



State of Wisconsin
Jim Doyle, Governor
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent



******NEWS RELEASE******

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Governor Doyle, State Superintendent Burmaster announce
\$1.7 million in education funding for homeless students and families**

MADISON— Governor Jim Doyle and State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster announced that \$1.7 million will be available to Wisconsin school districts to support families and students who are homeless. Over half of this funding comes from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

“The education we provide today will be the strength of our state and nation for decades to come,” Governor Doyle said. “We all need to pull together and make sure all our kids have the best education possible. This funding ensures schools can quickly identify and serve students and families affected by this national economic crisis.”

Last year, Wisconsin public school districts identified 9,331 students as homeless. Since 2003-04, the first year of annual data collection, the number of homeless students has increased 74 percent. Schools in all areas of the state are working with students who have lost their homes.

“During these difficult times, our schools must reach out to help families and students who are struggling to meet basic needs,” Burmaster said. “Increasing numbers of families all over the state are without a place to live due to the financial crisis or to poverty. Students struggling with these challenges cannot realize their full learning potential without our help.”

(more)

Wisconsin school districts have the opportunity to apply for competitive grants funded by the U.S. Department of Education, including \$904,000 available through the ARRA and \$835,000 through the regular Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program.

Because a key purpose of the ARRA dollars is to support schools which have not received EHCY funding in the past, the DPI has simplified its usual application process for the ARRA grants to encourage a large number of districts to apply. Whereas regular EHCY funding requires districts to have identified an average of 31 homeless students per year over 3 years, ARRA funding has no such restriction.

Schools can use the grants in a variety of ways, such as to hire case managers for homeless students, provide free school supplies and meals, offset transportation costs, develop tutorial programs, develop cooperative relationships with community agencies, and ensure timely identification and enrollment of homeless students. ARRA funds must be used by September 30, 2011, while the regular EHCY program grants will be awarded in three installments ending in the 2011-12 school year.

The ARRA also provides funding for special education, services to economically disadvantaged students, teacher quality enhancement, school construction bonds, school lunch equipment purchases, enhancing education through technology grants, and other education purposes.

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NOTE: This news release is available electronically at <http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/prmenu.html>. More information about homeless education funding through ARRA can be found at <http://dpi.wi.gov/homeless/arra.html>. More information about homeless education in Wisconsin is posted at <http://dpi.wi.gov/homeless>. For general information about ARRA, see <http://dpi.wi.gov/recovery>.