

Editorial: School panel must address right issues

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With their different views about the cuts for K-12 **education** in the state budget still fresh, it would be easy for Gov. Scott Walker and Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Evers to steer clear of each other.

So it's to their credit that they've joined in establishing a panel to design a system to hold the state's public schools accountable for their performance in **educating** kids.

It's always good to see people who frequently oppose each other instead working together for solutions. Walker and Evers definitely fit the bill of opposing perspectives, so it'll be interesting to see what the panel comes up with — even if it, disappointingly, doesn't include the Wisconsin Education Association Council, the state's largest **teachers** union.

But there are a couple of points that need to be made to those working on the effort.

Looking at **school** accountability, their main trick is going to be figuring out how to measure it. What's valid to measure and what isn't? Is there a risk in devising a system that will force schools to teach to high-stakes tests even more than they do now? And how much are high-stakes test

results an indication of the kind of education our students will need in the economy they'll face?

While the panel is focused on accountability, there's no way to remove that from the issue of equity in school funding. That doesn't mean increasing the pot of money given to K-12 education. It means finding a better way to divide it, based on each **school district's** needs.

School funding is an integral part of the education equation in Wisconsin. Failing to address it will leave a hole in whatever achievements the panel is able to make.

We're glad the group is being formed. But we also want to make sure it's tackling the right issues to truly have a positive impact on education in Wisconsin.

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