

September 2012

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The excitement of the new school year is upon us. Perhaps it is your child's first day of kindergarten; a move from elementary to middle school; or your young adult's last year of high school. No matter the circumstance, our schools and educators are ready to work with you to make sure every child has the knowledge and skills needed for success in college and career.

Wisconsin has a long tradition of excellent schools, something reflected in our students' solid performance on Advanced Placement and college entrance exams as well as our nation-leading high school graduation rate. This is not enough. We must continue improving and make sure all of our students are well prepared for the realities of the global economy.

To continue moving education forward, we are advancing several important education initiatives and setting goals through "Agenda 2017," a comprehensive plan for education reform. Agenda 2017 specifically will

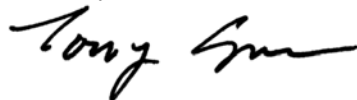
- Increase Wisconsin's graduation rate as well as college and career readiness.
- Close graduation and career and college readiness gaps.
- Increase the percentage of students scoring proficient in third-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics, key indicators of future success.
- Work to adopt the Fair Funding for Our Future plan to make school finance more equitable and transparent.

As parents and guardians, you are essential in helping your child learn. At the elementary level, it's important to read to and with your child. For students at any grade level, ask questions about the school day; find out which subjects are easiest or present the most challenge. Talk to your child's teacher.

As your children move to middle school and high school, they may think they don't need you, but setting expectations and serving as a sounding board are invaluable to a teenager. Know your child's friends. Help your student begin identifying academic strengths and career interests. Above all, make sure your child attends school. The habits of school attendance start in kindergarten and establish a pattern for success in school and in life.

Public education in Wisconsin is one of our great economic and social strengths. Agenda 2017 sets aggressive but achievable goals to improve student learning, promote safe and healthy school environments, and increase students' chances of academic success. Together, we can make sure every child graduates ready for college and career. I wish you and your student the best for the 2012-13 school year.

Sincerely,



Tony Evers, PhD
State Superintendent

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