

**State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster
States Institute for International Education
States Report on New Initiatives in
International Education
Plenary Remarks ()
December 7, 2005**

1. (Intro slide on screen – State superintendent’s name)

Thank you, Tom (Tom Houlihan, Executive Director of CCSSO) for that kind introduction, and for your outstanding leadership.

I am honored to serve as Wisconsin’s State Superintendent of Public Instruction and it is a special privilege to participate on this panel with my dear colleagues from Delaware, North Carolina, and Massachusetts, as we showcase how each of our states is working to infuse global perspectives in the education of all students.

In communities and schools throughout Wisconsin, we are moving forward with a vision for global literacy for all students in this 21st century. We are internationalizing PK-16 education and working to bring these efforts to all Wisconsin citizens.

2. (Slide – Chinese calligraphy of four directions – north, east, south west)

In Asian folklore, the directions of north, south, east, and west symbolize more than mere points on a compass.

They appear in ancient stories, place names, and Shinto (shin toe) and Buddhist texts ~ four directions providing paths that each have unique characteristics. In our approach to international education we are taking multiple directions or paths as we work to accomplish our large goal.

3. Leadership. Students & Teachers. Animate

So, in Wisconsin, we must approach international education by identifying the multiple forces that will enable us to make progress. Using the four directions metaphor, we must participate in the “push” and “pull” of multiple constituencies. We need state level leadership AND we need community activism, grassroots involvement of students, teachers, and citizens.

4. Communities. Schools. Animate

From other directions, we need the push of schools and districts. We need to respond to the needs of our communities, parents, and ethnic groups. We must simultaneously work in all four directions to achieve global literacy for our students.

5. (Slide – Governor – top down leadership)

At the very top, in Wisconsin, we have enlisted Governor Jim Doyle in the support of international education. Our Governor was once a Peace Corps volunteer to Tunisia in North

Africa, as well as a volunteer on a Navajo Indian reservation. He has a solid grasp of cultural and multicultural issues.

6. (Slide – Int’l Education Council)

Together, we formed the International Education Council, which meets three times a year. Around the table we invited a number of participants who don’t usually have the opportunity to meet to discuss global studies – private and public university representatives, technical college leaders, and leaders from various education organizations, and community and ethnic groups.

9. (7. (Slide – Inter-Agency Work Group))

Another part of the state level guidance is Wisconsin’s Inter-Agency International Work Group, which meets throughout the year. Representatives of state agencies — education, commerce, arts, tourism, transportation, insurance, and the university system compare notes on their international projects and problems. Their work includes advising the governor or myself on upcoming trade or education missions abroad.

8. (Slide – Signing ceremony, Thailand))

We are moving our international initiatives forward through Sister State relationships and Memorandums of Understanding. We have formal partnerships with Hessen, Germany; Chiba, Japan; France — Aquitaine and Provence, and as shown here – in my visit to Bangkok, with Thailand.

9. (Slide – Bangladesh student fair)

Ultimately, it is the students in classrooms throughout the state who provide real evidence of our vision. The specific knowledge, skills, and perspectives they gain are the proof that international education is happening. So, if we bring the world into their classrooms, what will students know and what will they be able to do?

Can they identify countries and cultures of the world?

Can they work side-by-side with students from diverse cultures?

10. (Slide – Student with Globe)

Can they speak a language other than English?

Can they understand world events from perspectives other than their own?

Can they be creative and engage in “hands on” design or writing, putting together concepts and ideas, from the arts, literature, and philosophies of other cultures and other time periods?

11. (Slide – test tubes)

Can they solve problems of science, world health, the environment that know no borders?

Can they get jobs in a global economy?

12. (Slide – Japan WI Ed Connection #1, kids in library)

As an example of grassroots work, in the past 9 years, our Department of Public Instruction, working with Japan’s Ministry of Education, has brought 125 fully certified teachers from Japan to work in hundreds of classrooms, reaching an estimated 250,000 Wisconsin students.

13. Japan WI Ed Connection #2 – kids in elementary school

Students in rural schools, suburbs, and urban schools learn about modern and ancient Japanese culture, including the *hiragana* (pron: *hee-rah-gahn-nah*)¹ alphabet, Japanese calligraphy, traditional gardens, martial arts, and modern animation and robotics.

14. Repeat slide #5 – side forces (schools & communities)

And we are also pushing from other directions, through programs initiated at the school district level on the one hand, and from our changing communities.

15. (Slide – list of DPI int’l programs)

At the state level, we promote 16 different international programs, a few of which are listed here, and at the district level, schools themselves participate in a wide variety of classroom-to-classroom programs, far beyond pen-pals.

16. (Slide –curriculum guide)

We promote the integration of global examples in all subjects, across all grades. We have curriculum guides that give schools practical ideas on how to do this and to support state standards. Our international education curriculum guide lists favorite activities and resources of teachers used across the state.

17. (Slide – international teacher)

Our international education curriculum guide also sets forth a *vision* that international education goes *beyond* what happens in the classroom. We won’t have international schools, for example until we change our hiring priorities, and bring in a more diverse teaching staff.

18. (Slide – teaching abroad #1)

We must also change our approach to teacher training. Wisconsin’s new licensing legislation gives teachers more flexibility to create their own Professional Development Plans, submitted every five years for license renewal.

¹ All syllables in “hiragana” are evenly accented – no one is emphasized.

19. (Slide – teaching abroad #2)

Teachers renewing their license may elect to participate in such international education activities as summer study abroad, the addition or improvement of a world language, or they may work with other teachers to “globalize” their curriculum.

20. (Slides – Menasha #1)

Like other states, Wisconsin sees the need to push hard to increase the number of schools teaching world languages in elementary grades. We like the K-12 model of the Menasha School District, located near Green Bay, Wisconsin, where every single student studies a world language from kindergarten through fifth grade. Each elementary school in the district focuses on one language – either Japanese or German or Spanish.

21. (Slide – Menasha #2)

It is inspiring to us how enthusiastic and supportive parents are in Menasha. Parents understand that learning one world language in elementary grades prepares students to add other languages later, or simply to see and name their world differently.

22. (Slide Janesville – student with Hugo Olmos)

In southern Wisconsin, the Janesville Academy for International Studies engages high school students through international education, combining world language study, international business study, and research on a global issue of their choice. The students apply to the Academy and then spend three hours a day in this special approach to integrate learning.

23. (Slide– Communities) - Celebrate Languages slide from Wausau

A force from another direction comes from the rich diversity in the communities of our schools. Even in a Midwestern state like Wisconsin, 100 different languages are spoken in homes throughout the state, 1 in 6 jobs directly connects to business abroad, and even small mom and pop enterprises are looking to export overseas.

24. (Slide –Greenheck Fan CEO)

Wausau is a town exactly in the center of Wisconsin which understands their global connection. The CEO of Greenheck Fan Corporation, located in Wausau with operations in three countries outside the U.S., was invited by the local Alliance for World Languages to address over 200 parents, teachers, and business persons at a community celebration of languages.

25. (Slide – Wausau Hmong students perform)

Here are Hmong students from Wausau performing at that celebration. Wisconsin is one of three states in the US with a very large Hmong population from Southeast Asia.

26. (Slide A – Thailand)

Looking at our increasing numbers of students from Southeast Asia, we wanted to help teachers understand and know more about the culture of these students.

27. (Slide B – Thailand)

During the last two years, we have been the only state education agency that applied for and received a Fulbright-Hayes Group Projects Abroad grant to take Wisconsin educators to Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

28. (Slide C – Thailand)

We want our teachers to experience the homeland of Southeast students directly AND we want them to develop curriculum that teaches ALL STUDENTS the importance of Asian arts, history, geography, and culture.

29. (Slide #1 – Nina’s service learning or MPS elementary students being tutored by high school students)

Teachers throughout our state can connect internationalizing the curriculum with the diversity of their own communities.

In another example of community connections, this year we honored Spanish teacher Nina Holmquist as a distinguished World Language Educator, Nina initiated a service learning component that takes her high school students far beyond their suburban school.

They serve as tutors in a Milwaukee inner city community center and at an elementary school identified for improvement. Nina’s students also volunteered to be translators at clinics. Language really matters to these students and they are learning perspectives that transform their lives.

30. (Slide - Regional alliances) –

To capture this kind of community energy, our International Education Council developed four Regional International Education Alliances. These Regional Alliances provide leadership and collaborate on international initiatives in their region. They are also providing support and showcasing the efforts of four high schools that were awarded grants to bring global perspectives to curriculum projects that crossed at least three disciplines. I thank the Asia Society for funding Wisconsin’s high school reform grant proposal of which this project was a part.

31. (Slide – Friends list serve)

To help teachers know what other teachers and communities are doing, we connect over 700 educators on a Friends of International Education email distribution list, plus another 800 teachers on our World Language and English Language Learners email distribution lists. These

are managed out of the Department of Public Instruction, but submissions come from many sources.

32. Shared vision

So, by pushing from all four directions, we are shaping a shared vision in our state.

33. (Slide A – Summit #1 – Michael Levine) (Conclusion)

In January of this year, leaders of education, business, industry, and our communities, gathered for a working International Education Summit to develop consensus, provide input on priorities, and as you see from this picture — we celebrated our Goldman Sachs Award. That is Governor Doyle, myself, and Mike Levine in the picture.

34. (Slide - Int'l Ed Recommendations)

The Summit and the experiences of the State and regional Council members in their communities led to 26 recommendations for International Education. We have a copy for each of you of our recommendations, plus action steps to accomplish them.

35. Slide – 5 key goals

Our recommendations are grouped under 5 key goals – and as you can see, the goals reflect our 4 directions – goals for students and teachers, for communities, and a role for leaders in government and business.

36. (Slide –Globally literate citizens)

In Wisconsin, we're working to produce globally literate students, and we're inviting the whole state to join us.

37. (Repeat 4 directions Asian slide)

In this endeavor, we truly need to push simultaneously from all directions together. Just as ancient people all over our world knew, there are many paths and many ways to travel. We need Wisconsin citizens to travel together to open the world to our children. Thank you for letting me share Wisconsin's experience. I look forward to hearing the stories of my colleagues here, and of all of yours as well.

(END OF POWERPOINT)