

State of Education Address Excerpts

September 16, 2010 — State Capitol Rotunda, Madison

By State Superintendent Tony Evers

MADISON — Today, Wisconsin State Superintendent Tony Evers delivered his second annual State of Education address to an audience of educators, policymakers, and citizens interested in the education of the state's school children. Some excerpts from his speech follow.

As your state superintendent, I am humbled by the work that goes on in public schools across Wisconsin to help children become active citizens, productive and skilled workers, and leaders in our communities. I am tremendously proud of the accomplishments of our public schools and libraries. At the same time, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels.

We are reforming and modernizing student testing in Wisconsin by phasing out the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (WKCE) and leading national efforts to build a new multi-state student assessment system. In the meantime, we will continue to administer the WKCE assessment to meet federal and state accountability requirements. My budget proposal will include incentives for school districts to: provide students in grades three through eight an online, adaptive benchmark assessment tool, the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP), and adopt a set of college and career readiness tests of students — the EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT.

Our commitment to “Every Child a Graduate” relies upon highly effective teachers. First of all, we must redouble our effort to increase the numbers of National Board Certified educators in Wisconsin, a fine example of measuring individual effectiveness. It is also critical that we move forward as a state to create an educator performance system that improves student learning and informs professional development.

My “Fair Funding for Our Future” framework is a school finance plan that outlines reforms that — taken together — will create a fair, sustainable, and transparent school funding system without raising statewide taxes.

Last year in this address I said, “Expect more to come.” More has come. More will come.

Teaching, learning, and improving — each of these — making our strong schools and libraries better — is about hard steady work. It cannot fall victim to fads and political turmoil. We know that real, serious change takes time and must be done right. We have set ambitious goals, and we will need your support to achieve them. Let's work for our kids and their parents, our educators, and for Wisconsin's future.

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Tony Evers is Wisconsin's state superintendent of public instruction.