

News Release

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

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Contact: Tom McCarthy, DPI Communications Director, (608) 266-3559

Evers announces redesigned Business Friends of Education program

MADISON — A program to recognize businesses that support their local public schools and students is getting a fresh start today as the State Superintendent’s Business Friends of Education.

“Throughout Wisconsin, businesses partner with schools to help kids gain valuable skills,” said State Superintendent Tony Evers in announcing the launch of the redesigned program. “Recognizing the positive benefits these relationships provide and encouraging other businesses to engage with their local schools is of great importance if we want to be successful in preparing every child for college and careers.”

Any Wisconsin business or business-related organization or nonprofit group that is fostering good relationships with their local public schools can submit an application to join the State Superintendent’s Business Friends of Education. Applications will be verified by a panel of industry professionals. Upon certification, the State Superintendent’s Business Friends of Education will be recognized at one of four levels — bronze, silver, gold, or platinum — based on the extent of their support and involvement in local schools. In addition to public recognition, the revamped program will establish a network of successful business-education partnerships that can provide examples and assistance to other businesses and schools seeking to develop and expand their partnerships.

“Wisconsin is already a leader in providing work-based learning opportunities to kids,” continued Evers. “But if we want to continue to grow and expand offerings, finding ways to share local models of success and recognizing people who go the extra mile is key.”

The original Business Friends of Education started in Wisconsin in 2002 as an annual awards program through which a small number of business-education partnerships were recognized. The program is being redefined to strengthen partnerships with public schools, ensure all such partnerships have an opportunity to be recognized, and provide a network of successful business-education partnerships for continued success.

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NOTES: The [online application and information about the Superintendent’s Business Friends of Education](http://dpi.wi.gov/business-friends) can be found at <http://dpi.wi.gov/business-friends>. This news release is available electronically at https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2017_33.pdf. A video message from State Superintendent Evers can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ADG4Gz28Vs>.