

**WALKER vs. EVERS:** We posed a series of questions for the two primary candidates for governor *page 10*

WISCONSIN

# SchoolNews

October 2018 | wasb.org

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



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# WISCONSIN SchoolNews

October 2018 | Volume 73 Number 3

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## Wisconsin Educators Finalists for National Recognition

Four Wisconsin educators are finalists for the 2018 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST), considered the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government for mathematics and science teachers.

The 2018 awards recognize those who teach grades kindergarten through six. Wisconsin finalists are:

- **Michelle Butturini**, fifth- and sixth-grade mathematics teacher, Reedsville Elementary/Middle School;
- **Michelle Howe**, science and agriscience teacher at Lodi Middle School;
- **Alicia Korth**, first-grade teacher, Lincoln Elementary School, New London School District; and

■ **Rebecca Saeman**, mathematics and reading intervention teacher, Sauk Trail Elementary School, Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District.

“These teachers demonstrate their care and love of students and the teaching profession,” said State Superintendent Tony Evers. “Their passion helps to inspire our future inventors, doctors, and software developers who will certainly impact our ever-changing world. I wish our finalists well in the next stage of the Presidential Teaching Awards process.”

Established by Congress in 1983, the PAEMST program recognizes teachers who develop and implement a high-quality instructional program that is informed by content knowledge and enhances student learning. Awardees serve as models for their colleagues,

inspiration to their communities, and leaders in the improvement of STEM education (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, which includes computer science).

The **Association for Middle Level Education** has named Sandra Kowalczyk a 2018 Educator of the Year. Sandra is a reading specialist at Patrick Marsh Middle School in Sun Prairie and will be recognized at the association’s annual conference later this month in Orlando.

“Sandra’s work to engage her students in literacy through a variety of experiences and subjects opens students’ eyes to the vast world around them and has shaped a desire to read and learn in countless kids,” said Evers. “Our schools and our state are all made better through the enthusiasm and drive of teachers like Sandra.” □

### STAT OF THE MONTH

57%

**Percent of Wisconsin residents** who said they’d rather increase public school funding than decrease property taxes.

Source: Marquette Law School Poll, September 2018

## Language Aids and ELL Programs in Demand

As public school districts become more diverse and enroll more English-language learners (ELL), Wisconsin districts are in need of more language aids and supporting programs. For instance, the Eau Claire Area School District has 21 different languages spoken by its students.

“The challenge is to provide more diverse bilingual educational adults,” says David Oldenberg, director of academic services. “For example, this year, we now have students looking for support in Albanian, Bulgarian

and Mandarin.”

The Madison Metropolitan School District has the highest concentration of English-language learners in the state. More than 109 languages are spoken by students in the district. *The Cap Times* reports that, “The district offers two instructional models, developmental bilingual education (DBE) and dual language immersion (DLI). Students in DBE classes all speak the same home language, while DLI students come from both English- and Spanish-speaking households.” □

## One Way to Increase College Access: Encourage Students to Retake the SAT

A new working paper published by the National Bureau of Economic Research indicates that the probability of a student enrolling in a four-year college increases 13 percent if that student retakes the SAT according to reporting by *Education Week*. Researchers analyzed the data from millions of SAT takers and found the correlation between retaking the SAT and college enrollment particularly significant for low-income and minority students.

According to the researchers, “Eliminating disparities in retake rates could close up to 20 percent of the income gap and 10 percent of the racial gap in four-year college enrollment.” □



## School Board Members, Thank You

**T**hank you for serving as a locally elected school board member and representing the public's voice in public education.

Public schools are the heart of our communities and our democracy. They ensure that every child has an opportunity to receive an education and become a productive member of society. You are there to oversee this important work and provide accountability for how taxpayer dollars are spent.

We know that you devote a significant amount of your time and energy to school board service throughout the year solely because you believe in the importance of educating our next generation of citizens.

Your work is not easy. You are tasked with developing the district's mission and vision, advocating for your schools at the local, state and federal levels, and overseeing multi-million dollar budgets. You approve contracts, hire and evaluate the district administrator, set policy, oversee curriculum development, and much more. You must be responsive to the district's present needs and set the groundwork for future success, ever mindful of staying accountable to your local communities.

Thanks to your dedication, leadership and public service, Wisconsin's tradition of a quality public education system remains strong. So, on behalf of your state association and in recognition of October 7-13 as Wisconsin

School Board Week, thank you.

We want to help you be the best board members you can be. If I haven't seen you yet at a Fall Regional Meeting, I hope to do so in the next few weeks. The Regional Meetings give you a great opportunity to network with other school board members in your area, get a preview of the 2019-20 legislative session, and hear an update on WASB activities and plans. To create a full professional development opportunity, WASB attorneys are leading pre-meeting workshops on how to plan and conduct effective school board meetings.

In November, the WASB Government Relations team will be leading a series of legislative advocacy workshops at select CESA offices around the state to help board members develop stronger relationships with their legislators and be more effective advocates. Visit [WASB.org](http://WASB.org) for more information and to register for the Regional Meetings and the workshops.

And, of course, we hope to see you in January for the 2019 State Education Convention, the premier board development opportunity of the year, which will focus on Leading for Excellence and Equity. Last month, we announced that Steve Pemberton will be our kick-off keynote speaker. Steve is a trail-blazing corporate executive, enlightened diversity leader, visionary youth

advocate and relentless champion for those who have often been left in the shadows. This month's issue of the *School News* includes an excerpt from his book, "A Chance in the World," that tells the compelling story how he overcame nearly insurmountable odds as a young child to find success.

This month, I'm also pleased to announce that Michele Borba will be returning to the Wisconsin State Education Convention. She last spoke to our convention 10 years ago and since then, has built on her earlier research and become an even more sought-after speaker. She'll be talking about how to cultivate empathy and address the effects of today's increasingly social-media-saturated society on our youth. Our third inspiring keynote will be Principal Salome Thomas-El. An award-winning teacher and principal, Principal EL has a contagious passion and dedication to ensuring that every child succeeds. His book, "I Choose to Stay," captures his personal account of what inspired him to stay and teach in the inner city of Philadelphia and the people who inspired him along the way. You'll want to hear his address.

For more information, visit the convention website at [WASB.org](http://WASB.org). Registration opens Nov. 1. We look forward to seeing you in Milwaukee! In the meantime, take advantage of the workshops around the state and enjoy the fall colors. ■

Thanks to your dedication, leadership and public service, Wisconsin's tradition of a quality public education system remains strong.



# Forward Together

WASB Business Honor Roll recognizes outstanding school-business partnerships

## School District of the Menomonie Area

### Dunn Energy Cooperative and Water Source Heating and Cooling

In collaboration, Dunn Energy Cooperative, Water Source Heating and Cooling of Eau Claire, and the School District of the Menomonie Area have successfully completed a project ensuring renewable energy

for years to come for the district.

With funding from the Dunn Energy Cooperative's Operation Round Up grant program and Jesse Green of Water Source Heating and Cooling, the Bjornson Education-Recreation Center — known locally as the Environmental Site — installed a 3kW photovoltaic array (a solar panel system).

This, along with the school district's participation in the Dunn Energy SunDEC Community Solar array, brings the Environmental Site

to a 100 percent renewable status.

"The success of this solar project is a great example of the good that can happen when community partners come together," said Joe Zydowsky, district administrator for the School District of the Menomonie Area. "We are proud to say that the school district's Environmental Site is now 100 percent powered by renewable energy. Not only has this been a wise investment for the district, but it also has the potential to serve as a good example and

“Not only has this been a wise investment for the district, but it also has the potential to serve as a good example and learning opportunity for our students and staff.”

— Joe Zydowsky, district administrator for the School District of the Menomonie Area

learning opportunity for our students and staff.”

The solar panels at the Environmental Site have been up just short of a year and have produced a total of 2.55 megawatt hours (MWh). The average home on Dunn Energy lines uses 1,000 kilowatt hours a month; meaning the small array at the Environmental Site has produced enough energy to power an average home for two and a half months straight.

“We often talk about preserving the future for the next generation, about making choices that make sense, not only for today, but for years to come. We believe the choice the district made will not only benefit

their financial position today but will also educate our youth on the importance of sustainability for years to come,” explained Jesse Singerhouse, manager of Administrative and Member Services for Dunn Energy Cooperative. “We’re proud to be a part of partnerships like these.”

Operation Round Up uses the power of cooperation to provide much needed grant dollars for community projects, 501(c)3 organizations and nonprofit groups within the Dunn Energy Cooperative service territory. □

*This portion of our article first appeared in The Dunn County News. Reprinted with permission.*

## Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District

### UW Credit Union

It’s been less than a year since UW Credit Union opened a branch at Middleton High School (MHS) and the Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District couldn’t be happier with the partnership.

The board of education approved installing a UW Credit Union branch just inside the main entrance to MHS in the summer of 2017. The branch officially opened on Jan. 29, 2018.

“We are extremely excited about the partnership with UW Credit



From left to right: Jesse Green, from Water Source Heating and Cooling, along with Joe Zydowsky, district administrator, and Jesse Singerhouse, of Dunn Energy Cooperative, celebrate the completion of the solar array at the Bjornson Environmental-Recreation Center.



Representatives from UW Credit Union, including branch manager Mark Klingele (front row, second from left), Middleton High School, and the Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District, including Superintendent George Mavroulis (front row, middle) participate in a ribbon cutting ceremony on Jan. 29. The branch is located just inside the main entrance of the high school.

Union,” Superintendent George Mavroulis said. “A financial literacy graduation requirement has been in place for a few years but having this opportunity available to students is going to take us to the next level. We look forward to a long partnership.”

Through the partnership, five students participated in internships, with three working out of the MHS branch and the others at nearby UW Credit Union locations. The experience included hands-on opportunities to manage branch operations, develop marketing campaigns and shadow credit union employees.

This is UW Credit Union’s first high school branch location. The branch is open Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on regular school days for students,

staff and faculty of MHS and the district.

UW Credit Union also provides financial education seminars to students and staff as well as supporting the high school’s financial literacy curriculum. Areas of focus for the partnership include: encouraging students to engage in financial literacy and sound financial management practices, extending outreach to under-represented students and families, and delivering financial services in a convenient and welcoming environment. Director of Employee Services Tabatha Gundrum reported UW Credit Union is developing plans to offer a series of financial wellness workshops to staff throughout the year.

In addition, UW Credit Union provides multiple scholarships to



Reshma Gali, a 2018 Middleton High School graduate, was one of five students to participate in an internship program with UW Credit Union.

graduating seniors. UW Credit Union also paid for the remodeling of the former concession stand where the branch is now housed and some of the costs of moving the concession stand to another part of MHS.

“UW Credit Union has already exceeded our expectations,” MHS Principal Steve Plank said. “They have shown how much they care about our students and have already proved to be phenomenal partners.” □

*Written by Perry Hibner, director of communications for the Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District.*

## Milwaukee Public Schools

### Kohl's

More than 350 associates from Kohl's Corporation's Product Development team volunteered their personal time making a difference in their community at four schools in the Milwaukee Public Schools.

Kohl's associates put their artistic skills to the test and worked closely with school leaders to develop projects that would help to beautify their school environments. Projects included newly designed murals for kindergarten classrooms and welcome spaces, hand-made art smocks and banners, a renovated school café, and hand-painted garden posts and benches just to name a few.

“At Milwaukee School of Languages, our students and staff appreciate the enhancements to our school created by the Kohl's volunteers,” said Principal Yvette Martel. “The work they did made our courtyard more inviting for our students, the umbrella room calm and relaxing, the café a welcoming environment for our students and visitors, and the fence a public display that we are proudly the “MSL Hawks.”

In support of their employees' volunteerism, Kohl's donates a \$500 volunteer reward for every employee who volunteers for each event. This



Kohl's volunteers create a cleverly worded bulletin board to welcome back to school MPS' Townsend Street School students.

*Photo by Sophia Smith, Volunteer Services Associate*

year's Kohl's Service Day event will allow Milwaukee Public Schools to receive a donation of \$35,000 to assist with needed educational resources for students.

With the dedication and passion of Kohl's volunteers, Milwaukee Public Schools is helping students achieve academic success through inspiring learning spaces — one paint brush at a time. □

*Written by Kellie Sigh, director, strategic partnerships and customer service for Milwaukee Public Schools.*

## School District of Arcadia and Cochrane-Fountain City School District

### Ashley Furniture Industries, Ashley for the Arts

Both the Arcadia and the Cochrane-Fountain City school districts recognized Ashley Furniture Industries for helping to support their schools and students.

In the School District of Arcadia, Ashley Furniture Industries has made several financial contributions over the past several years as well as offered opportunities for students to tour their facilities and learn about manufacturing careers.

In the last year, the business sponsored STEM camps for Arcadia students and donated more than \$1 million for a mobile learning lab. The mobile learning lab is the creation of the Trempealeau Valley Consortium (TVC), a collaborative effort between the Arcadia, Blair-Taylor, Independence and Whitehall school districts to provide students with high-caliber learning experiences in partnership with the area community. The mobile learning lab will offer STEM opportunities for students in the TVC districts and allow them to learn about industry automation and various technologies in modern manufacturing. The lab will also make nearly 300 online courses in subjects such as electrical engineering, PLC (programmable logic controller) and pneumatics available to students.

“The costs associated with the mobile learning lab — the equipment in that lab and the online courses — would not be possible for an individual school district to fund,” said Arcadia Superintendent Lance Bagstad. “With the partnership with Ashley Furniture Industries, we are able to have these offerings for our students.”

The Cochrane-Fountain City School District has also benefited from working with Ashley Furniture Industries. Specifically, the district has participated in Ashley for the



Arts — a multi-day music festival aimed at raising money for non-profit organizations and schools. Participating organizations provide the festival with volunteers and Ashley Furniture Industries donates back to those organizations. This year, Ashley for the Arts provided \$535,000 for 51 different nonprofit groups.

For the past five years, the Cochrane-Fountain City School District has participated and has received up to \$5,000 each year for its music programs. The donations have allowed the district to provide travel opportunities for students as well as purchase risers, instruments

and teaching aids for the elementary and secondary music classrooms.

“Their method of having schools ‘earn’ the donation by helping out at their music festival gets parents and community members involved with our students and our program,” said

Bonnie Breza, school board member. “‘Earning’ the donation also gets students from neighboring rural schools to work together.”

## School District of Mishicot

### D&S Machine Service

This summer, Mishicot High School received manufacturing equipment from Mr. and Mrs. Russell Nowak, owners of D&S Machine Service of Luxemburg. The donation, valued at

more than \$100,000, will give students the opportunity to get hands-on experience working with world-class manufacturing equipment. The new equipment includes:

- Haas Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Toolroom lathe,
- Haas Mini Vertical Machining Center (VMC),
- Multi-purpose milling machine,
- 2-Axis digital readout metal lathes, and
- Two Haas simulators.

The donation supports Mishicot High School’s focus on providing students with a strong career and technical education experience. In addition to the world-class equipment, the school provides opportunities for youth apprenticeship placements in multiple career fields including manufacturing, agriculture, healthcare, education and construction.

“We are creating opportunities and partnerships with business to supply them with a workforce to continue to ensure that our area businesses prosper,” said Mishicot Superintendent Paul Orlich. “If the kids don’t have access to the newest manufacturing tools, then we are unable to interest them in pursuing a career in the industry.”

The Mishicot School District also thanked Progress Lakeshore, a non-profit organization focused on business development in northeast Wisconsin. Lorinda Tulachka, operations manager for Progress Lakeshore, stated that getting students hands-on experience in high school is crucial to helping students transition to a career.

Orlich added, “Mishicot High School is very fortunate to have been chosen by D&S Machine Service to have this opportunity to provide more relevant educational experiences for their students.” ■

## WASB/School Perceptions Annual Board Development Tool

### Want to evaluate your board's effectiveness?

The **WASB** and **School Perceptions** have teamed up to create a complementary online tool that allows board members to evaluate their work in 12 governance areas including vision, policy, continuous improvement and more.

Learn more at [wasb.org](http://wasb.org) (search under governance)



Customized Leadership Services | 877-705-4422 | Visit [wasb.org](http://wasb.org)



Pictured (from left to right): Lorinda Tulachka, operations manager for Progress Lakeshore, Bob Shimek, school board member, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Nowak, owners of D&S Machine Service, Paul Orlich, superintendent, Judy Ferry, school board member, and Brennen Mickelson, technical education teacher.

## 2018 WASB Business Honor Roll

The following businesses have been nominated by their partner school districts to the 2018 WASB Business Honor Roll.\* For descriptions of each partnership, visit [WASB.org](http://WASB.org). Select "Services & Resources," "Communication Services," and then "Business Honor Roll."

### School District of Arcadia

Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc.

### Birchwood School District

Fred Thomas Resort  
Greener's Budget Lumber  
Masonite  
Rice Lake Weighing

### Cochrane-Fountain City School District

The Cochrane-Fountain City Recorder  
Ashley Furniture Industries – Ashley for the Arts

### Eau Claire Area School District

Grace Lutheran Communities  
Wisconsin Restaurant Association  
Reality Works  
Metropolis Resort/Action City  
Chippewa Valley Home Builders Association

### Greendale Schools

Today's TMJ4  
Southeast Wisconsin Carpentry Training Center  
Drilling's Panther Pub & Eatery

### Juda Public Schools

Colony Brands  
Carter and Gruenewald  
L and S Truck Service  
Rackow Family Sausages  
Olin Juda Oasis

### Kettle Moraine School District

Key Benefit Concepts  
Aurora Medical Center in Summit

### Lake Country Fire & Rescue

### School District of the Menomonee Area

Dunn Energy Cooperative  
Water Source Heating and Cooling

### Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District

UW Credit Union  
Integral Building Systems  
Fleet Feet Sports  
Singlewire Software  
All Channel Electronics

### School District of Milton

Milton Area Chamber of Commerce

### Milwaukee Public Schools

Kohl's  
The Salvation Army/  
WISN Channel 12  
Al Hurvis/ADAMM Education Foundation  
The Milwaukee Bucks

### Mineral Point Unified School District

Badger Welding  
Midwest Roofing  
Orthopedic Institute at Southwest Health  
SSM Health

### Mishicot School District

D & S Machine Service  
KNM Machining and Industrial Maintenance

### Necedah Area School District

Marquis Energy-Wisconsin LLC

### Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District

PPG Industries  
Martin Law Office  
Midwest Orthopedic Specialty Hospital  
Educators Credit Union  
Ebenezer Child Care

### Palmyra-Eagle Area School District

Generac Power Systems, Inc.  
Fort HealthCare  
Standard Process, Inc.  
Pleasant Valley Acres, LLC

### Pulaski Community School District

BayTek Games  
MCL Industries  
Cousins Subs and Figaro's  
Pizza of Pulaski  
Prevea Health  
Bode Boot Camp

### River Valley School District

Kaul Enterprises  
Straka Meats  
Prem Meats  
Gauger & Son Salvage, Inc.  
Sew What Embroidery

### West Bend School District

Serigraph, Inc.  
West Bend Mutual Insurance Company

**\*Please note:** this list reflects all of the nominations received by mid-September. Additional nominations may have been added to the Honor Roll since this time. For a complete list, please see the 2018 WASB Business Honor Roll at [wasb.org](http://wasb.org).



# WALKER

**This November, Wisconsin residents will choose** between incumbent Governor Scott Walker and State Superintendent Tony Evers to be the next governor.



## SCOTT WALKER

**Growing up in Delavan**, my parents instilled in me the importance of service and the dignity of a hard day's work.

One of my first reforms as governor, Act 10, helped eliminate the state's billion dollar budget deficit without raising taxes and gave local governments tools to balance their budgets without massive layoffs. I've cut taxes by \$8 billion, made record K-12 investments, froze UW tuition for six years, and helped make Wisconsin a top state for business. I'm fighting for bold reforms to keep moving Wisconsin forward, and create greater prosperity for hard-working families.

My wife, Tonette, and I have two sons — Matt and Alex — both are public school graduates.

*Learn more about Scott Walker by visiting his campaign website: [scottwalker.com](http://scottwalker.com)*



# vs. EVERS

The *Wisconsin School News* posed a series of questions to the two primary candidates for governor. The questions and their answers are on the following pages.



## TONY EVERS

**Some of the most meaningful moments** in my life happened in the classroom. I met my wife Kathy in Mrs. Potter's kindergarten class in my hometown of Plymouth, Wisconsin. My first job was teaching science in Baraboo. I was a science teacher and high school principal in Tomah, and I ran school districts in Oakfield and Verona.

I've been elected state superintendent three times and worked across party lines to ensure every child in Wisconsin gets a world-class education. As governor, I will use these skills to end the divisiveness that has consumed our state. I ask for your support.

Learn more about Tony Evers by visiting his campaign website: [tonyevers.com](http://tonyevers.com)

# WALKER vs. EVERS

## 1] What is the role of public education in today's society?

**WALKER:** Every child deserves access to a great education. For me, my sons, and now my nieces, it was a traditional public school. Our schools are the building blocks of a great society. They prepare our children for life and for careers. They help ensure equal opportunity for all to succeed.

It is important for our schools be connected to our communities — and that includes employers. This year, there are more people in the workforce in Wisconsin than ever before and we have gone six months with unemployment levels below 3 percent (the previous historic low). More than ever, we need our students to graduate with a plan for their careers.

As part of our new plan to Keep Wisconsin Working for Generations to Come, we will continue to focus on career preparation through expanding Youth Apprenticeships, Fab Labs, early college credits, and other programs.

**EVERS:** Education is the great equalizer and a key pathway to restoring economic prosperity. Public education should inspire every child with a passion for lifelong learning and prepare them for success in college and careers.

One of Wisconsin's greatest strengths is the growing diversity of our communities, which makes businesses more innovative and competitive. However, Wisconsin also has one of the largest achievement gaps in the country. To meet this challenge, we need an education system and economy that work for everyone.

## 2] Does the current school funding system adequately support the state's public schools for the role they play in today's society? If not, what changes will you propose?

**WALKER:** Act 10 reforms saved school districts \$3.2 billion. And in our last state budget, we made the largest actual dollar investment in K-12 education in state history. That means an extra \$204 per student this year on

top of the extra \$200 per student last year for every district.

To help rural districts, we increased transportation and other aids, including Sparsity Aid up to \$400 per student. We also massively increased TEACH grants to ensure access to world-class technology.

I will continue to make historic investments in our schools and will work with members of the Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding as they develop and release their plans.

**EVERS:** Our current school finance system is broken. My budget proposals always provide an extra lift to those who need it, and my Fair Funding for Our Future plan remains a blueprint for reform and equity. It focuses on:

- Revenue limit equity and sustainable increases;
- Minimum aid for all districts;
- Weighted funding for low-income students, students with disabilities, and English learners;
- Thawing the decade-long freeze on primary special education aid.

The governor and Legislature have adopted many of my recommendations, like expanding sparsity aid, increasing summer school funding, and upping transportation reimbursements.

However, if they had adopted my last four budgets, revenue limits would be over \$1,600 more per student, without any referenda or statewide property tax increases.

Our schools can do better. To move education forward, it's time for a change.

## 3] What will you do to ensure Wisconsin's youth receive appropriate mental health services?

**WALKER:** Several years ago, we made the largest investment in mental health services in 25 years. However, during listening sessions in all 72 counties, I kept hearing from teachers and administrators that mental health issues were a growing concern. So, we created a new

SCOTT WALKER

“I will continue to make historic investments in our schools and will work with members of the Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding as they develop and release their plans.”



TONY EVERS

“My budget proposals always provide an extra lift to those who need it, and my Fair Funding for Our Future plan remains a blueprint for reform and equity.”

grant program for school-based mental health services, which we will increase in our 2019-2021 state budget.

One of the challenges with record-breaking low unemployment is that key careers — like mental health professions — are hard to fill. We will expand our initiatives to include the recruitment and retention of mental health professionals as part of our Wisconsin Fast Forward Plan.

**EVERS:** With one in five students facing mental health issues, educators and schools are the frontlines in meeting this challenge. My budget proposes a tenfold increase in school mental health funding, including:

- Fully funding mental health grants, as funding covered only one-third of applicants this year.
- Increasing staff to address mental health, including school psychologists, nurses, counselors, and social workers.
- Expanding statewide mental health training and youth suicide prevention to boost efforts around trauma, AODA, and mental health first aid.

With over 80 percent of mental health incidents currently going untreated, we’re committed to getting all Wisconsin kids the support and early intervention they need.

**4 ] Do you support taxpayer-subsidized vouchers? If yes, what initiatives, if any, will you introduce or support to expand vouchers? If not, which current provisions, if any, will you work to roll back?**

**WALKER:** Every child deserves access to a great education. For most, it will be in a traditional public school. For others, it might be in a charter, a choice, a virtual or even a home-school environment. I trust parents to make the right choice. I also believe they should be given all the facts, and I support using the report card system to monitor all schools that receive public money.

I will continue to make historic investments in our public schools and look for ways to be supportive of alternative choices that are good for families. In the end,

# WALKER vs. EVERS

I and my children are products of public schools, and my nieces are attending public schools today. Without a doubt, I want strong public schools in Wisconsin.

**EVERS:** Wisconsin's public schools provide access and opportunity to over 860,000 kids. They have to be our priority. When we aren't adequately funding our public schools, how can we possibly afford a second private school system? Moreover, study after study show the same results: privatization does not magically solve problems.

As governor, I would hold all schools to the same high expectations and freeze voucher programs, working with stakeholders to phase vouchers out. At a minimum, voucher schools should meet the same requirements as public schools, including licensed teachers, student special education rights, data reporting, and pupil non-discrimination laws. Furthermore, I strongly support voucher transparency, including voucher school report cards and publishing the voucher impact on property tax bills.

## 5] What are the greatest challenges facing our public schools and what will you do to address them?

**WALKER:** The number one factor for success in our schools is: HOPE. If students have hope that their work will lead to positive outcomes and a fulfilling life, they will likely do well

in school. It is part of the reason we funded academic and career plans in 6th grade and why I am interested in advancing youth apprenticeships to 7th and 8th graders. Getting students interested early about their career goals gives them a reason to focus on their education.

Part of the challenge is connecting students with the skills they need to be successful in available careers, which is why we will continue to push advancements in TEACH and other programs to ensure access to top technology, expand broadband access, and connect every part of the state to high-speed internet.

**EVERS:** Our schools tackle big challenges every day: declining enrollment, growing student poverty, student mental health, but dwindling state investment in education has been pervasive over the last eight years.

Governing is about priorities. My budgets would have provided \$2.4 billion more in general school aid over the last eight years. In contrast, Gov. Walker's proposals would have left districts with \$63 million less than in 2010.

In the aftermath of Gov. Walker's \$800 million cut to school aids, over 1 million people voted to raise their own taxes to keep the lights on in school districts across Wisconsin.

While Gov. Walker spent millions to expand special needs vouchers, he hasn't invested a penny in primary special education aid.

My budget restores two-thirds

funding, makes historic investments in special education, provides a tenfold increase in student mental health funding, funds full-day 4K, and provides Wisconsin's first state funding for after-school programs.

Wisconsin's kids and schools deserve a governor who will invest in public education and support the transformational work happening in schools across our state.

## 6] What will be your top three priorities as governor next year?

**WALKER:** I want Wisconsin to be a top state for millennials, so we can keep graduates here and attract more millennials. With more people in the workforce in our state than ever before, we need to keep and grow our talent to move Wisconsin forward.

To keep graduates here, we plan to connect students with careers and reduce student loan debt. In addition to expanding youth apprenticeships and ensuring that every high school student graduates with a career plan, we also plan to expand support for technical colleges, provide a tax credit of up to \$5,000 over five years for graduates who live and work in Wisconsin, and continue the UW tuition freeze for four more years.

To assist senior citizens, we will provide a tax credit to help them stay in their homes. In the past, too many seniors faced a financial crunch with high property taxes, prescription drug costs and health

TONY EVERS

“Wisconsin's kids and schools deserve a governor who will invest in public education and support the transformational work happening in schools across our state.”

“I will continue to make historic investments in our public schools and look for ways to be supportive of alternative choices that are good for families.”

care costs. To support working families, we will provide a tax credit to ease the burden of child care costs and continue the Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday.

**EVERS: Education.** I believe that what is best for our kids is best for our state. As governor, I'll invest in early childhood and quality child-care; increase funding for our public schools and restore respect for hard-working educators; increase investment in our technical schools and UW System; make college more

affordable and allow Wisconsinites to refinance student loans at a lower interest rate.

**Healthcare.** Too few people have access to affordable health insurance and the cost of healthcare continues to be too high. As governor, I'll immediately accept federal Medicaid expansion dollars to insure thousands more Wisconsinites; adopt policies to stabilize health insurance markets and reduce costs, including prescription drug prices; invest in preventive health programs; and adopt protections for the millions of

Wisconsinites with pre-existing health conditions.

**Wisconsin's transportation crisis.**

I'll work with Democrats and Republicans to implement a sustainable, long-term fix for funding our roads; invest more in local road maintenance and public transit; and ensure our highways and bridges are no longer a liability, but an asset for bringing new industries and businesses to Wisconsin. ■

*The general election for Wisconsin governor is Tuesday, November 6, 2018.*



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**Keith Brandstetter**

Waterford Union High School  
Superintendent

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# “A Chance in the World: an Orphan boy, a Mysterious Past, and How He Found a Place Called Home”

by Steve Pemberton

It was late afternoon when we returned to the Department of Social Services. Because the office was one large space uninterrupted by cubicles, as Mike and I walked to his desk all eyes were on us. A few of his colleagues came up to clap him on the shoulder, congratulating him on a job well done. He accepted these platitudes humbly, like a fighter pilot returning from a dangerous rescue mission. It dawned on me that the tough cases probably fell to Mike to resolve, and he had solidified his reputation with my departure from the Robinsons.

“How are you feeling?” he asked, as we sat down.

“Better,” I managed to say. The realization that I would never return to the house on Arnold Street after a decade in their clutches had not yet sunk in. I was still literally shaking my head in disbelief.

“I’m glad. Let me update my supervisor, and I’ll be right back.”

After Mike left, his colleagues eyed me as if I were a vaudeville curiosity. If I looked in their direction, they looked away, pretending to be immersed in paperwork. *Don’t you dare, I thought, don’t you dare pity me.*

For the last couple of hours, adrenaline had masked the aching in my ribs and the pulsing in my eye. Now the pain returned, and I felt exhausted. I wrapped my arms around myself

and rested my head on the front of the desk. In the background I could hear phones ringing, file cabinets slamming shut, snippets of conversation. After a time, this all blended together and faded away.

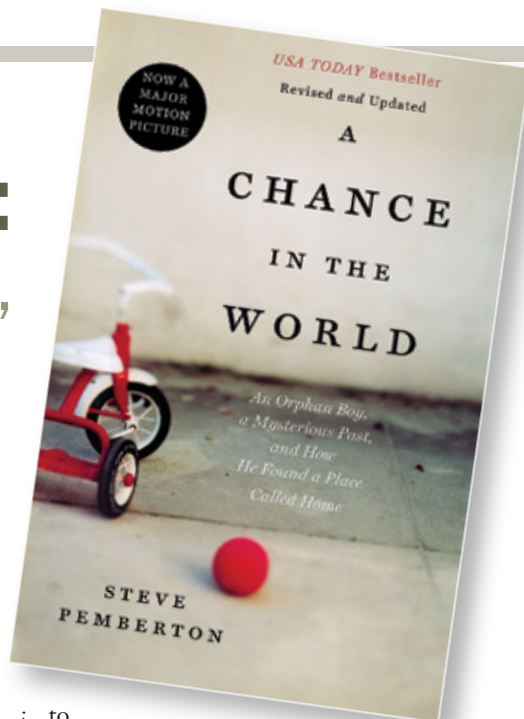
Hearing footsteps approaching, I popped my head up, forgetting for a split second where I was. Mike slid into his office chair and pulled a list of names and numbers out of a black binder. Looking me square in the eyes, he folded his hands together on his desk, the way people do when they are about to deliver bad news. “Well, now we somehow have to find you a place to stay.”

Though I had left the Robinsons’ only two days earlier than scheduled, the Department of Social Services seemed to have no plan for me. *I just need somewhere to go until I get to college*, I thought, as Mike scanned through his list. For a brief moment I felt intensely lonely, rootless, and disconnected.

Mike looked up and gestured to his list. “I have a woman here who may have room for you. She usually helps out in situations like this. You wouldn’t be there long, but it’s a place to stay until the start of the New Year, when we’ll figure out a more permanent placement.”

“Am I going to be able to do what I need to do to get to college?”

Mike nodded. “She’s great about letting boys live their lives.” I took this



to mean that the place wouldn’t be a home in a traditional sense but more of a group home for boys who had nowhere else to go.

He picked up the phone and dialed the woman’s number but got no answer. He went to the next name on the list and dialed another number, but the person on the other end said that she had no room. “Don’t worry,” he told me, offering a reassuring smile.

Mike called number after number, going farther and farther down the list. Each conversation began the same way: “Hi, my name is Mike Silvia with the Department of Social Services, and I have a client here...” Hearing myself described in such clinical terms bothered me, but I said nothing, for my options were dwindling. All around me, chairs were sliding under desks, coats were removed from racks, and “see you tomorrow” was resounding across the large room. It was the holiday season, and judging from their hurried departures, these social workers were anxious to return to their families and warm homes.

As the room emptied, I became more and more nervous. I had always wondered where I was going next, but I never quite answered the ques-

“Hearing myself described in such clinical terms bothered me, but I said nothing, for my options were dwindling.”

“I was among the most difficult type of foster child to place: **teenager, male, African American ...**”

tion, always telling myself, *Anywhere but the house on Arnold*. A half hour later, after the last social worker had departed with a cheery “good luck, guys,” Mike hung up the phone and let out an exasperated sigh. He had reached the bottom of the list. “Sorry about this, Steve. It’s just that it’s two days after Christmas and families...”

His voice trailed off, and we sat there in silence, trying to determine what to do. Though I didn’t know it at the time, I was among the most difficult type of foster child to place: teenager, male, African American. And during the holiday season, placing anyone was doubly difficult. Mike leaned back in his chair, his hands laced behind his head, staring at the ceiling. I glanced around at the large, silent office awash in piles of papers, filing cabinets, and binders. Somewhere in the corner of the room, a phone rang for what seemed like forever. “Nobody wants you”

had been among Betty’s final biting remarks, and now I was powerless to prove her wrong. The joy of escaping the Robinsons was gone; I felt lonely and defeated. Sighing long and hard, I buried my face in my hands.

“Do you know *anyone* you could stay with for a few days?” Mike asked. “Friends — anyone?”

I had been asking myself this very question. I thought about Mrs. Dottin for a moment, but given the Robinsons’ vengeful nature, I didn’t want to put her in harm’s way. Nearly all the other adults I had known over the years were somehow connected to the Robinsons or the Arnold Street neighborhood, and I needed as much distance from them as possible. *But what about Upward Bound? Was there anyone ... Wait a minute.*

I sat up straight in my chair. “Mike, I have an idea. It’s a long shot, but it’s worth trying.” I leaned forward and put my hand on the desk. “There’s a

teacher in the Upward Bound Program, a Mr. Sykes. When Betty Robinson tried to remove me from the program, Mr. Sykes and another counselor refused her request.” I didn’t mention it to Mike, but I remembered a specific comment Sykes had made to the other counselor as I walked away: “I don’t have any children, but if I did, I would want my son to be just like Steve.”

Mike leaned forward. “Do you know where he works?”

“At the college. But I really doubt he’s there; it’s school vacation.”

“Can’t hurt to try,” Mike said, picking up the phone. He called information and asked for the Upward Bound Program. I could hear the phone dialing. “Hi, Mr. Sykes. My name Mike Silvia, and I’m a caseworker at the Department of Social Services. I have a client here, Steve Klakowicz, who has spoken very highly of you. Steve was removed from his foster home today



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and needs a place to stay for a few days while we sort out his living situation. Is that possible?”

I rocked gently in my seat, tossing up a silent prayer. I needed this to work. This was it, my last option. Mike held the phone to his ear, and I studied him for any telltale sign that Mr. Sykes was saying yes. Suddenly he switched the phone to his left hand and began to scribble on a piece of paper. “I see, I see,” Mike said. “Well, it would only be for a few days, and I don’t think Steve would mind, not after what he’s been through today.” He talked for a moment longer, twirling his pencil in his hand. Okay, okay.” Then he put the pencil down and shot me a thumbs-up. I let out a huge sigh of relief. For a moment I forgot all about the day’s events, the Robinsons, and my injuries. Though my ribs ached, I exhaled deeply. It was the season of giving, and I had received the greatest gift of all: freedom, and, finally a place to go. ■

*This excerpt from “A Chance in the World: an Orphan boy, a Mysterious Past, and How He Found a Place Called Home” is reprinted with the permission of Steve Pemberton.*



## Pemberton to Give Keynote at Convention

**Steve Pemberton will give the keynote address during the opening general session on Wednesday, Jan. 23 at the 2019 State Education Convention.**

Pemberton’s triumphant life journey, now a major motion picture, is about defying the seemingly insurmountable odds of the path of the unchosen. *A Chance in the World*, drawn from his critically acclaimed memoir of the same title, recounts how Steve was orphaned into foster care, then abandoned and betrayed by the very individuals entrusted with his care. Yet these challenges only fueled his desire to become a man of resilience, determination and vision.

Steve went on to find success as a trail-blazing corporate executive, enlightened people leader, visionary youth advocate and acclaimed speaker devoted to inspiring and helping others. Committed to giving back, Steve timed the nationwide premiere of the film during National Foster Care Awareness month, hoping to raise awareness for children at risk in the child welfare system, especially those aging out of foster care.

Steve has made equality, access and opportunity pillars of both his professional and personal life. He currently serves as Chief Human Resources Officer for Globoforce, a leading provider of social recognition and continuous performance development solutions. Steve is a passionate champion for disadvantaged youth, serving on several boards including the United States Business Leadership Network and UCAN. Steve’s achievements have earned him national recognition, including the prestigious Horizon Award by the United States Congress, presented to individuals in the private sector who have contributed to expanding opportunities for all Americans.

*For more information, visit [WASB.org/convention](http://WASB.org/convention).*

## WISCONSIN SCHOOL BOARD WEEK: October 7 - 13

**The WASB has prepared a kit** which includes a sample press prelease, activities, and more to help school districts recognize their school boards. **Find the kit at [WASB.org](http://WASB.org).** Select “Services & Resources,” “Communication Services” and then “School Board Week.”



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BLR-2314-2c



# Are We Safe?

## TAKE TIME TO LEARN THE DATA

**L**ike many of us, I am fortunate to have attended several safety/security presentations. After each of the presentations, I am usually left with a knot in my stomach, wondering where to start, and what to bring back to implement in my district.

Much like every news story reporting a school killing, these presentations are physiologically powerful, as we all grapple with the sick fact that children are being killed at school. Inevitably, most of the presentations focus on hard-hitting tragedies that really strike a chord with those of us in charge of safety initiatives. Many of us wear numerous hats, including facilities management, energy management or human resources. We have a finite amount of time to study best practice security solutions, find funding, and go through an implementation that can take well over a year for

any given solution. In light of this, it is not only critical that you have the education behind decisions, but also the support of a larger team to help navigate decision making.

In our journey, it was critical to have a data-driven approach to addressing school violence rather than a knee-jerk reaction to the latest fad or product/process being

board, parents, community members and staff. Some of our findings are:

- The Fire Safety Code is clear, concise and effective. It has been a roadmap for over 50 years to ensure schools are compliant, and since its implementation, not a single student has died in a public school fire. Unfortunately, there is very little comparable clarity around school security compliance and best practices.
- The majority of guns used in mass shootings are hand guns and obtained from the home.

**Taking time to learn the data related to school killings has helped our district educate families and calm the anxiety of staff.**

pushed. During this journey, many questions came to mind and we sought guidance from the FBI as well as other reputable studies to better understand the nature of killings in school to help inform processes. Some interesting data was surfaced, and since then, we have been using it as a tool to present to our school

- Mass killings are most common on Monday and Friday, and likely first thing in the morning.
- Mass killings are more likely to occur in a suburban school district, but schools that have a larger minority population are twice as likely to experience gun violence.

- Ninety-eight percent of the time, someone else knew about the killer's plans and 59 percent of those knew about the plan weeks in advance
- The majority of the killers have been male, been previously bullied at school, been in a fight, have low parental involvement, and have had a high level of exposure to media violence.

These are just a few of the findings from hundreds of studies which can help us to examine our practices of identifying at-risk students and security shortcomings and decide where to invest resources.

While it is critical to never underestimate the possibility of a mass killing, it also important to answer the question: "Are we safe?" We owe it to our communities, parents and students to examine this question. Each organization needs to examine their own practices and prioritize opportunities to improve, but here are some of the more encouraging findings:

- Every day more than 55,000,000 students attend school in the U.S. — one of the largest concentrations of people in one setting at one time.
- The odds of a mass shooting at any given school are 1:10,000 years.
- Seventy-nine percent of mass killings occur in settings other than a school.
- For every mass killing we hear about, there are dozens of averted killings. Perpetrators write about their plans, post them on social media, talk about weapons and display their intent. Their peers, teachers, administrators and police have been heroes in more occasions than we'll ever know!
- Killings are NOT random or pointless. They often follow an event or altercation.
- Schools are 226% safer than the home.



With everything in life, it is important to strike a balance between what can be controlled as well as the facts of a situation. Taking time to learn the data related to school killings has helped our district educate families and calm the anxiety of staff. As humans, we are emotionally affected by loss, 100 percent more than gain. This effect can often cloud our vision and our choices. Taking time to logically connect the dots and assess risk on every level with the input of experts can help each of us improve the safety of our districts. As for me ... I feel safer at school than I do going to see a movie, a concert or to the mall with my family. How about you? ■

*Jeremiah Johnson is the director of operations & HR/safety coordinator for the Muskego-Norway School District, and 2nd vice president of the Wisconsin School Safety Coordinators Association.*

## School Safety RESOURCES

Wisconsin School Safety  
Coordinators Association  
**WSSCA.org**

Wisconsin Department  
of Justice – Office of  
School Safety  
**bit.ly/wis-doj-school-safety**

WASB Hot Policy Topics –  
School Safety  
**bit.ly/wasb-school-safety**

## DISCOVER Go365

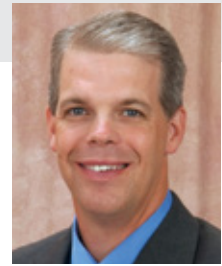
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## Got Flood Insurance?

**A**s you have heard, or have personally experienced, there was a lot of water in Wisconsin this summer. But we are not alone. In fact, in the past five years, all 50 states have experienced floods. According to the U.S. government, the average commercial flood claim in the past five years has been about \$89,000 and the average property damage due to flooding adds up to more than \$3.5 billion annually.

Floods have many causes and can occur anywhere in Wisconsin, but some of the most common events that lead to flooding in the state are:

- **Flash flooding** caused by periods of intense rainfall in a concentrated area;
- **Mudslides** caused by long, heavy rain periods on a hill or cliff, especially along the Mississippi and Wisconsin river valleys;
- **Snowmelt** caused by the still-frozen ground unable to absorb excess water;
- **Ice jams**, which are formed when an ice chunk flowing in a

river or stream blocks, dams or narrows passageways, causing overflow; and/or

- **Urban areas** where there is a lot of asphalt and concrete and water overwhelms the storm sewer system.

The first thing to look for in coverage is your current property policy. Many carriers will carry a sublimit for surface water run-off and actual flood coverage otherwise referred to as water damage. You need to read your policy to see how it is defined for your district's policy. If high winds damage a building and allow water to get in, that is covered under a property policy. For the purposes of this article, we are specifically referring to water from a stream, river or excess rain.

There are plenty of misunderstandings about flood insurance. At TRICOR Insurance, we have compiled some information about the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and its coverage to help you understand its benefits.

### ■ **NFIP Coverage: Who Should Buy It?**

There are two main flood hazard level standards and several sub-categories that the NFIP uses to categorize an organization's risk for flooding and to determine premiums.

Moderate-to-low-risk buildings are classified in zones B, C and X. These zones are outside of the 1 percent annual chance floodplain, are areas of less than 1 percent annual chance of sheet-flow flooding (when local drainage is insufficient) where average depths are less than one foot, are areas of less than 1 percent annual chance of stream flooding where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile, and/or areas protected by levees. Most school property carriers that have flood coverage are including these zones only.

High-risk buildings are classified in zones A and V.

- **Zone A** buildings are within a certain floodplain distance from a river, lake or stream. Most property carriers in Wisconsin exclude Zone A.



**In the past five years, all  
50 states have experienced floods.**

- **Zone V** buildings are within a certain distance from the coast and exposed to natural disasters associated with the ocean.

For a complete list of sub-categories and to map out which zone your schools fall in, visit [floodsmart.gov](http://floodsmart.gov)

### ■ Associated Costs

Flood insurance premiums are based on several factors, which could raise or lower the amount your district would have to pay. These factors include the following:

- Building's age, height and occupancy;
- Your school's location;
- The location of the lowest floor in relation to the elevation requirement on the flood map (only applicable to newer buildings); and/or

- The deductible you choose and the amount of building and contents coverage.

Even though federal disaster assistance is available to flood victims, it is usually in the form of a loan that must be paid back with interest.

### ■ What Gets Covered

There are two types of building flood insurance coverage, you can opt to buy one or both.

- Commercial Contents covers inventory, merchandise, machinery and any other contents your district has up to \$500,000.
- Commercial Building covers your district's building and contents up to \$500,000 each. If your district does not own the building, NFIP will cover up to

10 percent of improvements you made to the space.

In addition to these two types of building coverage, the NFIP will also cover debris removal during the cleanup process. If your district takes steps to protect against or prevent flood damage, you may be eligible for lower rates. For more information on how to protect against the risk of flood damage, go to [bit.ly/fema-po](http://bit.ly/fema-po).

If you have further questions about flood insurance coverage and its provisions, TRICOR Insurance is here to help. Call 1-877-GO-TRICOR to find out how you can extend your coverage to keep your district safe and running — no matter what happens. ■

*John Gibson is a partner and vice president of Program Business at TRICOR Insurance, endorsed agency through the WASB Insurance Plan. For more information, visit [WASB.org](http://WASB.org).*

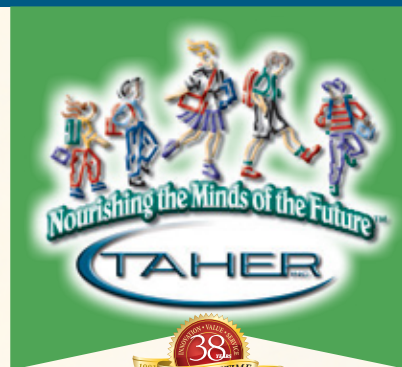
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## New WASB Advocacy Workshops



**A**t last year's fall regional meetings, you may remember filling out a feedback form related to our annual Legislative Advocacy Conference. We wanted to know if you would like an option closer to you and the results were overwhelmingly ... YES!

In response, we are holding five Legislative Advocacy Workshops on weeknights in early-to mid-November at various CESAs around the state. We plan to hold a single, centrally located conference in the fall of 2019 as we have in the past and, depending on the interest in the workshops shown this year, alternate the workshops with a full-day conference annually.

We believe each option can offer our members something different but equally valuable. For a full-day conference, we can invite experts, including legislators, to present on timely topics and provide an insight on legislative affairs. For the workshops, we are excited to have more opportunity for dialogue with attendees and more time to devote to advocacy tips.

We (Dan Rossmiller and Christopher Kulow) are former state legislative staffers. We've taken the calls, read the emails, drafted the response letters to constituents, and sat in the meetings. We will use this experience to share with you how legislative offices work and what are the best ways to develop and maintain a relationship with your legislators (and their staff). The goal will be to help provide guidance on building a

relationship and credibility with your legislators so they will look to you when they need advice or information on K-12 issues.

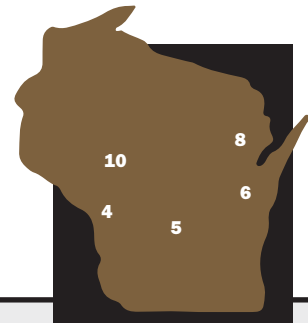
We'll teach you some of the things you should be sure to do to build a solid relationship as well as some things to avoid. For example:

- Your status as a locally elected school board member is an asset and gives you added credibility — don't shy away from that. Always mention your position on the school board when contacting your lawmakers. You are an elected official speaking to another elected official, and you share constituents.
- There are many ways to reach out to your legislators: meetings, phone, email, social media, board resolutions. All methods of communicating can be effective. The important thing is to do it and do it *regularly*.
- Your method of contact is less important than being in regular contact — so use the method that is easiest for you. Be mindful, however, that when time is of the essence, email or a phone call is preferable than mailing a letter.

We realize that, for many of you, school board service is in addition to your full-time work and family responsibilities. We will show you how to make a meaningful impact with your legislators without a major time commitment on your part, utilizing the resources that the

WASB provides. We will also provide attendees with a newly rewritten and updated Legislative Advocacy Toolkit.

This is only a small part of what we'll be talking about at the Legislative Advocacy Workshops in November. Being effective and efficient in your legislative contacts can lead to major benefits for your school district and the children you serve. We look forward to seeing you at a workshop near you! ■



### November 8 at CESA 10

725 W. Park Ave., Chippewa Falls

### November 13 at CESA 4,

923 Garland St. East,  
West Salem

### November 14 at CESA 5

626 E Slifer St., Portage

### November 14 at CESA 6

2300 WI-44, Oshkosh

### November 15 at CESA 8

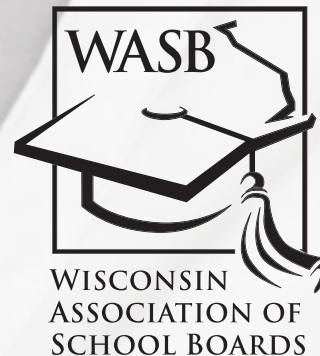
223 W. Park St., Gillett

Your status as a locally elected school board member is an asset and gives you added credibility — don't shy away from that.

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## Legislative Advocacy Workshops

Join the WASB Government Relations (GR) staff for a hands-on, evening workshop on how to develop the kind of relationships with lawmakers and their staff that will make you better, more effective legislative advocates for your students and schools. Both former legislative staff members, the WASB GR team will describe the inner workings of legislative offices with tips on how to make efficient and effective contacts. They will also highlight resources the WASB provides that can help you, discuss challenges you may have experienced in communicating with your state lawmakers, and give practical advice on how to address those challenges. □

See page 24 for more information.

### AGENDA

(all locations)

6 pm – Dinner

6:30 pm – Program

### LOCATIONS

Nov. 8 – CESA 10,  
Chippewa Falls

Nov. 13 – CESA 4,  
West Salem

Nov. 14 – CESA 5,  
Portage

Nov. 14 – CESA 6,  
Oshkosh

Nov. 15 – CESA 8,  
Gillett



## Policy Consulting Services

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## UPCOMING WEBINARS

The WASB hosts a series of webinars throughout the year. Here is a look at the upcoming webinars from the WASB.

### ■ ADMINISTRATOR CONTRACTS

**Oct. 10, 12 – 1 pm** | Presenter: Ben Richter, Staff Counsel

This presentation covers all aspects of administrator contracts, including the drafting of contracts, contract terms, application of section 118.24 Wis. Stat. to administrator nonrenewals and more. State and federal court decisions on administrator contracts, including the *Klaus v. Eau Claire School District* case, will be covered.

### ■ ELECTION NOTICES & PROCEDURES

**Nov. 7, 12 – 1 pm** | Presenter: Dan Mallin, Legal and Policy Services Counsel

Wisconsin school districts must comply with numerous statutory obligations related to elections, and this presentation will cover key deadlines, required notices, and post-election processes. This webinar will be of particular interest to school district clerks and to superintendents' administrative assistants (who often assist with election duties).

### ■ FMLA – STATE & FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

**Dec. 5, 12 – 1 pm** | Presenter: Barry Forbes, Associate Executive Director and Staff Counsel

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 men and women and their families. Employer notice and documentation requirements will be covered along with employer and employee rights and obligations during and after FMLA leaves.

**Please note:** These and all previous webinars 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 WASB Webinars page at WASB.org. In addition, links to past webinars are available in the Policy Resource Guide.

## 2018 REPORT TO THE MEMBERSHIP

### Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Inc. Condensed Statement of Activities for the Year Ending June 30, 2018

REVENUE	
Membership Dues	\$ 1,886,869
Program Revenue	\$ 2,035,724
Interest & Investment Related Income	\$ 43,250
Other Income	\$ 34,125
Total Revenue	<u>\$ 3,999,968</u>
EXPENSES	
Program Expense	\$ 2,748,604
Office Operations	\$ 1,031,859
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 3,780,463</u>
Change in Unrestricted Net Assets-Operating	\$ 219,505
Depreciation & Other Non-Operating Expenses	\$ 87,406
Change in Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>\$ 132,099</u>

### Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Inc. Condensed Statement of Financial Position, June 30, 2018

ASSETS	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Investments, Cash, & Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,066,403
Accounts Receivable	\$ 235,178
Deferred Costs & Prepaid Expenses	\$ 132,118
Accrued Interest Receivable	\$ 3,651
Total Current Assets	<u>\$ 1,437,350</u>
<b>Long Term Investments</b>	\$ 1,396,000
<b>Property &amp; Equipment, Net</b>	<u>\$ 103,020</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<u><u>\$ 2,936,370</u></u>
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
Deferred Revenue	\$ 520,122
Accounts Payable, Payroll Taxes, & Benefits Payable	\$ 247,503
Short Term Portion of Capital Lease	\$ 11,519
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$ 779,144</u>
<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>	
Long Term Portion of Capital Lease	\$ 6,593
Total Liabilities	<u>\$ 785,737</u>
<b>Net Assets</b>	
Unrestricted	\$ 2,121,317
Temporarily Restricted	\$ 29,316
Total Net Assets	<u>\$ 2,150,633</u>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<u><u>\$ 2,936,370</u></u>



## Remote Participation in Board Meetings

For some time, technology has provided board members with the ability to effectively participate in board meetings remotely, either by tele- or video-conference (“remote participation”). Notwithstanding this capacity, remote participation is still not in wide use. In fact, a proposal considered by the Wisconsin Association of School Boards Delegate Assembly in 2003 expressing WASB support for the legal authority to permit board members to participate remotely, including voting, was defeated by a large majority.<sup>1</sup> In addition, there has been very little statutory or other legal guidance expressly establishing the legality of remote participation and the conditions under which such participation would be appropriate.

Given this legal void, it is difficult to provide definitive answers on issues surrounding the legality of allowing remote participation and the conditions under which such participation would be permitted. While the statutes and legal authority governing board meetings suggest that remote participation is not prohibited by law, the decision whether to permit such participation and under what conditions is ultimately up to each board. This *Legal Comment* will review the limited legal authorities governing remote participation and outline the issues boards should consider when deciding whether to allow board members to participate remotely.

### ■ Is Remote Participation Legal?

Statutes and other legal authority that govern board meetings were written prior to the development and improvement of electronic means of communicating and do not directly address them. Thus, there is no definitive legal authority regarding the legality of remote participation at board meetings. However, the language used in the relevant legal authorities provides some insight into the issue.

For example, Wis. Stat. s. 120.11 states that a board shall hold a regular meeting “at a time and place” determined by the board and may hold special board meetings “at the time and place” designated by the board president. Further, this statute provides that a majority of the board members constitute a quorum “at a regular or special school board meeting.” This language suggests that, at a minimum, a quorum of the board must be present in the same physical location. It does not, on its face however, require that board members who do not constitute the quorum must also be physically present in the same location as the quorum.

The Wisconsin Open Meetings Law (“Open Meetings Law”) is similarly less than clear on this issue. On the one hand, the law requires that board meetings be held in open session (unless a statutory exception applies), which must be held “in a place reasonably accessible to members of the public and open to all citizens at all times.”<sup>2</sup> This

suggests the physical presence of board members. However, the law defines a “meeting” as the “convening of members of a governmental body for the purpose of exercising the responsibilities, authority, power or duties delegated to or vested in the body.”<sup>3</sup> This language does not suggest that the physical presence of members at one location is required in order to constitute a “meeting” subject to the notice requirements of the law. This is consistent with the Wisconsin Supreme Court’s recognition that a board can violate the Open Meetings Law through “walking quorums” in which a series of communications occur between individual board members, each involving less than a quorum of the board, which results in an agreement by sufficient members of the board to determine the course of action of the board on a given issue.<sup>4</sup> The creation of a “walking quorum” is not dependent on a quorum of the board convening in one physical location.

The Wisconsin attorney general has opined that a telephone conference qualifies as the convening of members of a governmental body (which includes boards) under the Open Meetings Law.<sup>5</sup> In that opinion, the attorney general concluded that if a quorum of a governmental body is present in a teleconference, “the meeting is rebuttably presumed to be for the purpose of exercising the responsibilities, authority, power or duties delegated to or vested in the body” and that the

A board should, as a matter of proper governance, adopt a policy if it wants to permit remote access participation.

# Get ready for Convention.

## Important dates and deadlines for the 98th Joint State Education Convention

**January 23-25, 2019**

*DOWNTOWN MILWAUKEE*



### Important Upcoming Convention Dates:

- **NOV. 1** — Convention registration opens.
- **NOV. 9** — Deadline for art competition and student video team.
- **DEC. 1** — Convention app releases.
- **DEC. 15** — Deadline for early bird registration.
- **DEC. 17 - JAN. 8** — Convention room blocks close (check with your hotel). Please try to cancel unneeded room before this date to allow other districts to access the special convention rates.

**For more information, visit:**  
**[wasb.org/convention](http://wasb.org/convention)**



board has “convened” in the sense that the board “can effectively communicate and exercise the authority vested in the body.”

This led the attorney general to address whether boards can meet telephonically under the Open Meetings Law. In concluding that they can, the attorney general focused on the requirement that such meetings be “reasonably accessible.” The attorney general concluded that this did not necessarily require that meetings be held at a physical location and that a telephone conference meeting could be considered “reasonably accessible” if the public and news media can effectively monitor it by means of speakers. In reaching this conclusion, the attorney general noted several situations in which this form of remote access would be inappropriate, including hearings in which the ability to view the demeanor of participants or documents utilized in the discussion is an essential component of board member decision-making.

These authorities suggest that remote participation by one or more board members is not prohibited, provided that a quorum of the board is actually present at a location reasonably accessible to the public and the meeting has been appropriately noticed under the Open Meetings Law. In addition, they suggest that a remotely participating member must be able to hear the board and public dialogue, and the board and public must be able to hear the remotely participating board member.

### ■ Does the ability to remotely participate in a board meeting include the right to vote?

While board members may not decide matters via electronic voting (such as voting through email) even if the board later ratifies the result of the electronic vote at a properly noticed meeting,<sup>6</sup> there is nothing in the statutes or other authorities that suggests that the ability to participate in a discussion remotely does not include the right to vote. As a matter of best practice, however, and

given the fact that it may be difficult to distinguish the remotely participating member’s voice vote, any vote taken by the board in which remote participation is used should be by roll call to unequivocally record how that remotely participating board member voted.

### ■ Are there situations in which a board member should not be allowed to participate remotely?

As recognized by the Wisconsin attorney general, board meetings involving hearings in which the demeanor of witnesses and the review of documentary evidence is a part of the board’s decision-making process are not conducive to remote access. This would include expulsion hearings, disciplinary and personnel hearings, non-renewal conferences, and any other quasi-judicial proceedings. Such subject matters usually involve testimony and exhibits, all of which can only be properly evaluated by board members who are physically present.

Remote access is also inappropriate with respect to subject matters that involve decision-making that is aided and impacted by demonstrations, handouts, exhibits, PowerPoint presentations, or videos made or used at a meeting and which a remotely participating board member cannot view or does not have access to. Remotely participating members should be provided with these documents either in advance or have access to them electronically during the course of the meeting. Any type of physical presentation utilizing documents or otherwise to which the remotely participating board members do not have access similarly creates a situation which would caution against remote participation.

Finally, remote access is problematic with respect to closed sessions. The concern in this situation is whether remotely participating members are located at a place where no one else is able to hear what transpires during the closed session. One

way to address this confidentiality concern is to preclude remote participation for closed sessions. However, the confidentiality of every closed session depends upon, in large measure, the integrity, credibility, and veracity of the board members present to ensure that confidentiality. Another way to address the issue is to require a remotely participating member to verbally affirm on the record that no one else is present with the board member at the remote access location who can hear the closed session proceedings.

### ■ Are boards required to adopt a policy specifically permitting remote access?

A board should, as a matter of proper governance, adopt a policy if it wants to permit remote access participation and may be required to do so. Many boards designate by policy Robert’s Rules of Order (“Robert’s Rules”)<sup>7</sup> as their governing rules for board procedures. Under Robert’s Rules, a board may only permit remote participation if its policies specifically permit the board to do so. Even in the absence of a policy establishing Robert’s Rules as the board’s parliamentary guidelines, a board should have in place a policy addressing whether remote participation is permitted and under what terms.

Robert’s Rules suggests several topics that should be addressed by board policy. For example, meetings must be conducted in such a way that all members participating can hear each other at the same time, and Robert’s Rules recommends that board policies be adopted to specify the equipment required to participate as well as the methods for seeking recognition, obtaining the floor, submitting motions in writing, determining the presence of a quorum, and taking and verifying votes.<sup>8</sup> Robert’s Rules emphasizes that to preserve the deliberative nature of a board meeting, the remote participation must be such as to allow simultaneous interaction between the

participants. Thus, under Robert's Rules, remote participation by emails or chat rooms is not recommended.

### ■ When and how often should board members be allowed to participate remotely?

The circumstances under which a board may allow its members to remotely participate is for each board to determine. However, notwithstanding technological advances that have made it easier to conduct board business remotely with quality sound and images, the statutes governing board meetings, while not expressly prohibiting remote participation, contemplate the physical presence of members accessible to the public. The fact that the 2003 WASB resolution failed by a large margin and the lack of legislative or other legal authority addressing this issue further suggests a preference for actual physical attendance at board meetings.

Given that background, boards can adopt policy guidelines that permit remote participation in limited circumstances and establish board expectations for regular physical attendance at board meetings for all board members. Such a policy could limit remote attendance to circumstances in which a board member is unable to be physically present because of (1) personal illness or disability, (2) employment or district business, (3) a family member illness or emergency, or (4) other circumstances in which the board approves remote attendance by majority vote. In addition, boards could adopt a policy in which individual board members are limited in the number of times in a given time period that they can participate remotely absent extenuating circumstances. For example, one such policy might state that a "member shall not participate remotely more than two (2) times during a calendar year; however, the board, by majority vote, may allow a board member to participate remotely more than two times when circumstances justify such added

remote participation." Board policy should also consider who determines whether the board member has satisfied the policy requirements for remote participation. That determination could be made by the board president, subject to any board member raising a point of order seeking consideration of that decision by the full board (other than the remotely participating member).

### ■ What process should be followed to allow remote participation?

In order to make sure that the necessary technology and contact information is in place, a board member who desires to remotely participate should provide advance notice to the board president and district superintendent. Board policy could require that the board member provide notice of the member's intent to participate remotely at least one business day in advance of the meeting. That time frame mirrors the 24-hour posting requirement of the Open Meetings Law, and boards should consider whether to note on the board agenda the fact that a member may participate remotely in the meeting.

At any meeting in which a board member is participating remotely, the board president should announce before the roll call that a board member has requested to participate remotely pursuant to board policy. The roll call of the board members physically present should then be taken and a determination made that there is a quorum of the board physically present at the meeting. If so, the board president should confirm that the remotely participating member is present remotely and can hear all the other board members and that the other board members can hear the remotely participating board member, and that the board member has received all the material received by the other board members. The meeting minutes should reflect these facts and other prerequisites adopted

by the board for remote participation. During the meeting, the board president bears the burden of making sure that the remotely participating board member has the opportunity to provide input and ask questions at the times that those members who are physically present are able to do so.

### ■ Conclusion

We interpret the statutes and other legal authority governing board meetings as requiring a quorum of board members to be physically present at the place of the meeting, but not prohibiting other members from remotely participating. However, whether to allow board members to remotely participate at board meetings is a policy decision for each board and is not, in our opinion, required by statutes, parliamentary procedure, or any other legal authority. If a board decides to allow remote participation, the board should adopt a policy to that effect and identify the circumstances under which such participation would be permitted. ■

### ■ End Notes

1. WASB Resolution 03-15, "School Board Communication."
2. Wis. Stat. ss. 19.82(3) and 19.83(1).
3. Wis. Stat. s. 19.82(2).
4. *State ex. rel. Newspapers, Inc. v. Showers*, 135 Wis. 2d 77, 398 N.W.2d 154 (1987); *State ex. rel. Lynch v. Conta*, 71 Wis. 2d 662, 239 N.W.2d 313 (1976).
5. 69 Wis. Op. Att'y Gen. 143 (1980) (OAG 39-80).
6. *Informal Opinion of Wis. Att'y Gen to Stephanie Jones*, I-01-10 (Jan. 25, 2010).
7. Henry M. Robert III et al., *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised* (11th Ed. 2011).
8. *Id.* at 97-99.

*This Legal Comment was written by Michael J. Julka and Steven C. Zach, Boardman & Clark LLP, WASB Legal Counsel.*

*For additional information, see Wisconsin School News, "Board Agendas, Voting and Minutes" (April 2017) and "Wisconsin's Open Meetings Law and Communicating with Technology" (November 2001).*

# Advice for Tackling School Finance Challenges

## SERVICE ASSOCIATE Q & A

**Q.** *What basic tenets of school finance should school board members understand?*

**A.** School board members should understand and know the district's fiscal policies, how the state biennial budget can affect school funding and their specific district, and the basics of Wisconsin school district funding, including the revenue limit formula, state equalization and categorical aids, the components of the tax levy and mill rate, outstanding debt of the district, and what fund balance is (and isn't). Board members should also know how district spending supports their students, programs, curriculum, facilities and other district priorities. Why are all of these topics important? School finance affects your district's ability to maintain, create and enhance educational opportunities for your students!

**Q.** *What are some of the bigger school finance issues that schools are currently dealing with?*

**A.** One of the biggest school finance issues today is the uncertainty of the state budget and future funding available to schools. Knowing and anticipating potential impacts can be difficult, especially within the complexity of Wisconsin's funding formulas. Creating additional challenges, the proposals presented can be positive for some districts and negative for others, creating disagreements among districts and challenges for the organizations that support them.

**Q.** *Is there any broad advice you can give to schools to avoid or fix some of these financial challenges?*

**A.** Many districts have found early

analysis of possible proposals and their potential district-specific impacts is key. This is why having a basic understanding of school finance is important. For example, recent legislation increased the revenue limit low-revenue ceiling. Some districts will see an immediate increase in revenue limit authority because of this new legislation, some will see an increase within the next few years, and others will see no change at all. In this example, one must first know the proposal, have a general understanding of the school finance topic(s) it affects, and, additionally, know the potential short- and long-term district-specific outcome.

One piece of advice I would give to school board members is to continue to learn about school finance so they may understand and have the ability to communicate the financial picture of the district. This takes time. Additionally, be sure to utilize a budget forecast tool to analyze potential changes and to determine what your district's fiscal challenges may be in the years to come. Finally, be sure to look beyond the current budget year. When short-term decisions are made with the long-term impact in mind, you've put your district in the best position to maintain, support and enhance student opportunities.

**Q.** *Are there any new school finance tools or resources schools can use to support good financial health in their district?*

**A.** Your district will also benefit from using a budget forecasting tool, such as the Baird Budget Forecast Model to help with your planning



**Debby Brunett** is a school business specialist with Baird Public Finance



needs and analysis. This tool is also beneficial when issuing debt where you attain a credit rating. Rating agencies request to see a recent version and view it as a credit positive if one is maintained. A relatively new resource is the WISEdash public portal. It provides statistical data for Wisconsin public schools which includes enrollment, staffing, assessment, financial, etc. We're also really excited about our new Baird Video Library (BVL) offered through the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators. The BVL includes more than 100 short, interactive videos on school finance that can help school boards, administrators, business officials and community stakeholders learn more about various school finance topics — from a general overview to the step-by-step how-tos. ■

*The WASB Service Associates Program includes businesses and organizations that have been recognized by the WASB Board of Directors as reputable businesses and partners of public education in Wisconsin. For more information, visit [wasb.org](http://wasb.org) and select "Service Associates."*



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Scherrer Construction has been partnering with school districts for over 88 years to deliver successful, quality projects that positively impact students and communities today and for years to come.

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### Financing, Banking, Consulting

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**SUPPORTING, PROMOTING AND ADVANCING PUBLIC EDUCATION**



## **2018 WASB LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY WORKSHOPS**

***NOVEMBER 8-15, 2018***

Join the WASB Government Relations staff for a hands-on, evening workshop on how to develop the kind of relationships with lawmakers and their staff that will make you a better, more effective legislative advocate for your students and your schools. They will also highlight resources the WASB provides that can help you, discuss challenges you may have experienced in communicating with your state lawmakers, and give practical advice on how to address those challenges.



### **Agenda:**

- 6 pm - Dinner
- 6:30-9 pm Workshop



### **Dates & Locations**

Thursday, Nov. 8	CESA 10	725 W Park Ave, Chippewa Falls
Tuesday, Nov. 13	CESA 4	923 Garland St E, West Salem
Wednesday, Nov. 14	CESA 5	626 E Slifer St, Portage
Wednesday, Nov. 14	CESA 6	2300 State Road 44, Oshkosh
Thursday, Nov. 15	CESA 8	223 W Park St, Gillett

***VISIT [WASB.ORG](http://WASB.ORG) FOR COMPLETE  
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