.

Dr. Yong Zhao is a Foundations Distinguished Professor in the School of Education with an appointment in the School of Business at the University of Kansas. He is also the Global Chair Professor of Education at East China Normal University, a global chair professor at the University of Bath in the U.K., and a professorial fellow at the Mitchell Institute for Health and Education Policy at Victoria University in Australia. Yong has published more than 100 articles and 30 books, including “What Works May Hurt: Side Effects in Education.”

Sponsored by Go365 by Humana, Yong will be the keynote speaker at the general session on Thursday, Jan. 23.

The following is an excerpt from his recent work...



Side effects in education can happen for a number of common-sense reasons. **First**, time is a constant. When you spend time on one task, you cannot spend that same time on another. When a child is given extra instruction in reading, he or she cannot spend the same time on art or music. When a school focuses on only two or three subjects, its students do not have the time to learn something else. When a school system focuses on only a few subjects such as reading and math, students won't have time to do other and perhaps more important things.

**Second**, resources are limited. When they are put into one activity, they cannot be spent on other activities. When school resources are devoted to the Common Core, other subjects become peripheral. When schools are forced to focus only on raising test scores, activities that may promote students' long-term growth are sidelined.

**Third**, some educational outcomes can be inherently contradictory. It is difficult for an education system that wishes to cultivate a homogenous workforce to also expect a diverse population of individuals who are creative and entrepreneurial. Research also has shown that test scores and knowledge acquisition can come at the expense of curiosity and confidence.

**Fourth**, the same products may work differently for different individuals and in different contexts. Some people are allergic to penicillin. Some drugs have negative consequences when taken with alcohol. Likewise, some practices, such as direct instruction, may work better for knowledge transmission, but not

for long-term exploration. Charter schools may favor those who have a choice (can make a choice) at the expense of those who are not able to take advantage of the choice. □



**THURSDAY, JANUARY 23**  
**Holly Hoffman**



**Born and raised** in Eureka, South Dakota, Holly Hoffman was the last woman standing on Season 21 of CBS' hit reality show “Survivor.” Through that experience and others throughout her life, Holly was inspired to share her message of positivity, determination and confidence.

Sponsored by The Insurance Center, Holly will be the keynote speaker at the WASB Breakfast on Thursday, Jan. 23.

Below are excerpts from Holly's book, “Your Winner Within”...

**E**veryone is faced with challenges in life, but it is our attitude and reactions toward them that sets us

apart as human beings and makes us better individuals. During my time on a reality show, isolated among strangers with no access to family or friends, is the point in time I recognized the full potential of my inner strength. It took me feeling utterly alone to realize I had complete control of my own destiny. I owned my own physical power, my attitude and my life. I was awakened by that experience and realized I wanted to improve my life by taking more control of it.

**Thoughts on attitude:** I think of attitude as the landscape of your soul. It is your personal view of the world and dictates how you choose to filter what you see and your reactions to the situations you encounter. It encompasses perceptions, emotions and actions, and may often determine your overall success. One individual may see a patch of beautiful wildflowers growing on a hillside. Another person may see an overgrown patch of native growing weeds — an eyesore and a nuisance.

**Thoughts on determination:** Determination is focusing every cell of your being toward an end result. You've decided to pursue something that is worth accomplishing and you drive towards it. No whining, no looking back and no quitting!

**Thoughts on confidence:** The essence of confidence is belief in your ability to accomplish anything you are determined to do. This is an understanding within yourself that you can tackle the challenges life throws at you, and for the most part, you will be successful. You may not always succeed on the first attempt, but you believe in yourself enough to keep trying until you do.

**Thoughts on desire:** Desire transcends beyond a basic need or simple want; it is connected to your being on an instinctual level. It is a deep longing for something that is missing in your life, whether it is for a particular state of mind, the accomplishment of a dream, or for the goodwill of another person. ■

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# 2020 State Education Convention



WEDNESDAY Keynote  
Scott **McLEOD**



THURSDAY Keynote  
Holly **HOFFMAN**



THURSDAY Keynote  
Yong **ZHAO**



FRIDAY Keynote  
Shane **FELDMAN**

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# Exceed Expectations,

# Not Your Budget

## A look at referendum construction projects

Leaking roofs ... undersized facilities ... antiquated classroom spaces ... there are many reasons why Wisconsin has seen a flurry of construction and facilities improvement projects at our public schools in recent years. Many districts, possibly your own, have either recently sought a facilities improvement referendum or are actively considering one as part of a long-range master plan to bring their schools into the 21st century. Most districts, recognizing the important

role facilities play in encouraging student learning, engagement and success, have begun to take steps to improve and upgrade their facilities. Whether this means remodeling, expanding or building a whole new school, a sizable construction project is likely in your future.

While a construction project of any size can be daunting, it's an exciting time for everyone involved. That excitement will only build through a referendum, when the real design and detailed planning for the



Andy Lyons



Brian Horras

future of your district's schools and facilities begins. There will be many people from the school and the community at large who have great ideas and passion for what should be included in the project. However, it's important to remember that once that referendum budget has been approved by the district voters, it's just that: a budget. It's set in stone and cannot be exceeded.

With all of the big expectations, enthusiasm, and push and pull from various groups of stakeholders,

a district can quickly find itself with a project that has exceeded its budget. So what can your district do to ensure that you break ground without breaking the bank? The answer comes down to three things: planning, communication and balancing expectations.

### ■ An ounce of prevention

The best way to ensure that your referendum budget is maintained is by working with your architectural partners to develop a comprehensive building space program well before the budget is set.

“A building space program is a detailed accounting of the spaces within your school; from A to Z; from classrooms to conference rooms,” says Chris Michaud, senior design architect with EUA, a Wisconsin-based architecture, interior design and master planning firm. It’s the basis of your building project and the document used by architects and construction managers to estimate project costs and track any changes in the project’s scope. It’s an important tool to ensure your referendum budget accurately reflects the project scope.

At the foundation of a good building program is a solid understanding of your district’s current and future needs. Is your district

enrollment projected to grow? Shrink? Stay the same? Enrollment projections from demographers can help inform you of your future space needs. But design and construction projects aren’t purely about growth trends. Teaching and learning needs are also important project drivers, making it essential that districts understand their curricular vision. Being able to clearly articulate your teaching and learning objectives will help you identify the facilities needed to achieve them.

As you begin to work with your architectural partner to develop your building program, engage your teaching staff and building users — including the community — to lend their insight and expertise. Your architectural construction management team will work with you to incorporate their input into the conceptual design and preliminary budget. Engaging stakeholders early in the facilities planning process will help ensure your pre-referendum budget will be sufficient to meet expectations once design and construction begin.

### ■ Capturing the total project budget

As you develop a comprehensive list of needs for your facilities, there’s

one often-overlooked potential budget-buster hidden in your ceilings, walls, basement and bathrooms: your mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, or “MEPs.”

“MEPs can easily account for up to 30% of the total cost of a building project, but are often overlooked,” warns Brian Medina, MEP manager for CG Schmidt, a Wisconsin-based construction firm. “Setting and maintaining an accurate budget means understanding your MEP needs early, because unlike some other project costs, these systems will have long-term operation and maintenance costs to account for, beyond the initial cost of investment.”

Engaging a construction manager with MEP expertise to conduct life-cycle costing — forecasting system expenses over its lifespan — will ensure project estimates capture these costs accurately from the beginning.

“We’ll often talk to districts that got the wrong systems for their needs, or that didn’t account for those long-term costs in their budget and found themselves in hot water down the road,” says Medina.

Environmentally sustainable goals and systems play a similar role. Your district may desire features and systems that support wellness and sustainability goals, but these systems

Flex learning space at Sheboygan Falls Middle School





**Mechanical, electrical and plumbing can easily account for up to 30% of the total cost of the project, and should be factored in early in the budget process.**

can have a high initial cost, which, if not accounted for before the referendum budget is set, can squeeze a project budget. Discuss your sustainability goals early on with your architectural and building teams to ensure they are captured in the initial budget.

### ■ Assembling your team

Facilities projects are complicated and it's important to have the right team of professionals in your corner. Architects, construction managers and other consultants have unique skillsets and knowledge to bring to the table, and districts will benefit from engaging all their project partners early in the process. Districts often select the construction manager soon after — and sometimes concurrent — with the architect. This allows the construction manager to draw from current and historical data derived from similar projects they've recently completed, which helps them develop accurate cost estimates for the designs as the architect team works to develop the pre-referendum building program.

Open, clear and uninterrupted communication between the district and its project partners is critical. All must have a clear understanding of project goals and operating

assumptions. Many districts select architectural and construction partners who have a strong and successful history of working together. When selecting your team, pay close attention to the chemistry and communication styles of all parties to ensure important details aren't lost in translation. Miscommunication has the potential to turn into cost impacts later on.

### ■ Planning for a rainy day

*“Plan for the worst, hope for the best.”*

It's common wisdom we're all familiar with, and it especially applies to construction projects. Just like you likely have contingency plans in place for the myriad circumstances that can arise in your day-to-day district administration, your referendum budget should include contingency funds to account for those “rainy day” emergencies.

Poor weather ... bad soil conditions ... natural disasters ... any of these can have serious impacts on the cost of construction and may be unforeseeable. Your construction manager will work with you to set a realistic contingency fund to account for these. However, beware the temptation to spend it too quickly, says CG Schmidt General Manager

and Vice President Dan Chovanec.

“There can be the temptation to see these funds as extra cash to be used to add new features or enhance design elements,” Chovanec says. “But if you use your contingency dollars too soon, you could end up stranded when you need the funds most.”

### ■ Set in stone

Once the referendum has passed, your budget is a fixed amount and design has now become a zero-sum game. Money spent on a new feature must be taken from somewhere else. Despite the best efforts of you and your team, it's still possible to find your project is over budget early in the design phase.

“Don't panic,” says Teresa Wadzinski, senior project manager at EUA. “The design phase is meant to be an iterative and fluid process. Through close collaboration, your architectural and construction management team will help you through the give-and-take process of balancing needs, wants and stakeholder expectations.”

During the design phase, your team will work closely with you to identify opportunities that maintain your budget without sacrificing the core needs set forth in your original building space program. Having the

right team in your corner means you'll have professionals experienced in providing options that deliver your vision while remaining on budget. Close collaboration with your team is the best line of defense against cost overruns.

"If you're more comfortable with a cautious approach to the design process, talk to your team early in

the process," Wadzinski says. "Let your team know that you want the flexibility to start under budget and add design features into the new space later, rather than run the risk of having to remove them."

#### ■ The bottom line

In the end, you can never completely remove all uncertainty and risk from

construction projects. But following the three principles of planning, communication and balancing expectations will help guarantee that your district gets what you need out of your building project, without sacrificing your referendum budget. ■

*Andy Lyons is an engagement specialist at EUA. Brian Horras is a project executive with CG Schmidt.*

Sheboygan Falls  
Middle School commons





# AN EPIDEMIC in Every Community

In 2016, the U.S. Surgeon General released the Report of Alcohol, Drugs and Health to highlight the growing burden of opioid dependency and addiction. Since that time, national physician organizations and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have responded to the opioid epidemic. A national public health emergency was declared in October 2017.

If you've had any exposure to media in the last year, you've likely seen, heard or read disturbing accounts of the illicit drug heroin and the emergence of fentanyl driving the overdose and death tallies. The connection between these street drugs and prescription drugs is real. According to the National

Institute on Drug Abuse, 80% of heroin users started out with prescription drugs. There are numerous causes of the current opioid epidemic, including overprescribing opioid pain medications, developing stronger and longer-acting formulations to overcome tolerance to pain-relieving effects, and self-medicating for stress and boredom.

Workers' compensation cases carry a particular risk with opioids. The National Safety Council reports that claims involving any opioid use average four times higher in costs than similar claims without opioids. Claims involving long-acting opioids average closer to 10 times the amount. These opioid prescription-related costs may not be readily

apparent in health plan claims data and reporting. While the rate of prescribing opioid pain medications has decreased since 2015, the related costs to districts continue to increase. A significant portion of this is due to the costs of treating opioid-use disorders.

The response to the call for action on opioids is slowly gaining momentum. State medical boards and professional licensing groups are looking to restrict prescribing habits — to curb the supply of opioids being diverted and decrease the misuse of narcotic pain killers. Some insurance carriers are dropping coverage of long-acting opioids to further limit their use. These regulations directly impact the prescribers

**Opioid Prevention at Work**  
[opioidpreventionatwork.org](http://opioidpreventionatwork.org)

**Approximately 900 adolescents** and 4,400 adults initiate prescription pain reliever misuse each day

**Up to one in four people** receiving prescription opioids long term in a primary care setting struggle with addiction

**National Safety Council**  
[bit.ly/nsc-calculator](http://bit.ly/nsc-calculator)

**2.1 million Americans**  
have an opioid use disorder

— physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and dentists. Workforce training and education is used to reduce risks, improve quality and control costs. Districts must take a similar approach to dealing with the opioid crisis. By addressing this epidemic, your district can save lives, improve workplace safety, have a positive impact on your community and increase your bottom line. A holistic approach demonstrates humanity to prospective employees and helps you become an employer of choice in an environment where it's a challenge to attract talent.

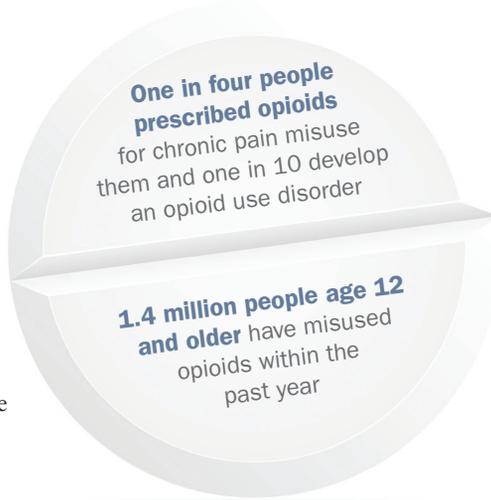
We invite you to join Gallagher's team of experts for an insightful breakout session at the 2020 Wisconsin State Education Convention. The session will uncover ways in which employers can limit, and even prevent, opioid misuse within the workforce. During our interactive session, we will:

- Compassionately approach the opioid crisis and address how school districts and the community may be adversely impacted
- Address the stigma of substance abuse
- Encourage attendees to be an employer of choice by helping employees access care
- Learn what employers are doing to help via new employer tools and resources
- Educate attendees to help develop a path forward in addressing misuse and prevention



We hope you will join our opioid session at the 2020 State Educational Convention in Milwaukee in January. ■

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# Human Trafficking

## In Wisconsin



### Know the facts and how a global organization is fighting back.

**H**uman trafficking is affecting the lives of children and young people across the U.S. and globally, including close to home. Trafficking cases have been recorded in every Wisconsin county.

Anyone at any age can be a victim of trafficking, which is a form of modern-day slavery. Traffickers often prey on vulnerable people — making children who are homeless, in the foster system, have disabilities or have previously been abused potential targets.

Everyone from teachers and school board members to the

governor are in a position of responsibility to assist in the prevention and detection of this barbaric crime.

Hope for Justice, a global non-profit operating in the U.S. and across four continents, is working to eradicate this modern-day slavery with a four-part mission: preventing exploitation, rescuing victims, restoring lives and reforming society.

#### ■ These are the facts

- In the United States, on average, a child is bought or sold for sex every two minutes.
- There are between 1.6 and

2.8 million runaway teens in the U.S. Studies suggest that 15% to 25% of these individuals are likely to be a victim of human trafficking.

- Human trafficking is the world's second-fastest growing crime, behind drug trafficking.
- Victims of human trafficking can be trafficked for different types of exploitation, including forced labor, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, identity fraud, domestic servitude, forced criminal activity and even organ harvesting.

Those who are freed from trafficking are often both psychologically and emotionally distraught.



### ■ In Wisconsin...

In December 2018, the Department of Children and Families released a report that revealed the reality of human trafficking in Wisconsin. It found that there were 422 child sex trafficking allegations brought in just 15 months. Of these, about 40% occurred in Milwaukee County. Although Milwaukee is a focal point for trafficking, the problem is statewide. Sex trafficking has been reported in all 72 Wisconsin counties.

This year, a Safe Harbor Law has been proposed in Wisconsin to bring it in line with 20 other states where similar laws have proven successful in increasing conviction rates of traffickers and protecting minors trafficked into prostitution. Under the proposed law, a person under 18 years of age may not be prosecuted for committing an act of prostitution.

Although Wisconsin does have some current protections for “commercially sexually exploited children,” they are still at risk of criminalization and arrest, despite backgrounds often entrenched in abuse — frequently following from prior sexual abuse, domestic violence, poverty or family breakdown. The Safe Harbor Law would ensure minors cannot be arrested for prostitution.

Nationally, the average age of a new child prostitute is 13, according to the Wisconsin Department of Justice. Traffickers use violence, threats, false promises and other forms of control to enslave their victims.

The National Human Trafficking Hotline, which refers cases to our investigators at Hope for Justice, reported more than 60 cases of human trafficking in Wisconsin in 2018. This marked a decrease from

91 cases in 2017, but many incidents go unreported. Trafficking is often a hidden crime, so the actual figures are believed to be considerably higher.

### ■ Would you recognize the signs?

Hope for Justice’s teams of professionals are training people to “spot the signs” of trafficking and modern slavery. The more aware and informed we are, the more likely we will be empowered to intervene and prevent children from being exploited.

Some of the warning signs which may indicate that a child is being sex trafficked include:

- Appears disconnected from family, friends and extracurricular activities.
- Attends school sporadically or drops out.
- Appears fearful, timid or submissive, particularly in the presence of certain individuals.
- Shows signs of having been denied food, water, sleep or medical care.
- Displays “gifts” of jewelry, clothing, electronics, money or other items without valid explanations.
- Seems to adhere to scripted or rehearsed responses in social situations.
- Has tattoos/branding on the neck and/or lower back.
- Enters or leaves vehicles with unknown adults.

### ■ Young girl freed from exploitation and abuse

During a recent investigation in the U.S., Hope for Justice came to the aid of a young girl who had become

trapped in sexual exploitation after meeting a man online.

“Megan” had traveled to another state to be with the man, but during their “relationship” he persuaded her to take heroin, which led to an addiction. He began trafficking Megan to various cities throughout the U.S. for sexual exploitation. She faced abuse and injury at the hands of those who were willing to use her vulnerabilities for their gain.

Her mother said: “I felt completely hopeless and began despairing about what was happening. I felt powerless to do anything. Then I found out about Hope for Justice and asked the charity for help.

“I spoke with one of their investigators who was based in Nashville. He was real positive. He knew we had a case. I was very confident that they would keep digging and get justice.”

A team of Hope for Justice investigators — detectives with long careers in law enforcement — began following a number of leads which eventually resulted in them finding and rescuing Megan. The investigation was turned over to federal law enforcement for prosecution.

“When I was told she was safe, words can’t explain my relief,” her mother said. “I was so overwhelmed and so grateful that she didn’t die and justice was going to be served.”

Those who are freed from trafficking are often both psychologically and emotionally distraught. Hope for Justice’s involvement goes beyond the rescue. Teams of trained professionals support victims in their long-term recovery, be it healthcare, rehabilitation or other services.



If you are interested in learning more about this topic and what your school district can do, attend the 2020 State Education Convention session, “The Role of School Leaders in Preventing Sex Trafficking,” hosted by the Appleton Police Department.

## ■ The Hope for Justice plan

Hope for Justice was founded in 2008 by Ben Cooley with the aim of ending modern slavery and human trafficking with an effective, proven multi-disciplinary model. We have global offices and projects in the U.S., Norway, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Uganda, Vietnam and Zimbabwe, and a head office in the United Kingdom.

The charity has directly rescued more than 700 victims of trafficking and assisted in the rescue of many others, reaching more than 72,000 children via global projects last year. Our outreach teams, self-help groups and education initiatives are empowering people to protect themselves and their families. Meanwhile, investigators are working closely with the police and other agencies to identify victims of slavery and remove them from exploitation. Hope for Justice also

works with victims to overcome trauma and restore their lives, and trains professionals to spot the signs of trafficking and respond.

“Our vision is to live in a world free from slavery,” Cooley said. “There are still children digging in gold mines and in dirty trenches for cobalt to help make the batteries used in cell phones, laptops and electric cars. There are still children in brothels who are being exploited night after night. There are children facing threats of violence, being raped or beaten. We need to act, and fast. One survivor we worked with a few years ago told us, ‘I didn’t need someone to cry about this; I needed someone to do something about it.’ That’s why we founded Hope for Justice.”

## ■ How you can help

Here are a few ways you can become involved. Also visit [hopeforjustice.org](http://hopeforjustice.org)

to learn about more ways you can get involved.

- Become a Guardian... Unlock freedom for victims by giving financially.
- Raise funds or donate to help us achieve our goal of ending modern-day slavery.
- Join or form an Abolition Group to help us raise awareness and campaign for change.
- *Get educated!* Search online for Hope for Justice and click “Take Action” to find out how you can learn to spot the signs and download posters and other resources.

Get in touch with our U.S. office by calling 615-356-0946 or emailing [info.us@hopeforjustice.org](mailto:info.us@hopeforjustice.org).

*Tim Nelson is the international development director at anti-trafficking non-profit Hope for Justice.*

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## Facing Our Equity Challenges Directly

Too often, we hear the word “equity” and immediately associate it with large city districts that have high concentrations of ethnically diverse students. However, equity goes beyond those boundaries and impacts every district, including those in rural areas.

In my 12 years as a school board member, I have attended many WASB events and talked to board members throughout the state. I have heard stories about the difficulties of combining districts, transportation costs for geographically large districts, and families wanting their children to get a good education.

The first thing many people think about when they hear equity is “Oh boy, another ask for more money.” We all know the financial resources within our communities and state are limited. Equity means providing more assistance to those who need it in order to succeed. In fact, public education as a whole can be seen as the ultimate exercise in equity.

There is no denying that larger, urban districts like Milwaukee, Madison and Green Bay grapple with significant urban challenges. Rural schools contend with different challenges, not the least of which is providing academic and social services over large geographic areas.

Over the years, many smaller and more remote districts have consolidated to remain financially viable. Lakeland Union High School in Minocqua is the largest district in

Wisconsin, covering 743 square miles. To put it in perspective, almost half the counties in Wisconsin are smaller than that. LUHS is not alone, the state’s 37 geographically largest districts are each over 250 square miles.

Transporting students to and from these schools can take an extraordinary amount of time out of the student’s day. An hourlong trip each way can make an eight-hour school day become 10. Moreover, many students in America’s Dairyland have chores to do before and after their school day, leaving little time for study and assignments. That extra hour on the bus means many students don’t have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities, including sports and academic clubs. Furthermore, because many of our rural districts have high numbers of families living at or near poverty (based on free and reduced-price lunch levels), the ability to pay can be just as much of a factor as in urban districts.

In addition, a recent report by the Rural School and Community Trust found that Wisconsin was among the 12 states that provide disproportionately less state funding to its small and rural schools.

Like families everywhere, farmers and rural residents understand the need for a good education. My family was no different. Both of my parents grew up in rural areas of Wisconsin. Both families stressed the importance of school as a means to

success. Both families saw many of their children — daughters and sons — attend college. Everyone knew they could make a living on the farm, but they also knew a good education opened opportunities far beyond the farm.

I encourage all of our boards — rural, urban and suburban — to face your equity challenges head-on. By working within our budgets, we must find ways to level the playing field for all of our students by providing the educational opportunities our students need and eliminating the barriers to success.

The WASB is here to help. Based on the equity statement approved by the WASB Board of Directors (below) as well as policies adopted by Delegate Assemblies that have recognized that each of our districts are unique, with different needs and different struggles, we’re advocating for a range of general aids and categorical aids. For instance, in geographically large districts, sparsity and transportation aids are vital. For other districts, funding for bilingual programs is important.

By directing our lobbyists to advocate for a range of needs, we send a message to our legislators in Madison and Washington, D.C., that we stand behind all our students to provide the education each of them needs to succeed. ■

*Brett Hyde is the 2019 WASB President and a member of the Muskego-Norway School Board.*

### WASB Equity Statement and Services

**We affirm in our actions** that each student can, will and shall learn. We recognize that based on factors including, but not limited to, disability, race, gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status, not all students receive equitable educational opportunities. Educational equity is the intentional allocation of resources, instruction and opportunities to meet the specific identified needs of students and staff in the local school community. *(Approved by the WASB Board of Directors, June 2018)*

## Resolution Decisions Now in Your Hands



The WASB Policy and Resolutions Committee has finalized the proposed resolutions that will be advanced to the 2020 WASB Delegate Assembly. It is now up to each member board to decide how its delegate will vote on Jan. 22. The resolutions adopted at the Delegate Assembly become the official positions of the WASB and guide our advocacy efforts.

The Policy and Resolutions Committee is appointed annually by the WASB president based on recommendations made by the members of our board of directors. To ensure fair representation of boards throughout the state, the committee is comprised of at least one school board member from each WASB region and from each type of school district (i.e., common, unified, K-8 and union high school districts).

Over the course of two meetings this fall, the committee reviewed the proposed resolutions submitted by member boards as well as committee-initiated resolutions and resolutions submitted by the WASB Board of Directors, which is allowed by the WASB Bylaws. In the process of making those decisions, the committee approved, rejected and modified board-submitted resolutions.

Resolutions on the following topics have been forwarded to the Delegate Assembly:

- Quorum for the purpose of filling school board vacancies
- Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding recommendations
- English learner services funding

- Equalization aid payment schedule
- Transportation aid for high poverty districts
- Dyslexia guidebook
- School and school district report cards
- Social and emotional learning
- Mental health categorical aid
- Native American mascots
- Meal shaming
- Social worker certification and licensure
- Mandatory reporting by school employees
- Whole grade sharing incentive aid
- Formation of new K-8 and union high school districts
- Weighting of low-income pupils
- Equity in student activities

The full resolution language and rationale has been posted on the Delegate Assembly page at [WASB.org](http://WASB.org). Delegate packets have been mailed to each board's delegate as well as to board presidents and district administrators.

Those packets also contain copies of all the resolutions submitted by boards by the Sept. 15 deadline. The WASB Bylaws allow resolutions turned down by the committee to be brought before the Delegate Assembly by the submitting board with a two-thirds vote of the delegates.

We encourage boards to discuss the proposed resolutions so your delegate will be making informed decisions that reflect your board's

views when they cast their votes at the Delegate Assembly.

To ensure delegates have a chance to ask questions about the resolutions, a Pre-Delegate Assembly discussion session will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 21 at 7 pm in the Crystal Ballroom of the Milwaukee Hilton Hotel. This will be an informational session only and include a review of the parliamentary procedure to be used at the Delegate Assembly.

If your board wishes to offer any amendments to resolutions, this is a good time to make that known to other delegates and to the WASB staff.

The Pre-Delegate Assembly discussion session is also the opportunity to offer any emergency resolutions to the Policy and Resolutions Committee for their consideration. An "emergency resolution" is one that deals with a concern that arises between Nov. 1 and the time of the Delegate Assembly and could not have been presented earlier due to the emergency nature of the subject.

To help first-time delegates better understand the Delegate Assembly process, an orientation session will be held Wednesday, Jan. 22, at 8 am in Ballroom AB of the Wisconsin Center.

Thank you to all the school boards that submitted resolutions and the committee members for their work. If you are interested in serving on the Policy and Resolutions Committee in the future, please contact your WASB regional director. ■

*Dan Rossmiller is the WASB director of government relations. Chris Kulow is the WASB government relations specialist.*

It is now up to each member board to decide how its delegate will vote on Jan. 22.



## Interested in History?

*Take an active role in the WASB Centennial*



**In honor of the upcoming WASB centennial**, the WASB is hosting a special award for the 2020 National History Day in Wisconsin. Two students will be selected for the Wisconsin School Board History Award for excellence in exploring the history of their local schools and the role of their locally elected school board in that history. All submissions will be eligible to have their work on exhibit at the 2021 Wisconsin State Education Convention and on the WASB website. Get involved by:

- **Encouraging your students** to participate and document the history of your local schools.
- **Serving as a judge.** The Wisconsin Historical Society needs judges for the History Day awards at both the regional and state competitions.

Visit the Wisconsin Historical Society website for details and to sign up. □



## Rossmiller to Chair National Committee in 2020

**WASB Government Relations Director**  
Dan Rossmiller will chair the National School Boards Association Conference of State Association Legislative Staff in 2020. The Conference of State Association Legislative Staff is a working

group of school board association lobbyists from various states. The group meets annually and communicates regularly about state and federal legislative initiatives. □

The complete 2019-20 WASB Legal Webinar schedule is available at [WASB.org](http://WASB.org).

## Upcoming WASB Webinars

### FMLA: State and Federal Requirements

December 11, 2019 | 12-1 pm

This webinar will review requirements under the Wisconsin and federal Family and Medical Leave acts, including eligibility for leave for birth or adoption; serious health conditions of employees, parents, spouses and children; and the various leaves available to military service members and their families. Employer notice and documentation requirements will be covered along with employer and employee rights and obligations during and after FMLA leaves.

*Presenter: Barry Forbes, Associate Executive Director and Staff Counsel*

### Individual Contracts and the Nonrenewal Process

February 12, 2020 | 12-1 pm

Individual teacher contracts have changed since Act 10. This webinar will focus on the process of drafting new contractual provisions to transition from traditional contracts to contracts that meet districts' needs. This presentation also will review the basics of nonrenewal of teacher contracts under section 118.22 of the Wisconsin statutes and include guidance on the application of constitutional protections and discrimination laws as well as alternatives to nonrenewal.

*Presenter: Bob Butler, Associate Executive Director and Staff Counsel*

**Please note:** These webinars, and all previous ones, are recorded and available on demand. WASB members can purchase any webinar and watch when their schedule allows. Upcoming live and pre-recorded webinars are listed on the webinar catalog page at [WASB.org](http://WASB.org). In addition, links to past webinars are available in the Policy Resource Guide.



## Expulsion Decisions of Note

Wisconsin's expulsion statute<sup>1</sup> gives school boards the authority to expel a student when specific substantive standards are met and specific procedures have been followed.<sup>2</sup> In reviewing an expulsion decision, the Wisconsin Superintendent of Public Instruction must ensure, among other things, that the required statutory procedures were followed and that the board's decision is based upon one of the established statutory grounds. In a recent decision, the state superintendent concluded that this also includes determining whether certain student constitutional due process rights were met. The state superintendent also recently clarified issues as to when a student's out-of-school social media usage can serve as the basis for an expulsion order.

This *Legal Comment* will review recent decisions from the state superintendent that address the statutory procedural steps a district must follow, the due process standards that apply in expulsion proceedings, and what type of off-premises conduct may be addressed in an expulsion proceeding.

### ■ Due Process Notice Requirements

The Wisconsin Constitution guarantees children ages 4 through 20 a free public education.<sup>3</sup> This provision creates a property right under the due process clause of the

14th Amendment to the United States Constitution that may not be taken away without adherence to the minimum procedures required by that clause.<sup>4</sup> Wisconsin's expulsion statute authorizes districts to expel a student notwithstanding the constitutional guarantee of a free public education. In the past, the state superintendent has concluded that compliance with the expulsion statute satisfies the requirements of procedural due process.<sup>5</sup>

The statutory procedural standards that a board must follow include providing the student and the student's parent/guardian notice of the expulsion hearing.<sup>6</sup> The interplay between the constitutional due process requirements and the process set forth in the expulsion statute regarding the notice required to be given to the student and the student's parent/guardian was recently the subject of an appeal to the state superintendent.<sup>7</sup> In this case, the Notice of Expulsion Hearing was sent separately to the student and his parents at their correct address, but was not received by the pupil or his parents prior to the hearing. After the expulsion hearing, the notice was returned to the district by the post office as not being deliverable to the address on the envelope. The student and his mother first learned of the expulsion hearing an hour before it was scheduled to start, when the student arrived at school and was told about

the hearing. The mother appealed the expulsion order, alleging that they were not given fair notice of the expulsion hearing because they were only given one hour's notice, were not prepared to present evidence to dispute the expulsion, and did not have the opportunity to consult with an attorney.

The state superintendent's decision is significant because it provides that, in addition to determining whether the district complied with the expulsion statutory procedures, the state superintendent will also review whether the student received due process. In particular, the state superintendent noted that, while the expulsion statute covers many basic due process rights, it is not an exhaustive list of fundamental due process rights. In this case, the state superintendent focused on whether the student and parents received sufficient notice to comport with the constitutional guarantee of due process. Under due process, a student facing expulsion is entitled to timely and adequate notice of the charges against the student so as to allow him or her a meaningful opportunity to be heard.

In this regard, the expulsion statute requires that "[n]ot less than 5 days' written notice of the [expulsion] hearing ... shall be sent to the pupil and, if the pupil is a minor, to the pupil's parent or

Districts should confirm at least 24 hours before the expulsion hearing that both the student and parents on record have received the notice.

guardian.”<sup>8</sup> The statute is silent as to when that notice must be received. Notwithstanding this, the state superintendent noted that no part of the expulsion statute eliminates the fundamental due process requirement that a student facing expulsion receive adequate notice. In interpreting the statute, the state superintendent found it significant that the notice provisions were amended to specifically extend to individual pupils, and not just their parents. The state superintendent concluded that these changes manifested “a clear legislative intent to extend to the individual pupil the right to prior notice of hearing.”<sup>9</sup>

Given this, the state superintendent concluded that, although the expulsion statute uses the word “sent,” the legislative intent was to ensure that both the student and the parent receive prior notice of the hearing. In particular, the “statute’s use of ‘sent’ clarifies the relevant timeline — the notice must be sent, as opposed to received, at least 5 days before the hearing — and does not omit the fundamental requirement that the notice be received prior to the hearing.” The state superintendent noted that the substantive information required to be contained in the expulsion notice only has value to the student and parent if they receive that notice sufficiently before the expulsion hearing so as to be able to prepare a defense to the expulsion. This interpretation is consistent with court decisions that have assumed that the expulsion statute requires receipt of the notice prior to the hearing.<sup>10</sup>

Accordingly, the state superintendent determined that the student and parent did not receive the notice with sufficient time to review the specific allegations, prepare evidence to contest the expulsion, or consult with or hire an attorney. As a result, the state superintendent held that this notice did not comply with the expulsion statute and due process standards. The state superintendent emphasized that, while the district did nothing wrong in its drafting

and mailing of the notice, that does not mean the student received due process.

In reaching this decision, the state superintendent did not provide any guidelines as to how much advance notice of the hearing is required; i.e., when the notice must be received. One hour was not sufficient in this case, but the state superintendent cited a federal case that held that due process requires that an inmate facing disciplinary charges be given at least 24 hours’ advance written notice of a hearing on those charges. The state superintendent also contrasted the facts in this case with situations in which a student or parent refuses to accept service of the notice or fails to pick up a notice that was sent by certified mail.

In another expulsion case involving allegations of insufficiency in the service of an expulsion notice, the mother of an expelled student appealed an expulsion order, contending that she did not receive a notice of the expulsion hearing.<sup>11</sup> Instead, the district sent the notice of the expulsion hearing to the student and his father by certified mail. The student had been enrolled in the district by the father and the district’s records contained no information regarding the mother. The state superintendent concluded that, while the failure to notify the mother would have been a violation of the statutory procedures if the district had knowledge of her existence, her legal status to the student and her address, it was reasonable for the district in this case to rely on its records. Therefore, because the district did not have this information, the district did not violate the notice provisions of the expulsion statute.

These cases are significant reminders to districts to ensure that the procedures set forth in the expulsion statute are met. In particular, they stand for the proposition that the expulsion statute and due process not only require that the expulsion notice must be sent separately to the

student and parents of record at least five days before the expulsion hearing, but also that it must be received by them in sufficient time for them to be able to provide an adequate defense. Given this decision, districts should confirm at least 24 hours before the expulsion hearing that both the student and parents on record have received the notice. One way to ensure this is to mail and personally serve the notice on the student and parents, such as at a pre-expulsion meeting.

### ■ Off-Site Conduct

One of the permissible grounds for expulsion is student conduct that occurred “while not at school or while not under the supervision of a school authority...which endangered the property, health or safety of others at school or under the supervision of a school authority.”<sup>12</sup> Students are increasingly involved in social media conduct outside of school that negatively impacts their peers and creates issues in the school environment. The state superintendent has recently upheld expulsion orders in cases dealing with out-of-school social media conduct.

In one case, a student posted a video on social media stating that “I’ll cap yo” while holding a real gun.<sup>13</sup> District students viewed the video and commented on the video through social media. The district received an anonymous report of the posted video from an individual claiming to be a district student who perceived the video as a threat to the safety of the student and other district students. The student who posted the video had a familiarity with guns and was holding her father’s gun in the video. The district administration testified as to the serious nature of the post and the administration’s perception of the video as a threat. The state superintendent determined that the board could reasonably conclude that the post endangered the property, health or safety of others at school or under the supervision of a school authority.

In another case, a student posted a Snapchat message in which the pupil posed with an Airsoft gun with a text stating, “Florida 2.0 coming soon.”<sup>14</sup> The post was made five days after the shootings at the Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Law enforcement discovered that the student had other images related to school shootings on his smartphone. At the time the Snapchat message was posted, the student was enrolled in a private school and left that school prior to the start of expulsion proceeding. When the student attempted to enroll in a public school district shortly thereafter, the district became aware of the Snapchat message based on media reports. The student admitted to sending the Snapchat message. Upon enrollment, the district expelled the student.

The parent appealed the expulsion order, contending that the board did not have the statutory authority to expel the student because he was not enrolled in the district at the time he engaged in the alleged misconduct. While the expulsion statute does not expressly prohibit a board from expelling a student based on conduct that occurred prior to the student’s enrollment, it refers to conduct “at school” and under “the supervision of a school authority.” The state superintendent construed these provisions narrowly to mean a school governed by the board engaged in the expulsion process and not any public or private school. As such, a board must find that the student engaged in conduct that endangered the property, health or safety of others in the board’s district or a person under the board’s authority.

Having narrowly interpreted the expulsion statute, the state superintendent took a liberal view of the

evidence to affirm the student’s expulsion. The state superintendent concluded that the Snapchat message could reasonably be perceived as a threat to repeat the school shooting that took place in Parkland and that the message was not limited to a specific school. Instead, the board did not have “to assume a threat to execute a school shooting exclusively endangered the school currently attended by the pupil.” The district administration testified that they perceived the Snapchat message as a threat that endangered its schools and responded to the perceived threat contemporaneously by reviewing its safety protocols. Given this evidence, the state superintendent held that the board could reasonably conclude that the pupil engaged in conduct that endangered the property, health or safety of others at its schools or persons under the supervision of a school authority. The state superintendent cautioned, however, that this interpretation does not give a board blanket authority to expel a student based on conduct at any school that occurred at any time. The board must have a basis to conclude that the conduct had a reasonable nexus to the district.

### Conclusion

These cases reaffirm the state superintendent’s role in assuring that students facing expulsion are provided with the appropriate procedural protections to comply with the expulsion statute and constitutional due process. This includes a requirement that the expulsion notice not only be sent five days before the expulsion hearing, but also be received before the hearing. Districts should take the procedural steps necessary to ensure compliance with this standard. The cases also reflect the state superintendent’s broad deference to articulated board

determinations of whether student conduct endangers the property, health or safety of others at school or under the supervision of a school authority, regardless of whether that conduct occurs during educational hours, on district property or while the student is enrolled at another district. ■

### End Notes

1. Wis. Stat. § 120.13(1)(c).
2. *Madison Metro. Sch. Dist. v. Burmaster*, 2006 WI App 17, ¶ 19, 288 Wis. 2d 771, 709 N.W.2d 73.
3. Wis. Const., art. X, § 3.
4. *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565, 574 (1975).
5. *T.M. by Monona Grove Sch. Dist. Bd. of Educ.*, Decision and Order No. 772 (Sept. 26, 2018)(citing *B.R. by Hamilton Sch. Dist.*, Decision and Order No. 555 (Aug. 5, 2005)).
6. Wis. Stat. § 120.13(1)(c).
7. *Racine Unified Sch. Dist.*, Decision and Order No. 783 (August 8, 2019).
8. Wis. Stat. § 120.13(l)(c)4.
9. *M.S. by Milwaukee Public Schs. Bd. of Sch. Dirs.*, Decision and Order No. 128 (May 10, 1985).
10. See, e.g., *Racine Unified Sch. Dist. v. Thompson*, 107 Wis. 2d 657, 665-67, 321 N.W.2d 334 (Ct. App. 1982).
11. *T.B. by Westfield Sch. Dist. Bd. of Educ.*, Decision and Order No. 743 (October 27, 2016).
12. Wis. Stat. s. 120.13(1)(c)1.
13. *R.A. by Nicolet Union High Sch. Dist. Bd. of Educ.*, Decision and Order No. 773 (Jan. 2, 2019).
14. *O.O. by Nicolet Union High Sch. Dist. Bd. of Educ.*, Decision and Order No. 775, (Jan. 10, 2019). This decision was appealed to the Milwaukee County Circuit Court (Case No. 19 CV 1067). The state superintendent’s decision was affirmed, however, the circuit court’s decision is sealed and not public at this time.

*This Legal Comment was written by Michael J. Julka and Steven C. Zach of Boardman & Clark LLP; WASB Legal Counsel. For additional information on related topics, see Wisconsin School News, “Judicial Review of Expulsion Decisions” (March 2000) and “Early Reinstatement of Expelled Students” (October 2000).*

*Legal Comment is designed to provide authoritative general information, with commentary, as a service to WASB members. It should not be relied upon as legal advice. If required, legal advice regarding this topic should be obtained from district legal counsel.*



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