

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# DEAN KNUDSON

30TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

November 21, 2013

Tony Evers, PhD  
State Superintendent  
Department of Public Instruction  
125 S Webster Street  
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Superintendent Evers,

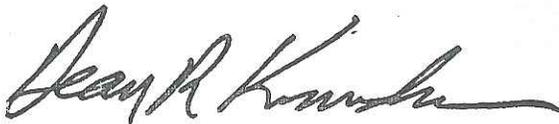
The Assembly Select Committee on Common Core Standards has engaged the public in a statewide conversation on academic standards for Wisconsin schools. The committee held multiple public hearings and heard hours of testimony. We also sought the opinion of outside experts and asked school administrators from across the state to share their thoughts about the implementation and rigor of the standards.

Sometime in the next few weeks the Committee will issue recommendations to the legislature, but I still have questions about the process by which your department adopted Common Core. Some of these questions are in response to reports the department has previously released, and where applicable, the relevant language and a citation is included. Other questions are of a more general nature, and arise out of testimony or from comments made over the course of the committee hearings.

To be blunt—I believe the Department has made a number of claims about the adoption process that have not been substantiated, and I want to give you a chance to set the record straight. Parents, teachers, and taxpayers deserve to see behind the curtain and fully review the process by which these standards were adopted, and the analysis that your team conducted. Please provide the information and documents requested (see attachment) as soon as possible, but by no later than noon on December 3, 2013.

If you have any questions about this request, please do not hesitate to contact me at (608) 266-1526. Thank for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Rep. Dean Knudson  
Vice Chair  
Assembly Select Committee on Common Core Standards  
Wisconsin State Assembly

**“Wisconsin would participate as a full partner in the process of drafting and revising the CCSS, but Wisconsin would reserve the right to make an educated decision about adopting them as the process unfolded.”<sup>1</sup>**

**“Since Wisconsin had already spent significant time working on revision to its own standards before the multi-state initiative that led to CCSS, Wisconsin actively participated in the CCSS drafting/revising process while maintaining perspective on whether the CCSS standards would meet Wisconsin’s needs.”<sup>2</sup>**

- How did the department maintain perspective on whether the CCSS standards would meet Wisconsin’s needs?
- What inclusion or exclusion to the CCSS would have resulted in the department determining that the CCSS would not meet Wisconsin’s needs?
- Was there a formal process used to determine whether or not the CCSS standards met Wisconsin’s needs? If so, please describe the process and/or provide the rubric.

**“DPI reviewed multiple drafts of the CCSS often using leadership teams of Wisconsin standards experts to provide valuable feedback that was then incorporated in subsequent drafts.”<sup>3</sup>**

- Please provide a copy of each subsequent draft of the CCSS received by DPI. With each draft, please identify the reviewing Wisconsin standards experts.
- Please include the feedback that the relevant Wisconsin standards experts submitted to the CCSS authors.<sup>4</sup>
- Please cite specific examples of feedback that were incorporated into subsequent drafts of the CCSS.
- Please provide copies of all comments the Department received from teachers, education professionals, parents, taxpayers, etc., in response to any CCSS draft.<sup>5</sup>

**“In March 2010, the CCSS were released for a three week period of public feedback, in which states sought insights from parents, educators, community members, and the public.”<sup>6</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Transforming Teaching and Learning: Wisconsin’s Journey to College and Career-Ready Standards, 7 (August 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Id. at 8.

<sup>3</sup> Id.

<sup>4</sup> The Committee has already received copies of two letters with accompanying comment, including: (1) Letter from Tony Evers, State Superintendent, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, to Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers, and Dane Linn, Director, National Governors Association Center (Dec. 4, 2009), and (2) Letter from Tony Evers, State Superintendent, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, to Chris Minnich, Council of Chief State School Officers (Apr. 2, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> The Committee has copies of the following comments (1) Email from Donna L. Pasternak, President, Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English entitled “Common Core Standards Response” (Mar. 18, 2010) (on file with the Committee), (2) Letter from Diana L. Kasbaum, President, Wisconsin Mathematics Council, to Chris Minnich, Council of Chief State School Officers (Apr. 2, 2010), (3) WASCD Highlighter, Wisconsin ASCD Response to Common Core State Standards Draft (Apr. 1, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Transforming Teaching and Learning: Wisconsin’s Journey to College and Career-Ready Standards, 8-9 (August 2013).

- Roughly 50 individuals were invited to preview the public draft of the Common Core State Standards in person on March 9, 2010. How many of the invited individuals were educators, education professors, or education professionals?<sup>7</sup> Were any of the invited individuals from outside the field education?
- Aside from this meeting, what effort did the department make to seek input from parents, community members, legislators, and the public? Please provide copies of any invitations, meeting notes, etc.

Additionally, please respond to the following:

- When did the department receive a copy of the final draft of the CCSS?
- Please provide a copy of the analysis the department conducted of the rigor of the final draft of the CCSS.
- Please provide a copy of the analysis the department conducted that reviewed and considered how and whether Wisconsin stakeholder comments, submitted *after* the release of the March 2010 draft, were incorporated into the final draft.
- Please provide a copy of the analysis the department received from CCSS authors that detailed how and whether Wisconsin stakeholder comments, submitted *after* the release of the March 2010 draft, were incorporated into the final draft.
- For the time period covering April 2, 2010 to June 2, 2010, please provide all records, including emails, sent or received by the Office of the State Superintendent that include the phrase "Common Core."

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<sup>7</sup> Distribution list: Common Core Preview Meeting (on file with the Committee).