



Many Reasons to Be Proud

t's an exciting time of year. New and returning students and staff are settling into their classrooms and getting started on a new school year. While this can also be a daunting time of year, I feel very optimistic about the future of public education in Wisconsin.

I believe the students who are entering our schools will have some of the best learning opportunities of students anywhere in the country. Our educators — teachers, principals and administrators — comprise one of the most qualified workforces anywhere. Their training, commitment and dedication is incredibly impressive. In addition, our schools continue to build valuable partnerships with higher education, business and other stakeholders for the benefits of students.

There is much to be proud of when it comes to Wisconsin public schools.

Over the past several years, we have been highlighting success stories from Wisconsin schools on our blog Stand Up for Public Education (wasbstandup.wordpress.com). It is impressive to look through the stories and see the wide range of good work and accomplishments taking place in our schools.

Stories from this past year featured: a manufacturing business completely run by students at Hustisford High School; the Chippewa Falls IT Academy which, through a partnership between Chippewa Falls High School and Chippewa Valley Technical College, brings college instructors to the high school; the Ozaukee Youth Apprenticeship program, which connects students to careers; and a

team of students from Milwaukee's North Division High School who earned a spot in a nationwide mobile app development program sponsored by MIT. The list of success stories goes on and on.

While there is much to be proud of, there are always challenges awaiting our educators and school leaders. As I mentioned earlier, we have some of the best educators, however, the number of people entering the teaching ranks is shrinking and many districts are struggling to find quality candidates. We also need to continue to address issues related to the socioeconomic gaps in our communities and provide extra support to those who need it. We know that students come to our schools at all different learning and readiness levels.

And, as always, there are new initiatives underway in a continuous effort to improve student achievement — from the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act, to Response to Intervention, Universal Design for Learning, local technology initiatives and more — the work never ends.

I know our school leaders are thinking about and working on these issues and others. We received a record number of session proposals for the upcoming State Education Convention in January. Thank you for your willingness to contribute to the professional development of board members and administrators around the state. We're all in this together. I also want to thank those districts that submitted resolutions to be considered for the WASB Delegate Assembly in January. Your resolutions guide the WASB's advocacy.

As the school year gets underway, there are a number of WASB events on the calendar. The annual fall Regional Meetings take place in each WASB region from September to November and give you an opportunity to network with school leaders in your area and learn more about the WASB's activities and plans. The WSAA/WASB Employment and School Law Seminar will take place Oct. 13-14 in Wisconsin Dells. And the WASB Legislative Advocacy Conference will be held Nov. 12 in Stevens Point.

In October, we celebrate you — our school board members — with the annual Wisconsin School Board Appreciation Week. This year, the special week is Oct. 2-8. During this week, we encourage school districts to thank their boards. We have developed a kit (available on WASB.org), which includes a sample press release, activities, and more to help districts honor their school boards.

Finally, I'm excited to announce that details about the upcoming State Education Convention will begin to be released in early September. In this issue, we have an article by one of our keynotes — David Horsager, founder of the Trust Edge Leadership Institute. Look for more information on the upcoming convention in future issues of *Wisconsin School News*, the WASB website and your email inbox.

It's a busy, and always, exciting time of year. I hope your school year gets off to a great start and I look forward to hearing about the success stories from your district. It's going to be a great school year! ■

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