

TO: Bayfield School Board
FROM: Dave Aslyn
DATE: December 6, 2015
SUBJECT: December District Administrator Report

1. Important Grants Received

The District received notification of being awarded two important grants in November. The District was awarded \$24,000 from the DPI through the American Indian Language Revitalization Grant. This grant will support Ojibwa language and culture classroom learning experiences. It will also help support the student Native American Club, provide additional teacher resources about Native American language, history and culture and will help support the school-community pow wow in the Spring.

This District received a \$4,800 DPI grant to support our Educator Effectiveness program. This grant covers the District's cost of the Educator Effectiveness system for supervision of instruction and teacher evaluation through the My Learning Plan platform.

2. Superintendent's Coffee Chats

Superintendent's Coffee Chats were held at Legendary Waters, LaPointe Library and the Egg Toss during the week of November 9th. Some excellent conversations about special education, a possible NOAA Sanctuary designation for the south shore of Lake Superior region and the District's budget took place during the Coffee Chats. Coffee Chats will take place again in the spring.

3. Effectiveness Project

Implementation of the teacher evaluation system moves into its second year of use in Bayfield. Staff members currently working under the Educator Effectiveness Program have developed Student Learner Outcomes (SLOs), Professional Practice Goals (PPGs) and are in the process of conducting student/parent surveys to get feedback. A variety of professional development activities have been held last school year and this school year to support educators in the use of this new system.

4. Report on Rural Poverty

It's no secret that poverty has a big impact on our community and school district. The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families recently published a report titled, "Dealing with poverty in predominantly rural Wisconsin counties." Bayfield County is one of 18 counties focused on in the report. The Department of Children and Families was recently directed by Governor Walker to develop strategies to help the poorest rural communities. Meetings with local officials from the affected areas and developing recommendations for possible legislative solutions are listed as next steps. A summary of the report is attached.



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REPORT: RURAL POVERTY A GROWING PROBLEM IN WISCONSIN

1 message

Kelly McDowell <kellymcdowell@gmail.com>

Sat, Dec 5, 2015 at 10:43 AM

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REPORT: RURAL POVERTY A GROWING PROBLEM IN WISCONSIN

By most measurements, Menominee is the most poverty-stricken rural county in Wisconsin, according to a November state Department of Children and Families report.

The DCF's "Dealing with poverty in predominantly rural Wisconsin counties" report is the first step in a department project aimed at tackling the problem, according to the report. Future steps will involve meeting with local officials in affected areas and developing recommendations for potential legislative solutions.

"In Wisconsin," according to the report, "it has been estimated that while rural poverty was approximately 8 percent in 2000, it has nearly doubled to about 15 percent today."

DCF spokesman Joe Scialfa said the 93-page report, obtained by WisPolitics.com, was meant to remain an internal document to help the agency get started on its rural poverty project.

The focus of the report was to identify rural counties with the highest concentrations of poverty and pinpoint the barriers to economic development and job growth. It identifies 18 counties, mostly in northern Wisconsin: Adams, Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Clark, Dunn, Florence, Forest, Iron, Jackson, Juneau, Langlade, Menominee, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, Vernon and Vilas.

Department policy, Scialfa said, requires all questions from media be written and emailed to him. In his written response to emailed questions, Scialfa said Gov. Scott Walker's budget called on DCF to develop strategies to help the poorest rural communities.

Walker's biennial budget sets aside \$3 million to expand the Transitional Jobs program to areas with "special needs" that DCF determines should be a priority. Scialfa said DCF recently released a request for proposals for an administrator of the Transitional Jobs

program for rural communities.

Representatives for several lawmakers from many of those counties said they could not comment because they had not seen the report.

DCF analyzed the counties from multiple angles, including poverty rates, unemployment, FoodShare use, Medicaid payments, median value of owner-occupied homes and health ranking. Menominee scored worst of the 18 in each of those categories.

The report highlights Menominee as a somewhat special circumstance because so much of the county is tribal property, meaning people who live there cannot own the land. The report referred to it as "Wisconsin's, and perhaps the nation's, poorest county."

"Economic obstacles created by the existence of federal trust land on Indian reservations need to be addressed," according to the report. "More individual ownership would allow residents to build equity and use it as collateral, something difficult under the present arrangement."

For instance, the county's poverty rate, based on federal definitions, was 38.8 percent in 2013. The next closest county was Rusk at 18.5 percent.

The statewide average for FoodShare use, according to the report, is 15 percent of residents. Menominee came in at 50 percent.

But the report highlights several factors that contribute to poverty in all 18 rural counties. There are limited options for transporting goods out of those counties because of a lack of rail service, according to the report. Spotty broadband limits interest from potential new businesses.

Walker this week has been making stops in northern Wisconsin to promote \$1.5 million in broadband expansion grants. The goal, he has said, is to improve access to high-speed Internet as a way to attract more businesses and grow the economy.

The report also highlights the state's Public Trust Doctrine, which requires the state preserve water resources for the public, as a major obstacle to growth. The doctrine limits development in areas that border the Great Lakes even when portions of the lake bed are dry, the report states.

The doctrine also is among the targets of a "property rights package" of two bills circulated this week by Republicans Rep. Adam Jarchow, of Balsam Lake, and Sen. Frank Lasee, of De Pere. The package would let developers get clean title to portions of lake beds that have been filled for 40 or more years.

Still, solutions to rural poverty are vague in the report, which acknowledges there is no "magic bullet" to solve the problem.

"There is no panacea for dealing with rural poverty," according to the report. "Any improvements will be small and incremental."

Read the report:

http://wispolitics.com/1006/Rural_Poverty.pdf

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