



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

November 27, 2013

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

Dear Superintendent Evers,

Your office recently communicated via telephone that it would be unable to meet the timeline included in a November 21 request for documents. Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, we agree that it would be appropriate to move the deadline—please provide the information and documents requested on November 21 as soon as possible, but by no later than noon on December 10, 2013. We believe that two work weeks should be sufficient to fill the request, as your department has been on notice for months that information requests on this topic would be forthcoming.

We also understand that your department intends to process at least a portion of the November 21 request under Wisconsin's public records law. That law is not intended to be used as a tool of legislative oversight, and we do not seek to employ it today.

Absent special considerations, state agencies—including the Department of Public Instruction—are required to give the legislature access to requested documents, and should not filter those requests through a time-consuming legal review that traditionally accompanies the processing of a records request.

We are not seeking the release of records from your department under the state's public records law. We are seeking release of the requested materials under the authority granted to a select committee of the Wisconsin legislature. Pursuant to Assembly rule and the state constitution, select committees have the power to investigate matters within the subject matter jurisdiction of the committee. A review of the process by which your department adopted new academic standards is certainly within the jurisdiction of this committee. Pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 13.45(7) your department has a statutory obligation to provide access to the requested documents without delay.

It is our hope that this letter clears up any confusion about the outstanding November 21 request.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our offices at (608) 266-1526 or (608) 266-3156. Thank for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Thiesfeldt
Chair
Assembly Select Committee on Common Core



Dean Knudson
Vice-Chair
Assembly Select Committee on Common Core