

Excerpts from remarks of Wisconsin's Superintendent of the Year, Joe Schroeder (Muskego-Norway School District), at the Wisconsin State Education Convention, Jan. 20, 2011:

“... I humbly submit to you today my strong beliefs that the people in this room and beyond be RESOLVED around two things:

- 1) Be resolved to develop a fair and sustainable school funding formula in this state while
- 2) Be resolved to simultaneously transform the way we do business in public education that adapts with the times.

“In regard to the first proposed resolution regarding a fair and sustainable school funding formula, State Superintendent Evers' Fair Funding for Our Future Plan is the best proposal I have seen in over a decade and allows citizens to have a responsible conversation that is long overdue. In looking back at the bills introduced over the past several years, you might hope to find at least one serious piece of legislation that was crafted to solve the problems within the school funding system—but I'm afraid you would come up empty....

“Given this situation, I am particularly appreciative of Supt. Evers's initiative to provide real leadership on this deeply important, statewide issue at the heart of Wisconsin's future. And I believe strongly that his leadership in this area deserves our vocal support....

“Now I acknowledge the challenges of the current economy and note that the Fair Funding for our Futures proposal would require some additional revenues to implement. Still, budgets are about priorities, and I believe that our state's future, through the quality of our children's education, should be among those vital few budget priorities. Furthermore, this proposal addresses the key policy issues at play in our broken state school funding formula and provides state government a **tremendous** opportunity to address and correct a major concern of Wisconsin families for over a decade. And working Wisconsin families like mine have long held such beliefs, ones that historically have made Wisconsin a highly successful and thriving place for building a stronger future and an honorable legacy for our children and grandchildren. In my opinion, our elected officials, as civic stewards, bear a responsibility to embrace these issues of our day and find a path forward for the long-term because Wisconsin needs a funding formula that will sustain public education, even in difficult financial times. And as citizens of this fair state, we ALL bear a responsibility, as civic stewards, to convey such an expectation to them.

“We stand at a crossroads. What will we be **resolved** to do? When it is our time to hand the torch off to our successors, our children and grandchildren, will time have shown us to have faithfully served their interests and those of our state's future – or not?”