



Questions for State Superintendent Candidates

1. What is your motivation to be Wisconsin State Superintendent of Public Instruction? What is your vision for PK-12 public education in Wisconsin?

My desire to serve as Wisconsin's State Superintendent is grounded in my experience as a parent of a son with disabilities and a daughter who is gifted and talented. Each of my children presented their own individual challenges and their educational journeys were extremely different. I was inspired to become an educator because of my son. I felt disempowered during the IEP process and knew that to be the best advocate for my special needs child, I would need to pursue my own education. As the granddaughter of sharecroppers, I was a first generation college student. As a single parent, I knew that education would unlock a bountiful future for me and my family. I have served as a paraprofessional, special education teacher, assistant principal, principal, district administrator and adjunct faculty member. Along this career trajectory, I have seen first hand the good, the bad and the ugly. I know what can happen for our students when they are given their inalienable rights to a fully funded well rounded education. I am seeking to serve the state in order to move our educational system further and faster along the trajectory towards continuous improvement. I feel a tremendous sense of urgency in this matter. It is our students sitting in our Wisconsin schools right now that must be successful. There is no room for complacency. This is the time for working together to ensure the best pathways are in place for our students right now! Like my children had, I will use my relentless drive to leverage change toward the goal of creating equitable opportunities so that each Wisconsin student receives a premier education. I don't feel entitled to the office of State Superintendent, I believe I am destined to do this work due to common roots, not so common experience and uncommon disposition.

My vision for PK-12 education in Wisconsin is communicated in my "Bill of Rights for Wisconsin Students". Each Wisconsin student is guaranteed inalienable rights to a premier, fully-funded education; experiences that result in achievement at the student's maximum potential; liberty to form opinions and make decisions based on truth and

fact, not fantasies and fallacies; and successful transition to post secondary experiences which may include day services or sheltered workshops for students with disabilities, military, trades, Peace Corp, career and/or college. College and careers are not an option for all students.

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Each Wisconsin student shall:

1. Have access to a high quality early childhood education (K3 & K4), infused with developmentally appropriate practices centered around attainment of pre-reading, pre-writing and pre-mathematical skills through play and exploration and/or achievement of the student's IEP goals.
2. Receive full day K5, in the areas of pre-reading, pre-writing and pre-mathematics skills, ensuring that students are ready as required for success during the student's primary education (grades 1-3) and/or achievement of the student's IEP goals.
3. Demonstrate 3rd grade reading, writing and mathematics proficiency and/or achievement of the student's IEP goals by the end of the student's primary school education (grades 1-3). Toward this goal, the student will attain proficiency in reading skills required to move from "learning to read" to "reading to learn" as required for success during the student's intermediate education (grades 4-6) and/or achievement of the student's IEP goals.
4. Demonstrate 6th grade proficiency in all content areas (reading, grammar, mathematics, science and social studies) and/or achievement of the student's IEP goals by the end of the student's intermediate school education (grades 4-6). Toward this goal, the State will ensure that the student has mastered the ability to read to learn as required for success during the student's secondary education (grades 7-12) and/or achievement of the student's IEP goals.
5. Demonstrate proficiency in all subject areas, including (reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, communications, art, music, physical education, computer science and foreign language) and/or achievement of the student's IEP goals by the end of the student's secondary education. Toward this goal, the State will ensure that the student has artifacts to demonstrate proficiency as required for success transition post secondary experiences which may include day services or sheltered workshops for students with disabilities, military, trades, Peace Corp, career and/or college.

6. Receive instruction in the “essentials”, art, music, physical education and computer science, beginning in primary school and throughout secondary school.
7. Receive instruction in the “essentials”, communications, financial literacy, economics, health, and civics, in intermediate and secondary school
8. Receive instruction in an additional world language in intermediate and secondary school
9. Receive high quality instructions from licensed teachers who are compensated at or above the rate of other professionals holding similar degrees and credentials, demonstrate mastery of the Wisconsin Teacher Standards and hold a valid certification/permit/license issued by the State.
10. Receive guidance counselor services throughout the student’s secondary school education
11. Receive nursing services, as needed, to ensure the student’s academic success beginning in early childhood and throughout primary, intermediate and secondary school education
12. Receive social worker services, as needed, to ensure the student’s academic success in early childhood and throughout primary, intermediate and secondary school education
13. Receive opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities (academic, sports, civic, social, clubs, etc.) throughout their educational experience
14. Receive quarterly feedback on their progress via one on one conferences with the student, parent and teacher throughout their educational experience.
15. Have the option of receiving instruction in different modalities (face to face, on-line, blended).
16. Receive tutoring or additional academic support to ensure the student’s academic success in early childhood and throughout primary, intermediate and secondary school education in partnership with community based organizations.
17. Receive related services (speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, transportation, nurse, social work, etc), as needed, to ensure the student’s success on achieving IEP goals and objectives
18. Receive mentoring and/or coaching services beginning in intermediate school and throughout the student’s secondary school education.
19. Identify an area of career interest and complete, minimally, a two semester internship for credit and/or complete, minimally, two semesters in a dual enrollment program at one of Wisconsin’s public or private colleges and/or

achievement of transition related activities per the student's IEP goals during the student's secondary school education.

20. Receive leadership development training during the student's secondary school experience, culminating with the student developing a personal leadership statement informing how the student will use knowledge, skills and dispositions attained during the experience at Wisconsin's schools to make a meaningful contribution to the student's community. The student shall define what community is in their statement.

2. Under your leadership as state superintendent, how will you define and shape the role of the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in its relationship with Wisconsin school districts? What will be your priorities for the Department in working with district leaders to meet the needs of students across the state?

DPI's role is to ensure that districts have the resources, expertise and support needed to ensure that all Wisconsin students graduate prepared for a successful transition to post secondary experiences which may include day services or sheltered workshops for students with disabilities, military, trades, Peace Corp, career and/or college. College and careers are not an option for all students. As State Superintendent, I will ensure that all students are considered as it relates to post secondary outcomes. Further, DPI's role is to ensure that districts and libraries are compliant with Wisconsin Statutes and Administrative Code. Fortunately, DPI has the best and brightest minds serving as consultants, assistant director, directors, etc. What is needed is transformational leadership rather than transactional leadership. Transactions address each challenge and then moves to the next challenge. Transformational leadership examines the ecosystem of public education, identifying its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and develops a plan to transform that ecosystem such that it moves from non-performing to high performing. My priority for the department in working with district leaders is to engage in a statewide SWOT analysis; develop a theory of change; create a strategic plan with SMART goals and measurable outcomes and implement it statewide, while adhering to my "Bill of Rights for Students"

3. In your estimation, what are the current strengths and challenges within the DPI? How would you approach building upon those strengths and addressing any shortcomings?

As stated previously, DPI has some of the best and brightest minds that are doing the hard work every day, from the Finance team to the TEPDL team. Many consultants hold terminal degrees and come from school districts around the state. They eat, live, breathe and speak education, challenging themselves to self imposed accountability to the public. They have stayed regime after regime, from Libby Burmaster to Tony Evers to Carolyn Sanford-Taylor. They are committed hard workers who thirst for a new breath of life in leadership. They want high educational outcomes. They want more diversity. They want the achievement gaps to be closed. Their passion for their respective content area of expertise is evident in their advocacy for up to date content guidelines, unbiased student performance assessment, high quality educator preparation programs, universal services for vulnerable populations, etc. DPI is challenged with leadership doing the same thing, engaging the same people, and maintaining the status quo that has resulted in statewide inequities yet expecting different outcomes. It's time for a leadership overhaul. Building on the strengths of consultants, assistant directors and directors, I will engage them in coaching training so that they possess the knowledge, skills and disposition to engage district and EPP program leaders in discussions that will help identify disempowering beliefs and actions that thwart progress, empowering them to look beyond usual and customary practices to revolutionary and transformative change. Through open, respectful communication and collaboration, we will form more flexible systems and public/private partnerships to get all students, schools and districts on a trajectory towards success. That which the DPI expects of districts is that which the DPI must demonstrate first. As it relates to diversifying the teacher workforce, DPI must take the lead. Mellody Hobson said it best: "It's not ok to fall short on diversity". She goes on to say that there has been a lot of "try" around diversity. The interesting thing is that it's the only area where you can talk a lot about something, not make any progress and still have your job. It's time for new leadership, someone like me who is ready to create new trajectories. It is one thing to develop a statewide plan to recruit, develop and retain teachers and to expect school administrators and district leaders to diversify Wisconsin's

teacher workforce so that it is reflective of our students' racial and cultural background. It's quite another thing to acknowledge that focusing on the pipeline isn't enough. Leadership focuses on the pipeline because it's the most non-threatening thing to focus on. By focusing just on the pipeline, leaders are ignoring the fact that students, parents and teachers need to be able to see themselves in those leadership positions....to say "I could be that person". Further, for some leaders, it's hard to reconcile between what is best for Wisconsin's students and, based on results in the areas of diversity, are you best for Wisconsin students, families and teachers? Let's develop and implement a plan to diversity the DPI so that its workforce is reflective of Wisconsin's students' cultural and racial background as an exemplar for the state and our schools. And then let DPI's assistant directors, directors and assistant state superintendents coach school administrators and district leaders as they develop and implement a plan to diversity their schools and districts so that its workforce is reflective of Wisconsin's students, cultural and racial backgrounds. Leadership starts at the top. I, as the first African American to seek the State Superintendency by election and the only candidate of color, am the only candidate that will enable diverse students, parents and teachers the opportunity to see themselves leading the DPI and providing a means for them to say "I could be that person".

4. As state superintendent, what policies or strategies would you advance to improve academic achievement for all students and close achievement gaps in Wisconsin? How would your policies/strategies ensure equal opportunity for all students, no matter their educational needs or their zip code?

Closing the achievement gaps are closely tied to closing the access gaps. Some students in Wisconsin have access to instructional opportunities that others don't. Therefore, they are denied opportunities to demonstrate how smart they are. When working at Brown St Academy, we implemented Multiple Intelligences school wide which celebrates individual students' strengths by providing them multiple opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do. Those opportunities were grounded in experiences that some Wisconsin students don't have access to such as art, music, physical education, health, and computer science. Ensuring that all students have access to these essentials,

provides an opportunity to celebrate students whose strengths lie in one or more of the eight modalities. High school students in some Wisconsin schools have access to instructional opportunities that others don't. World languages, civics, financial literacy and economics provide a means to teach thematically, embedding proficient reading, writing and mathematical skills while allowing students to explore other coursework. Students benefit from learning experiences inside and outside the classroom. Extended learning opportunities via partnerships with community based organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, Neighborhood Centers, churches, synagogues, etc. provide an opportunity to create "the village" by providing after school care and summer enrichment opportunities to decrease the likelihood of students losing academic skills at the end of the school year. Funding that is allocated for extended opportunities for extended learning needs to be allocated to organizations who either have a track record of providing such services or will demonstrate the ability to do so. Dr Hendricks' Bill of Rights for Wisconsin's Students clearly articulate what each student in the state will experience from K3 through high school. A lesson learned from COVID is that virtual and blended instruction is an option. Our high school juniors and seniors can earn high school and college credits while enrolled in online courses at our state's IHE, further providing options for rural students who do not live in close proximity to colleges and universities. Distance is not a barrier to dual credit course offerings as they can be provided virtually or in a blended manner. UW-Green Bay's Rising Phoenix program just expanded to western Wisconsin and is an example of how to create opportunities for rural students to participate in dual credit programs enabling students to earn an associate degree while simultaneously completing their high school diploma.

5. Numerous studies have shown that improving early learning opportunities can help reduce achievement gaps for children. In Wisconsin, the good news is families now have access to quality 4K programming in over 98 percent of our school districts. We simply need greater access to high quality birth-to-three programming for those children who have a high probability of not being ready for school. As state superintendent, what policies or strategies would you advance to improve early learning opportunities in Wisconsin?

One of my "Bill of Rights for Wisconsin Students" is that Wisconsin students have access to high quality full day K3 and K4 that is developmentally appropriate. All research shows that high quality early education programming is advantageous for children. This must start even before the age of three. We must support the programs that are in place and implement others to fill the gaps. We currently have the YoungStar rating system that sets criteria for high quality child care centers when parents need external childcare. The DHS has programs that provide additional support to infants and toddlers, training parents at home and following up with visits. We will partner with DHS in their efforts for increasing school readiness for the state's PreK population. We also have outstanding Birth to Three programs that are available for children with special needs. On a very personal level I have experienced the power of the Birth to Three program. My son participated in the Curative program which was absolutely life altering for him. His range of motion and attentiveness to others increased. Further, he began bearing weight which was of great assistance when transitioning him from his bed to his wheelchair. All of these programs are helping to maximize early learning to prepare our young people with a secure foundation for future learning. Another way in which we will improve early learning opportunities to reduce achievement gaps is to work with the WI Dept. of Children and Families. We will develop collaborative partnerships between licensed birth to 3 childcare centers and early childhood teachers to deliver strong readiness programs. While serving at Urban Day School, our Head Start and day care staff members worked with our early childhood students doing just that. The collaboration resulted in a smoother transition from day care to K3 as well as K-3 readiness efforts. Maximizing opportunities for such collaboration might best be suited by daycare centers occupying available space in schools and lead to exploring the implementation of K3 programming.

6. In Wisconsin, too many children have unmet mental health needs which, in turn, result in negative consequences for those children, their families, our schools and our communities. While school leaders greatly appreciate the school mental health investments made in the 2017-19 and 2019-21 state budgets, most believe a stronger, long-term commitment from the state is required to meet this challenge. As state superintendent, what next steps would you take to address this problem?

A more robust, long term commitment to mental health is paramount to the well-being of our students and our future as a state. We need core investments in destigmatizing mental health and curricula addressing mental wellness in our classrooms. This allows youth to learn about crucial dynamics of mental health and well-being from a young age. Supportive services are paramount in meeting the needs of students. One of my 'Bill of Rights for Wisconsin Students is that students will receive supportive services by way of social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, etc. Recognizing that schools are only part of the solution as it relates to meeting the mental health needs of students, we will engage in strategic partnerships with organizations such as Rogers Behavioral Health which operates nationally and provides mental health services in Wisconsin. During the pandemic, I had the opportunity to speak with them and hear how they pivoted their service provision using telehealth to reach families living in rural areas. I will work with the Governor and legislators toward the goal of extending tele-health. Additionally, many of our densely populated communities are in need of mental health services within their communities. As State Superintendent, I will be open to engaging in courageous conversation about how such services can be positioned in underserved communities, even perhaps establishing satellite offices in schools. We have been engaged in conversations with community based mental health agencies that grapple with inequitable insurance reimbursement rates when compared to big box mental health providers. We will work with DHS to increase parity in reimbursement rates for those agencies that serve the most vulnerable people in the neediest communities.

7. The recruitment, preparation, development and retention of effective educators is vitally important for our children's future. Increasingly, many Wisconsin school districts face difficulties in filling key instructional positions with highly qualified educators. As state superintendent, what policies would you advance to address this important issue?

We need to compensate quality educators commensurate to their commitment to educating our children. It is an investment in our future as a state and a direct investment in our children's futures. More importantly, we must provide additional opportunities for teachers to grow and learn while teaching through fellowships such as the one I

completed: Horace Mann-Abraham Lincoln, National Education Association, Teacher Network Leadership Institutions, etc. Opportunities for growth and advancement has been cited multiple times as reasons why teachers leave the field. Additionally, we must ensure coaching for principals in order for them to provide high quality leadership at the school level whereby teachers will feel supported and valued. It's been said time and time again, people don't leave jobs, they leave bosses. Not only do we want to recruit, develop and retain teachers, we want a diverse workforce which is fully reflective of the cultural and racial mosaic that is Wisconsin. A large body of research supports the fact that all students, not just students of color, benefit from having a teacher of color. When at DPI, I developed a statewide plan to diversify the teacher pipeline and address teacher shortages working with leaders in Wisconsin and nationally through CCSSO. This led to the repeal and rewrite of PI34 that eliminated racially biased gateway assessment, Praxis I and Praxis II, which prevented many teacher candidates of color from securing a teaching license. We will continue to identify barriers to certification, particularly if they lack empirical data or research to support implementation of it. We will fully fund and implement that plan that has been sitting dormant for 2 years. It includes strategies for recruiting high school students; students that chose to leave Wisconsin to attend Minority Serving Institutions, such as Historical Black Colleges and Universities, recruiting amongst people interested in teaching as a second career, recruiting content area experts and even bringing retirees back to the field of teaching. I will work with the Governor and legislators for an expanded loan forgiveness program beyond the one available for those teaching in high need areas.

8. Do you support the expansion of taxpayer-funded private school vouchers in Wisconsin? Why or why not? What is your position on requiring greater accountability for schools participating in the voucher programs?

It is important to focus on ensuring that all children in Wisconsin achieve because this is in the best interest of the state, our economy, our industries and our farms. When a student completes a college application, IHE's don't ask if the student attended a public, private or charter school. IHE's want new students to be college ready. When a student completes a job application, employers don't ask if the student attended a public, private

or charter school, employers want new employees to be employable. The economy of Wisconsin depends on ensuring that all students graduate transition, trade, career or college ready. We will ensure that whatever the sector the school is functioning within, all schools will operate within the same standards of accountability to ensure the school is delivering high quality education aligned to Wisconsin state standards

9. A recent report from the Wisconsin Policy Forum discovered that between 2002 and 2018 Wisconsin's per-pupil spending declined from 12th highest in the nation (11% above the national average) to 24th highest in the nation (2.6% below the national average). Compounding Wisconsin's lagging per-pupil spending has been the recognition that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the inequities in our school finance system, making it increasingly difficult for districts to ensure equitable opportunities for all children – no matter their educational needs or their zip code. As state superintendent, how would you address the current inadequacy and inequity of our school finance system?

As State Superintendent, I will work with the Governor, legislators and tax payers to communicate the importance of fully funding our schools because educating Wisconsin's students is not a partisan issue. It is a human rights issue. Local property tax base funding in rural and predominantly black and brown zip codes leaves schools in these areas critically underfunded. Wisconsin is in dire need of a funding update for our schools. We have known this for a while and engaged in multiple conversations over the years about it. The per-pupil aid system is inefficient in distributing funds and grossly oversimplifies strategies to power up our next generation of Wisconsinites. We need an updated state funding stream that goes beyond property values. Working with the Governor and legislators, we will seek to raise the revenue intake limit for schools, bolster the state funding budget, and eliminate inefficiencies in funding. My mother always told me that you get what you pay for. Your rate of return is equivalent to your investment. If we want the best and brightest students prepared to be the best and brightest Wisconsites, we have to invest in education and fully fund education, including special education. We must act now and invest in our schools to prepare the future workforce our states require. We can no longer wait for other states to prepare their students and then attempt to recruit

them to Wisconsin's businesses, industries, schools and farms. We have to prepare Wisconsin students aggressively by investing in them. The third Friday count is obsolete. A change is needed. We have attendance data that would allow us to reimburse schools based on actual enrollment of the student and eliminate the third Friday game of getting everyone in the door and ousting certain students right after that.

10. In Vincent v. Voight (2000), the State Supreme Court found the Wisconsin school finance system constitutional, so long as the legislature provided sufficient resources to ensure that all students are offered an equal opportunity for a sound, basic education. The court specifically enumerated three classes of students to which the state has a special obligation for ensuring equitable opportunities: economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English language learners. Since 2000, the rising costs to meet the growing needs of students in these enumerated classes have far outstripped the limited school funding directed to each of these student classes; thereby challenging the abilities of local school districts to meet the Court's standard. As state superintendent, how would you address this problem?

Our children's future should be a bipartisan issue. As such, I will leverage my relationships in the state legislature to pass policy which unlocks the much needed funding to support these vulnerable students within our schooling system. I will work diligently with our Governor and State Legislature to unlock funds for districts that sadly rely on an ineffective amount of funding to ensure equitable opportunities. I am optimistic that we have an educator as our country's first lady. Without a doubt, Dr. Biden is aware of the challenges and lack of unfunded mandates and under-funded schools. I will seek opportunities to engage with our federal delegation and DOE to advocate for additional federal funding.

11. Increasingly, Wisconsin school leaders are growing dissatisfied with the lack of improvement in Wisconsin reading scores and seek innovative leadership and new investment in literacy instruction for Wisconsin students. As state superintendent, what policies/initiatives would you advance to address this problem?

If we wish to achieve results in literacy instruction and grow high performing readers in our classrooms, then we need to be willing to invest and retain quality reading teachers. It is vitally important that we build pre-reading skills in K3 and K4 and ensure that our students learn to read by grade 3 so that when they enter 4th grade they can begin to read to learn. For students who are performing below grade level, additional targeted reading instruction is needed at their grade level as well as their instructional reading level. When I was serving at an elementary school wherein over 90% of the students were children of color and qualified for free or reduced lunch in the impoverished 53206 zip code, we implemented a school wide reading program wherein for 90 minutes a day every day, every adult in the building either taught reading or supporting reading in small groups at each students instructional level using a schoolwide program called Success for All. We need to inculcate a culture where in every school, all teachers are reading teachers. Reading was infused into every aspect of school. Parents were vital partners. Reading books were sent home for students to read to their families. Then and now, distribution of reading material addresses the well known disparities about the lack of reading materials in some students' homes. Sadly, way too many homes have no appropriate books for their children. This forged a partnership between parents and teachers, supporting home-based parental involvement. After three years of implementation with fidelity, the percentage of students reading at grade level increased from 30% to 70%. School wide targeted reading instruction matters. As State Superintendent, I will lead DPI in addressing this problem. We will identify successful school wide targeted reading programs for districts to choose from based on what students, parents and teachers decide.

12. Small, rural schools continue to face many challenges that limit educational opportunities for the children they serve. These include: declining enrollment, a lack of economies of scale, difficulties in recruiting/retaining qualified staff contributing to reduced programming options, and distance from post-secondary education institutions. As state superintendent, what policies/initiatives would you advance to reduce the disparities in educational opportunities for children in rural Wisconsin?

Most rural schools and the communities that they serve are not broken. These

communities are often home to deep wells of social capital, tradition, and values that educators can build upon to improve schools. In fact, survey data from rural communities shows higher levels of social cohesion, stronger beliefs in community safety, and stronger opinions that people in the community look out for each other. I was raised in a small rural town wherein the majority of people earned a living by working in industrial or agricultural commodity processing and production, factories or farms. I learned the importance of committing myself to something bigger than me at a very young age. The 4-H are words I live by. I lead with my head (clear thinking eliminating negative thoughts and beliefs that hinder progress); heart (caring for others); hands (giving, putting others before self); and health (maintaining my personal health while thinking, caring and giving). That said, rural schools definitely have challenges. They struggle to recruit and retain high-quality teachers and leaders. The DPI began a program that provided incentives to college students who wanted to complete their student teaching in rural areas. We will expand that program. We will form partnerships with IHE's who wish to implement programs such as UW GB's Rising Phoenix program that focuses on students who want to be teachers. Theoretically, a rural student can graduate from high school with an Associate degree and then attend an IHE for 2-3 years, returning home to teach in their own community. Rural schools also struggle to offer diverse courses for their students. Rural schools lag behind all others when it comes to offering AP classes, foreign language classes, and other dual-enrollment classes. Again, we will unveil opportunities for success that include essentials for all: art, music, physical education, health, foreign language, computer science, etc. Some of these courses can be provided virtually. Broadband service is a challenge and we will work with the PSC, Governor and legislature to find a way to ensure that lack of access to the internet is remedied. Closing the achievement gaps is closely tied to closing the access gaps. I agree with policy plans to pay parents of students taught virtually; however, districts would be hard pressed to find the funding to do so. I propose that we work with the state legislature to create a Wisconsin tax deduction for parents similar to that which is provided to educators in the amount of \$350 for out of pocket education related expenses without requiring itemization or receipts. This will relieve financial strain from rural families while offering novel virtual learning opportunities for families in remote locations.

13. In your estimation, what is your individual role as state superintendent in advocating for evidence-based educational policy that will lead to effective educational outcomes in Wisconsin?

I will leverage relationships with the federal delegations, DOE, Governor, legislators, district leaders, education related organizations, businesses, industries, and other stakeholders to ensure that we meet the needs of our students, parents, and teachers. Together we will meet the goal of maximizing potential, creating new trajectories, and unveiling opportunities for success. Details will be rolled out in my entry plan which will communicate what we will accomplish during my first 100 days in office. In my role at State Superintendent I am the students' advocate. I am responsible for eliminating achievement gaps. I am the parent's advocate. I am responsible for ensuring the state provides an educational experience that aligns with and potentially exceeds their expectations for their children. I am the teacher's advocate. I am responsible for ensuring that school leaders and district leaders have the resources that teachers need to do what they are called to do....teach.

14. The COVID-19 pandemic has and will continue to have a significant impact on student learning, especially for our most challenged learners. As schools increasingly move toward in-person instruction for students and anticipate the eventual full return to daily in-school activities, what do you see as the greatest recovery needs to be addressed for effective and meaningful student learning growth? As state superintendent, how would you propose meeting those needs on a statewide basis?

The state is indebted to Wisconsin's great teachers, education's front line workers, who pivoted from face-to-face instruction to online teaching. Their constant goal was to provide the continuity of education to our students as well as addressing their social-emotional needs in times of uncertainty and increased stress. We vigorously honor their flexibility and commitment. Their hard work and commitment needs to be rewarded with increased compensation, opportunities for growth and increased reliance on the professionalism of our teachers in setting expectations and the channels by which we

measure them. When I served as the principal of an elementary school, teachers developed interim assessments aligned to standards. This is an example of teachers leading by establishing channels to measure student achievement. It is also important to look at lessons learned from the virtual paradigm of education and its uses in meeting several of the challenges facing our schools across the state. We also strongly appreciate the difficult role our parents and caregivers have provided during this pandemic. Without notice or preparation, these people have risen to the challenge of juggling educational support with the other demands in their lives. To acknowledge their dedication, I will work with the legislature to develop a parent rebate. This will be similar to the way our educators have the ability to claim up to \$350 for expenses related to their classroom. Parents, who have once again served as Wisconsin's students' first teachers, deserve to claim up to \$350 for expenses related to instruction at home. As our students return to the brick-and-mortar classrooms across the state, we will follow our national and state medical experts. I will rely on science, safety, and student well-being as our guide. In my capacity as state superintendent, I will ensure the DPI focuses on improving a reopening school buildings risk assessment tool. I will follow interim COVID-19 transportation guidance, provide interim COVID-19 cafeterias and food service guidance as well. Additionally, a COVID-19 Infection Control Checklist for K-12 Schools will be crucial as we return to in-person instruction.

I look forward to earning your confidence and support as we work diligently, student by student, teacher by teacher, school by school to achieve academic success for Wisconsin. It is imperative to develop a pervasive attitude throughout Wisconsin that our students are capable, can achieve success and with our help they WILL. I know I can. I know we can. I know we will!

