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The timing of test administration may also change. The Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (WKCE) currently administered in February will likely change to November to allow more time for promotion policy decisions.

To assure that all children are performing up to state standards, test scores will be broken down for every student group. Results are intended to show achievement gaps among students who are economically disadvantaged, come from racial or ethnic minority groups, have disabilities, or have limited English proficiency.

Tony Frontier says results may even display performance gaps between boys and girls. "Are we truly serving all students as effectively as we could be?" he asks. "Any district that says 'yes' isn't being honest about the complexity of meeting each student's needs."

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- Tony Frontier

No Child Left Behind requires all school districts to issue report cards so that parents can compare progress at their child's school to nearby districts. Test results will be used to determine whether schools are making "adequate yearly progress" toward 100% efficiency for all students within 12 years. Parents with a child enrolled in a school with poor performance will be given options to improve their child's education. For instance, they may be allowed to transfer their child to a different public school district or enroll the child at a charter school. They may also be given vouchers to pay for a tutor.

Given Whitefish Bay schools' reputation for excellence, Tony Frontier doesn't expect the district to issue a failing report card. "If we reach that point," he says, "then the other 99% of Wisconsin districts looking up to us will be there, too."

Currently Wisconsin tests...	NCLB requires...
Reading at 3rd grade (WRCT)	The state must develop and administer mandated annual tests in reading and math from grades 3 through 8 that are aligned with Wisconsin's academic standards, and at least once in grades 10-12. Starting in 2007, a science assessment will be added.
Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, & Social Studies at 4,8, & 10 (WKCE)	
The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) is optional. (WFB does not currently participate)	NAEP is required starting in 2002-03



# Advocates *for* EDUCATION *of Whitefish Bay, Inc.*

Winter 2003

[www.advocatesforeducation.org](http://www.advocatesforeducation.org)

## *No Child Left Untested:*

### *The Impact of President Bush's Education Plan on Whitefish Bay*

**W**hitefish Bay students will encounter more standardized testing as a result of the federal legislation known as the No Child Left Behind Act, according to district Director of Instruction Tony Frontier. The legislation is the centerpiece of President George W. Bush's education reform plan and contains the most sweeping changes to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act since it was enacted in 1965.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires districts to administer reading and math tests annually in grades 3-8 and again in high school so that all children meet state standards approved by the Department of Education.

Districts that don't meet state standards face sanctions. States that fail to meet requirements lose federal education funds.

"Our size and the fact that we're a high performing district give us more time and flexibility to make it work," says Frontier. "We know we don't need to completely restructure our curriculum to succeed on the test."

The impact of the new legislation will be unique in each state. The U.S. Department of Education negotiates independently with each state to establish rules, policies and procedures that will constitute

NCLB requirements for that state. Educators expect the Department of Education will be flexible in approving state standards.

"So far, five states have been approved. They each have different plans, but they were each approved," Frontier points out. "So there's more than one way to get approved."

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction is in the process of negotiating requirements with the U.S. Department of Education. According to the Education Commission of the States, Wisconsin's proposal has not yet met federal requirements for developing rewards and sanctions for individual schools.

For parents and students in Whitefish Bay public schools, the most noticeable impact of NCLB will be different standardized testing schedules. The Iowa tests, currently used in grades 3, 5, and 7 will probably not meet NCLB criteria because they are not aligned with state standards. As a result, it is likely the Iowa tests will be dropped. The loss of the Iowas means the district also loses useful long term tracking data because the Iowas have been in place for many years.

## *No Parent Left Behind:*

*What the "No Child Left Behind" law  
means to your child*

7:30-8:30 pm • Tuesday, March 11 • WFBHS Rm. 47  
(Enter the high school from the Ardmore parking lot  
entrance.)

WFB District Administrator Jim Rickabaugh and  
Director of Instruction Tony Frontier discuss how the  
new federal law affects education in the Whitefish  
Bay Public Schools.

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## Whitefish Bay Teacher Compensation:

# MOVING UP THE RANKS

While many Wisconsin public school districts were engaged in contentious teacher contract negotiations, the contract between the Whitefish Bay School District and the Whitefish Bay Education Association (WBEA) was approved last fall with little fanfare. Bay residents were pleased when the school board and teacher's union settled the contract without the bitter disputes which characterized the negotiations process in some neighboring school districts. The school board and the negotiating team deserve high praise for maintaining a productive atmosphere throughout the process.

Before breathing a sigh of relief, we need to remind our readers that the contract settled last fall covered the period of June 2001 through June 2003. Negotiations for the 2003-2005 teacher's contract will begin this spring. As the district begins to develop the next teacher's contract, we thought a brief overview of the cur-

rent contract would help provide some insight into the challenging task the district will be facing in the coming year.

*"We know that we didn't get to the bottom in one bargaining session; so it's going to take several contracts to correct the situation. We'll have to keep this as an ongoing goal."*

— Pam Ryder

### District Ranked Low in Overall Compensation

At the June, 2002 school board meeting, a large number of teachers voiced concerns about the compensation package of the previous teacher's contract. Some of their complaints were supported by recent statistical data. According to the Public Policy Forum, in August 2002 Whitefish Bay Schools ranked 32 and 31 in salary and fringe benefits among 51 Wisconsin school districts. Compared to other North Shore suburban Milwaukee school districts, it ranked at the bottom.

Undoubtedly, modifications made to the 2001-2003 contract helped improve the District's ranking. School administrators and WBEA staff members agree that the new contract provisions slightly increased the district's compensation ranking. "With this new contract, we've managed to move up from the bottom of the list

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## New Outlook in Madison

Last fall's election brings a new Democratic governor, Jim Doyle, to Wisconsin after sixteen years of Republican control of the governor's office.

Governor Doyle's first task will be to present a budget bill for the next two fiscal years. A large deficit is looming, and over 45% of the state budget is spent on K-12 education. There is growing support for the idea of restructuring the school finance system from people with many different points of view. While most observers do not expect the school finance program will be dramatically changed in the first year of the next biennial budget, a spending freeze is possible and major change

of some kind is likely on the horizon for subsequent years.

The governor will be working with a Republican controlled legislature with many new leaders. Whitefish Bay is represented in the senate by Republican Alberta Darling, and in the assembly by Democrat Sheldon Wasserman. Senator Darling was recently appointed co-chair of the Joint Finance Committee, the key committee for the budget process.

The Assembly Education Committee continues to be chaired by Rep. Luther Olsen. Senator Richard Ellis chairs the Senate Education Committee. Former chair Senator Richard Grobschmidt, who

demonstrated commitment to children and to quality public education during the high stakes testing campaign, left the senate and now works for the Department of Public Instruction. The Assembly Education Reform Committee is chaired by Rep. Scott Jensen.

During former Governor Thompson's tenure, the Governor's office and the Department of Public Instruction did not work well together. Governor Doyle and State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster are friends and allies, and it will be interesting to see what programs come forward during their tenure.

For Those in the Know,

# Did You Know...

▲ The Whitefish Bay School District is exploring ways to increase the energy efficiency of school facilities. The district is considering a contract with Energy Education, Inc., a consulting firm with a national practice. The consultant would train and work with a part-time district employee and provide specialized energy software programs to identify ways to save energy. The consultants predict significant energy cost savings over time, and back up their performance with a guarantee that savings will at least equal the program's expenses.

▲ Cumberland Elementary School instituted a new approach to providing academic support this year. Instead of meeting with support teachers a few times a week and receiving, essentially, help with work due the next day, the program has been completely restructured. Scheduling of common instruction time throughout a grade enables support personnel to work with students intensively for several weeks at a time. For example, students in need of reading support in the fourth grade might all work with the support teacher daily during a unit of social studies, while the rest of their class is doing the same unit of social studies with the regular classroom teacher. This way students are not missing instruction in another area while they are receiving support, and support teachers are able to help students build the skills they need rather than just completing daily work. Support teachers believe this more intensive approach enables them to know the students quicker and better, and facilitates student performance.

At a recent Whitefish Bay

School Board meeting, Superintendent Jim Rickabaugh noted that this approach, while successful and supported by research, is just one way in which the district is working to address the needs of more diverse learners. The district is seeing an increased need for support, and this raises the question whether there are options to increase the capacity of the core program. An additional approach might be to broaden and strengthen the set of instructional strategies that every teacher has available.

▲ Weighted grades at the Whitefish Bay High School are not under scrutiny currently, but may come up again as part of the discussion of goals of the District's new focus plan. Information on this issue can be found at [www.advocatesforeducation.org](http://www.advocatesforeducation.org). Click on Newsletters, then February 2002 newsletter.

▲ New classes that will be offered next year at the Whitefish Bay High School are Marketing II, Digital Photography, Water Safety Instructor Training and Sport Conditioning.

▲ A major study at the University of Arizona found that state laws requiring high-stakes tests may result in improved scores on those state exams, but performance declines on other independent measures. When high-stakes tests were implemented, scores on the SAT and ACT declined against the national average in twice as many states as those that gained on it. The study also found the graduation rate falls faster than the national average once a state requires a high school graduation test. The reason goes beyond students giving up when faced with

an exit exam. The researchers asserted that administrators sometimes pressure failing students to drop out in order to improve a district's overall scores. For more information on this study see "More Schools Rely on Tests, but Big Study Raises Doubts" at <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/12/28/education/28EXAM.html?tnemail1>

## MISSION Statement

**A**dvocates for Education is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that works to promote high quality public education in Whitefish Bay by:

- informing residents about education issues and encouraging public participation in matters affecting the schools;
- fostering a social and political climate favorable to public education;
- advocating for public policies that promote high quality public education in Whitefish Bay.

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of comparable districts in the area of total compensation," reports Pam Ryder, Director of Personnel and Pupil Services.

But as we strive to maintain the high-quality educational programs offered in our district, serious questions loom: Just how competitive is the new Whitefish Bay teacher's contract? Will it attract and retain the most competent teachers? How will the state's fiscal woes impact the negotiation process?

**Key Contract Changes Allowed Salary Increase**

The 2001-2003

contract made several changes to address compensation issues. Most of the changes involved modifications of the benefits package. The most significant change was the adoption of a salary schedule. Of 426 public school districts in the state, Whitefish Bay was one of only four still operating with a customized salary plan. Efforts to recruit new teachers were compromised by the customized plan. "In the past few years we have experienced some difficulty in engaging or signing some of the best candidates," states Ryder. "The new salary schedule should strengthen the recruiting process."

The second significant change in the current contract was the district board's decision to use funds from the operating reserve to pay off its

**Milwaukee-Area School Districts Ranked by Staffing Considerations\***

Milwaukee County District	Salary Rank	Avg. Teacher Salary	Fringe Rank	Avg. Teacher Fringe Benefits
Brown Deer	9	\$ 48,695	9	\$ 18,129
Cudahy	10	\$ 47,272	10	\$ 16,684
Franklin	27	\$ 43,236	28	\$ 17,081
Greendale	1	\$ 52,288	3	\$ 19,099
Greenfield	24	\$ 44,513	6	\$ 18,680
Milwaukee	35	\$ 42,722	1	\$ 23,499
Nicolet Union**	4	\$ 50,208	4	\$ 19,038
Oak Creek/ Franklin	13	\$ 46,787	40	\$ 16,301
St. Francis	43	\$ 42,009	45	\$ 14,749
Shorewood	12	\$ 47,039	11	\$ 17,926
South Milwaukee	26	\$ 43,821	50	\$ 13,139
Wauwatosa	34	\$ 42,781	46	\$ 14,085
West Allis	14	\$ 46,261	22	\$ 17,262
Whitefish Bay	32	\$ 42,911	31	\$ 16,976
Whitnall	16	\$ 45,616	25	\$ 17,211

Ozaukee County District	Salary Rank	Avg. Teacher Salary	Fringe Rank	Avg. Teacher Fringe Benefits
Cedarburg	23	\$ 44,580	32	\$ 16,957
Grafton	15	\$ 45,994	5	\$ 18,750
Mequon-Thiensville	6	\$ 49,661	2	\$ 19,928
Northern Ozaukee	30	\$ 43,165	8	\$ 18,291
Port Washington-Saukville	3	\$51,710	7	\$ 18,300

\* source: publicpolicyforum.org

\*\* Includes Glendale-River Hills and Maple Dale School Districts

plan, WEAC Trust, operated by the state teacher's union, (Wisconsin Education Association Council or WEAC), while a less expensive alternate healthcare plan is available through United Health Care. Compounding the problem is a very high rate of usage within the district. For the past few years, WBEA members have been posting one of the highest rates of usage in the state.

In order to control insurance costs, changes need to occur in types of insurance used and frequency of use.

Under the new contract, several minor insurance changes have been made to reduce

prior service liability. Prior service liability is the cost of providing benefits for service credit earned (1) prior to an employer joining the Wisconsin Retirement System, or (2) for providing benefit improvements based on service credit earned prior to the effective date of certain major benefit legislative changes, several of which have been enacted into law by the legislature over time. By paying off the prior service liability, the school district eliminated interest charges that otherwise would have applied and was able to provide additional funds for the compensation package.

As in private industry, the ever-increasing cost of health care is a continuing burden for the school district. Most WBEA members use an expensive indemnity health care

costs. Most of the changes involve increasing patient costs for coverage (increased deductibles, increased cost for drug card). The early retirement eligibility provision was raised from 10 years of service to 15 years of service. In addition, the teachers agreed to work with the district to examine options for controlling health insurance costs and to create better health care consumers.

**How Competitive Is the New Contract?**

The changes in the compensation package have allowed the District to move from the bottom of the ranking to a more competitive spot. While a revised rank was unavailable at the time of publication, administrators and WBEA leaders felt confident that

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the new ranking is more competitive than it was prior to August 2002. Jeff Widder, President of the WBEA described the new contract as “a step in the right direction – something we can live with for now.”

District administrators acknowledged that the new contract marks the beginning of a new approach to contract negotiations. There is considerable determination to continue to work to address compensation shortfalls. “We know that we didn’t get to the bottom in one bargaining session; so it’s going to take several contracts to correct the situation. We’ll have to keep this as an ongoing goal,” states Ryder.

**Financial Crisis Will Effect Upcoming Negotiations**

Addressing compensation will become increasingly challenging as the state’s financial woes threaten school funding. Shawn Yde, Director of Business Services, reported “It’s no surprise that Governor Doyle’s budget will make it tighter.” He also stressed that the Whitefish Bay School District will continue to work to minimize the effects of revenue constraints, hoping to avoid larger class sizes. “We will continue to be judicious about balancing program costs and the district’s focus.”

Yde outlined four ways in which the school district can address the upcoming financial difficulty:

- 1) Strive to maintain the high level of services currently available

- 2) Increase efficiency
- 3) Generate revenue at the state and local level - through increasing enrollment – we need to keep our resident students enrolled in the Whitefish Bay Schools and we need to continue to attract additional students.
- 4) Reduce expenditures – in a manner that has the lowest impact to the district’s mission, purpose and focus plan.
- 5) Keep the focus on the students

The Whitefish Bay school district will not be suffering alone. Most Wisconsin public schools will be experiencing similar difficulties. At publication, Governor Doyle’s budget had not yet been released. But few school districts are feeling optimistic about the new budget. “We don’t know what is coming, but we aren’t expecting it to be very good for us. But we are all under the same legislative restrictions as everyone else. And no matter what comes, our goal will continue to be to hold down costs and increase revenue to the greatest extent possible,” states Yde.

While there is abundant evidence that increasing salaries can help retain teachers, the political reality is that funding such increases is limited. Given that large salary increases are likely to be politically difficult regardless of the benefits, researchers and policymakers should continue to search for additional lower-cost ways to retain and attract good teachers.

# JOIN

## Advocates for Education of Whitefish Bay, Inc.

*Join the team of voices speaking on behalf of children to provide the best public education possible.*

- Active Member(s)  
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@ \$20 per household
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@ \$20 per household
- I am interested in volunteering for AFE. Please call me.
- Enclosed is an additional donation to support AFE. Due to the lobbying mission of AFE, donations are not tax-deductible.  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ donation enclosed.

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Please detach this form and mail today to:

Sarah Nesbitt  
5035 N. Diversey  
WFB 53217

# The Armory and The Arts

Could the Armory be the answer to a shortage of space for fine arts at Whitefish Bay High School? A committee of citizens and elected officials is studying that question. The committee of two school board representatives, two village trustees, the village manager, the superintendent, and several citizens has been meeting every Thursday

morning since December to determine whether it is feasible to convert the Armory into a building flexible enough to serve educational needs as well as needs of the community. Suggestions include the creation of a “black box” theater that seats roughly 200 people for small-scale concerts and plays. Committee members are talking to local groups to learn

whether there is interest in renting facilities to help defray costs. So far, no price tag has been attached to the possible renovation. It is expected that fundraising would be necessary to cover most of the cost. The village board has given the committee a deadline of March 31.