



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. Box 7882 • Madison, WI 53707-7882

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For more information contact:
Speaker Robin Vos (608) 266-3387
Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald (608) 266-5660

Legislative Leaders Announce Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding

Madison...The leaders of the Wisconsin State Legislature are creating the first ever legislative commission, the Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding. Under the leadership of co-chairs Rep. Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay) and Sen. Luther Olsen (R-Ripon), the commission will examine how tax dollars are distributed to schools and make recommendations to better meet the needs of students across Wisconsin.

“The school funding formula was first created in the 1970’s and a review hasn’t been done in 20 years,” said Speaker Vos. “Times have changed, state demographics have changed, and of course, schools have changed; it’s time to examine the way we pay for schools.”

“Every child should have access to a quality education in Wisconsin,” said Sen. Fitzgerald. “With declining enrollments in more than half of the state’s school districts, a thorough analysis is necessary to ensure the process is transparent, equitable and delivers excellent schools today and in the future.”

The Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding involves members of the legislature and experts in the field of education.

- Rep. Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay), Co-Chair
- Sen. Luther Olsen, (R-Ripon), Co-Chair
- Sen. Alberta Darling (R-River Hills)
- Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green)
- Sen. Kathleen Vinehout (D-Alma)
- Rep. Cody Horlacher (R-Mukwonago)
- Rep. Romaine Quinn (R-Rice Lake)
- Rep. Sody Pope (D-Mt. Horeb)
- Rep. Jason Fields (D-Glendale)
- Ted Neitzke, CEO, CESA 6
- Dr. Michelle Langenfeld, Superintendent, Green Bay Area Public Schools
- Dr. Joni Burgin, Superintendent, Grantsburg School District
- Dan Rossmiller, Director of Government Relations, Wisconsin Association of School Boards
- Lori Saqer, Director of Business Operations, Messmer Catholic Schools, Inc.
- Dr. Julie Underwood, Professor, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, UW-Madison
- Dr. Bill Hughes, Chief Academic Officer, Seton Catholic Schools

The commission will hold its first meeting this month. Beginning next year, the commission will travel around the state conducting public hearings to learn more about school funding issues in Wisconsin. Recommendations will be given to legislative leaders before the end of the session.