



STATE OF WISCONSIN

Legislative Audit Bureau

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Janice Mueller
State Auditor

January 22, 2008

Senator Jim Sullivan and
Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz, Co-chairpersons
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Dear Senator Sullivan and Representative Jeskewitz:

I write in response to questions raised by several legislators concerning the content and timing of our statutorily required analysis of the standardized test score data received from the School Choice Demonstration Project. Section 119.23 (7)(e) 2, Wis. Stats., requires the Bureau to report to the Legislature, in 2007 and annually thereafter until 2011, on the results of the standardized tests administered to pupils participating in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program and those who attend Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS). As you are aware, our first report to the Legislature will be delayed because we did not receive the baseline test score data from the Project until December 28, 2007.

We have completed a preliminary examination of the baseline test score data, which contain the results of the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination tests that were administered during the 2006-07 school year to a sample of 2,727 pupils who attended schools participating in the Choice program, a sample of 2,727 MPS pupils who were selected based on their similarity to the sample of Choice pupils, and a random sample of 2,727 MPS pupils. Demographic and other information was also provided for these pupils.

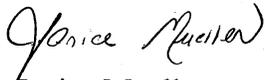
With the data given to us, we anticipate that we can provide the Legislature with a report that analyzes the average baseline test score data, for reading and mathematics at each grade level, for each of the three groups of pupils and determine whether any differences in average test scores are statistically significant. We also anticipate providing summary demographic information for the three groups. However, because the test score data do not identify individual pupils or the schools where they were enrolled, we will be unable to report on the average test scores of pupils at individual Choice schools or determine whether pupils at some Choice schools scored significantly differently than those at other schools.

We will begin analyzing the test score data in earnest in the weeks ahead and anticipate releasing our first report to the Legislature later in 2008.

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We appreciate the cooperation of the School Choice Demonstration Project in providing us with the baseline test score data and explaining its research methodology. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Janice Mueller
State Auditor

JM/bm

cc: Senator Julie Lassa
Senator Mark Miller
Senator Alan Lasee
Senator Robert Cowles

Representative Samantha Kerkman
Representative Kitty Rhoades
Representative David Cullen
Representative Joe Parisi

Dr. Patrick Wolf
School Choice Demonstration Project

Dr. John Witte
School Choice Demonstration Project