

# Addressing Public Education

**Gov. Scott Walker Reviews Recent Past,  
Provides Glimpse to Future**



**G**ov. Scott Walker's address to the 92nd State Education Convention audience reviewed recent initiatives and hinted at some of the proposals he will advance in his 2013-15 biennial budget, including teacher incentive bonuses, improving school-to-work transitions and rewarding high-performing schools.

He noted the work of his Read to Lead task force that proposed a pre-kindergarten screener to assist teachers in understanding a new student's reading ability and stressed, "We put money behind the reading screeners, so it's not an unfunded mandated."

Walker acknowledged the work of the associations represented at the Convention in regard to school accountability measures that were part of the state's approved waiver from the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act.

"The various associations represented today played a critical role on school and school district accountability. We had to have a comprehensive, objective and transparent system to do that" and all parties worked to that end, the Governor said.

The Governor spoke about his goal of providing "an incentive bonus" for successful teachers, similar to sales bonuses given in the private sector. He suggested this incentive money would probably be a categorical aid and characterized it "as a way to say thank you and acknowledge the good work."

"My goal over all in public education and education in its entirety in this state is to make sure that every kid has access to a great education," Walker said. "That is overwhelmingly going to come from our public schools, which means the overwhelming amount of our focus and new resources has to go in there.

"There may be some other areas such as virtual and charter and choice and others along the way that we look at as options, but the vast majority of our focus is going to be on our traditional public school system because that's where our students are."

Walker generated applause from attendees saying, "We'll put additional funding in, overall, for school aids in the state. We think that makes sense." Elaborating, the Governor suggested, "All of us

— as taxpayers — are willing to make investments, but we want performance."

For close to two years, the business community and legislators have talked about the need to match education with job openings. Walker said he is working with State Superintendent Tony Evers "to talk about more ways we can incorporate our technical colleges into our K-12 curriculum, particularly in middle and high school, and (through) dual enrollment and other things we can do" to fill vacant jobs in the state.

Lamenting the weekly job reports that show 30-40,000 unfilled jobs, Walker said, "We've got to do a better job of connecting young people (and others) with those openings. We're looking at ways of helping out school districts to incorporate more work on career and academic preparedness, so that we make assessments earlier on, so that young people start thinking earlier about what's the best career path they want to be on. We're making good progress, but there's still plenty of work to do." ■

**Check the WASB.org**  
for information and updates  
on the 2013-15 state budget.

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to incorporate more work on career and academic preparedness."**