

## News Release

Education Information Services ■ 125 South Webster Street ■ P.O. Box 7841 ■ Madison, WI 53707-7841 ■ (608) 266-3559

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI-NR 2012-24

Friday, January 27, 2012

Contact: Patrick Gasper, DPI Communications Officer, (608) 266-3559

### Evers again asks Assembly to honor promise to close voucher loophole

*Off-line discussion regarding voucher legislation highlights need for action*

MADISON — State Superintendent Tony Evers repeated his call to Assembly Republicans to take up legislation to close the voucher school expansion loophole created in the 2011-13 state budget.

“While legislators are on record that they only intended to expand vouchers to Racine, the language in the 2011-13 state budget act allowed voucher programs to expand beyond Milwaukee and Racine without legislative oversight or community input. Senator Ellis and Representative Vos promised to honor an agreement by Republican lawmakers, leadership, and the Governor to limit the voucher expansion to Racine through separate legislation after the budget debate was over.

“In fact, Senator Ellis and Representative Vos introduced bills to correct this voucher expansion loophole, limiting the program to Milwaukee and Racine. Both Senate Bill 174 and Assembly Bill 314 received unanimous support in public hearings last fall, and both the Senate and Assembly education committees have recommended passage of the bills. Recent media coverage detailing an ‘off-line’ discussion by legislators on this matter highlights the need for the Assembly to quickly take action and close the voucher expansion loophole.

“Unfortunately, the Green Bay Area Public Schools were inaccurately portrayed during this after-hours legislative discussion. The greater Green Bay community should be proud of the work being done in the Green Bay Area Public Schools to prepare students for success in college or career. In the face of growing statewide poverty, Green Bay schools continue to excel.

“If we look specifically at Preble High School, they beat the state average in reading and mathematics, while maintaining a graduation rate of 89.7%, essentially equal to the overall Wisconsin graduation rate of 89.9%, which is the highest state graduation rate in the nation. I congratulate Superintendent Langenfeld and all the educators and administrators in Green Bay Area Public Schools for their dedication and hard work on behalf of the students and parents in Green Bay.

“Once again, I call on Assembly Republicans to take action, as promised, to close the voucher expansion loophole, which the Governor has indicated he would sign into law.”

###

**NOTE:** This news release is available electronically at [http://www.dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2012\\_24.pdf](http://www.dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2012_24.pdf). Superintendent Evers’ earlier statement on the matter is available at [http://www.dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2012\\_10.pdf](http://www.dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2012_10.pdf).