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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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News Release

UW System studies teacher education enrollments, incentives

Task Force for Advancing Teachers and School Leaders will develop recommendations

MADISON, Wis. – The University of Wisconsin System is pleased to announce the creation of a task force to help identify how UW System institutions can better meet Wisconsin's need for more teachers and school leaders.

An eight-member UW System Task Force for Advancing Teachers and School Leaders in the State of Wisconsin will produce a report and recommendations by May 1, 2019, for presentation to the UW System Board of Regents Education Committee in June. The task force will be led by Diana Hess, Dean of UW-Madison's top-ranked School of Education, and Deborah Kerr, president-elect of AASA, the national School Superintendents Association, and current Superintendent of the Brown Deer School District.

"This task force is committed to working with stakeholders across Wisconsin to find innovative solutions aimed at addressing Wisconsin's teacher shortages. We look forward to bringing together partners from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin's teacher preparation programs, and the vast PK-12 community to propose ways to increase access to teacher education and school leadership programs," Hess said. "High-quality educators are an investment in Wisconsin's future and serve as catalysts of opportunity by helping children in every corner of our state."

"All of our Wisconsin school children deserve to have the best and brightest teachers in their lives," Kerr said. "We are looking forward to working collaboratively to identify best practices for teacher recruitment and retention and collectively create a plan of action. Our Wisconsin educational system can only continue to grow, thrive, and excel with a vibrant workforce."

In June 2017, Regent Regina Millner started a discussion among the Board about the reduced enrollment at UW System Schools and Colleges of Education, which is leading to significant impacts on rural areas and in high-need subject areas. Over the past year, the Education Committee, which Millner chairs, heard from a variety of experts on the subject.

In December, the Regents asked the UW System Office of Academic and Student Affairs to create a task force to present a series of proposals that address challenges and questions related to such enrollments.

The challenges include:

- Significant declines in enrollments in teacher education, teacher certification, and school leadership programs;
- The low number of certified teachers and administrators graduating from UW System institutions – especially relative to the demand.

The task force will address how the UW System can work with stakeholders to improve college affordability, reduce student loan debt, address teacher workforce shortages in Wisconsin, and increase access to teacher education and school leadership programs in the UW System. It will also focus attention on understanding the concerns of communities, district administrators, school leaders, teachers, students, and parents while also raising the esteem of teaching in Wisconsin.

"We welcome the opportunity to help put forward solutions to Wisconsin's most pressing challenges," said UW System President Ray Cross. "Whether it is economic development, research, or education, the UW System will be on the frontlines in offering its experience to help make a better Wisconsin."

Other task force members are:

- Gary Albrecht, Commissioner, CESA Statewide Network and Interim School Superintendent, Wauzeka-Steuben School District
- John Ashley, Executive Director, Wisconsin Association of School Boards
- Mary Gulbrandsen, Executive Director, Fund for Wisconsin Scholars
- Kim Kaukl, Executive Director, Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance
- Carmen Manning, Dean, UW-Eau Claire College of Education and Human Sciences
- Carolyn Stanford Taylor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Others may be added to the task force.

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