

January 5, 2007

Governor Jim Doyle
PO Box 7863
Madison WI 53707

Dear Governor Doyle:

I am writing on behalf of the Three Lakes School District as a partner in the Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools. The Three Lakes School District represents approximately 2,500 voting constituents who are struggling with ever-increasing property taxes. Our constituents know that education and the future of our students, as well as students around the state, are in jeopardy because of the way we fund our public schools.

Citizens of the Three Lakes School District have passed two referendums to exceed the levy limit, even though we receive minimal state aid and the entire burden goes on the local property taxpayer. Our constituents were forced to do this by declining enrollments in our school district, which have declined by 25.5% in the last 10 years. Having the choice of closing your schools or raising property taxes is really no choice at all. However, constituents know that as goes the Three Lakes School District, so go the communities that it serves.

It is time to stop this insanity and correct the sins of the past. Wisconsin has deteriorated fiscally because of unsound policies that have shifted the tax burden disproportionately to the individual property taxpayer. This injustice can be corrected by requiring Wisconsin businesses to pay their fair share, and diversifying the tax base by closing some loopholes in the sales tax and increasing the sales tax by 2%. Anyone who understands anything about economics will know that doing this will provide property tax relief and stimulate economic growth by providing adequate funds for the services that progressive people demand for the standard of living they expect. Studies demonstrate that these services attract more businesses and result in economic development and stability. The lowest taxing states do not enjoy the benefits of increased economic development and productivity.

A major part of this picture is the plan proposed by the Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools. We urge you to strongly consider this plan as the appropriate conduit for

adequately funding education, providing property tax relief, and restoring Wisconsin's position as a leader both economically and educationally.

As a partner in WAES, the Three Lakes School District is committed to fighting for increased categorical aid to address the critical short-term needs in all school districts. At the same time, we urge you to work with us, other education stakeholders, and the legislature to begin comprehensive reform of the school-funding system in 2007.

We truly believe that the future of our state depends on what we do now!

Very truly yours,

Dr. George J. Karling
District Administrator

GJK/mb