

## **Unfinished Business for the 2011-12 Legislature**

**Recalls** – With a November 15 target to begin collecting signatures to recall Gov. Walker, recalls will loom large over the remainder of the Legislature’s 2011-12 session. Partisans discuss more Senate recalls, targeting senators elected in the fall of 2010.

**Independent Charter Schools** – Political appointees (and the State Superintendent) would determine where independent charter schools could be placed in any community with over 2,000 students (105 school districts – about one-fourth of the state’s school districts) with passage of **Senate Bill 22**. The measure was on a fast-track list last week, but was pulled and put on a list of bills that “need more discussion by the caucus” (Senate Republicans).

**“Double-Dipping”** – “Double-dipping” describes when public employees collect a pension and a paycheck at the same time. Gov. Walker endorsed Republican Rep. Duey Stroebel’s bill, **Assembly Bill 318**, which would suspend annuity payments to retirees who are rehired. The payments would remain suspended until they terminated their employment. Current rehired annuitants would not be affected. School officials need to explain to their legislators the occasional need to hire a teacher/administrator in difficult to fill roles (e.g. ELL/special education personnel).

**Statewide expansion of the voucher program** – Rep. Robin Vos (R-Burlington), co-chair of the Joint Finance committee and rumored to be in line as the next Speaker, is a big booster of vouchers.

In his testimony in support of AB 314 before the Assembly Education Committee, Vos said, “I intend—as an individual legislator—to push as hard as I can so that other districts could qualify (for taxpayer-funded private school vouchers).” **AB 314/Senate Bill 174**, require further legislative action to expand the voucher program beyond Milwaukee and Racine. Passed the Senate; stalled in the Assembly.

**Fund 80 Audit** – Some legislators believe school districts are pushing the envelope too far in using Fund 80 resources for a wide variety of purposes. Two legislators have requested an audit of school districts’ use of Fund 80. Look for something on this in 2012.

**Teacher Effectiveness/School Accountability/“Read to Lead”** – An effort led by both Gov. Walker and Supt. Tony Evers has two groups examining ways to bolster Wisconsin’s accountability measures, with action by the Legislature anticipated next year. The “Read to Lead” task force created by Gov. Walker is looking at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading proficiency and determining measures/strategies to ensure students leave third grade reading at grade level.

**NCLB Waiver** – This will come from Supt. Evers and Gov. Walker and seeks to exempt Wisconsin from the 100 percent student proficiency compliance required by NCLB in 2014.

**Student Information System** – The state budget put \$15 million in reserve in fiscal year 2011-12 for the purpose of creating a Student Information System by the DPI with academic and demographic data aggregated by school district, school and teacher. Joint Finance Committee approval required to expend funds.