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January 15, 2007

Governor Jim Doyle
P.O. Box 7863
Madison, WI 53707

RE: WAES and School Funding

Dear Governor Doyle,

This past November, the Stevens Point Area Public School District successfully passed a three-year non-recurring referendum of \$26.4 million, to exceed the revenue cap for operational expenses. While completing our referendum process, the district also approved support for the Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools, WAES. The WAES connection is one avenue that the district is using to support some relief in the K-12 education funding formula.

During the third year of this referendum, 2010, the district will face the task of preparing to once again ask the local voters for additional tax dollars. The passing of the 2007-2010 referendum spoke to the point that the citizens of the Stevens Point Area Public School District support K-12 public education; however, we are already hearing questions about the district's financial future and what will happen when the referendum expires.

Part of addressing the funding formula would be addressing raising revenue through referendum, due to inadequate state funding. This has been the practice for the past several years. Our district has already, in the past decade, cut nearly \$8.5 million from the operating budget and gone to referendum eight times, asking for additional revenue. Our success rate is about 60%. Further cuts would compromise the quality of education and opportunities for the students we serve.

The Stevens Point Area Public School District is not alone in this situation of budgeting by referendum. As the Governor, you have the power and leverage to put school funding back on track. We ask that you listen, with open ears, to the concerns of the citizens in our community, and throughout the State of Wisconsin. We urge you to make the funding formula a top priority for you and your fellow lawmakers.

Sincerely,

Bette Lang

Bette A. Lang, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Stevens Point Area Public School District

C: School Board Members
Long-Range/Strategic Planning Committee Members