



STATE OF INDIANA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
State House, Second Floor
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Michael R. Pence
Governor

November 15, 2013

SUPERINTENDENT RITZ: VIA HAND DELIVERY AND ELECTRONIC MAIL
MEMBERS OF THE BOARD: VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Glenda Ritz, Chair
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Brad Oliver
Sixth Congressional District Representative

Tony Walker
First Congressional District Representative

Daniel Elsener
Seventh Congressional District Representative

David Freitas
Second Congressional District Representative

B.J. Watts
Eighth Congressional District Representative

Cari Whicker
Third Congressional District Representative

Troy Albert
Ninth Congressional District Representative

Sarah O'Brien
Fourth Congressional District Representative

Gordon Hendry
At-Large Representative

Andrea Neal
Fifth Congressional District Representative

Dear Superintendent Ritz and Members of the State Board of Education:

Let me begin by thanking all of you for your commitment to serving the children of our state through your service on the State Board of Education. Hoosiers are fortunate to have such a talented and dedicated group working on their behalf.

I commend you for the progress you've made this year. Most recently I am grateful for your work in committing to a timetable for completion of the 2012-2013 A-F grades, in reaching consensus on the next steps to revise our A-F model, and in passing emergency rules to enable Choice Scholarship schools to serve students who qualify for special education.

Despite this strong progress, I am aware that the Board has had difficulties in working together, and I am writing to offer my Administration's assistance in finding a solution.

As you are aware, Indiana is a member of the nonprofit National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). Founded in 1958, NASBE works to strengthen state leadership in educational policymaking, promote excellence in the education of all students, advocate equality of access to educational opportunity, and assure continued citizen support for public education. The organization has a national perspective on the work of state boards of education, has expertise in best practices and has provided consulting regarding governance of state boards across the nation.

I am writing to inform you that I have reached out to NASBE, and they have agreed to facilitate a discussion within the Indiana State Board of Education to clarify its roles and responsibilities and reach a

common understanding regarding the governance procedures. Our Administration is prepared to provide any and all resources and assistance needed to coordinate this process, and I hope the Board will consider this sincere offer to engage NASBE in resolving these present difficulties.

I know you share my belief that it is of the utmost importance to Indiana's schoolchildren that the differences that have emerged between the Superintendent and the other members of the Board be resolved in a civil and respectful way to restore a spirit of cooperation and trust. The Board has an opportunity to do so in engaging NASBE, which has extensive national experience with state boards of education, governance matters and education issues.

Hoosiers are indebted to each of you for your work on the State Board of Education. On behalf of every student, parent, teacher, and administrator in Indiana, I offer my heartfelt appreciation for the hours that you give to this effort. I am confident that, with this assistance, you will be able to resolve your differences quickly and build on the progress that Indiana has made in educational achievement.

Because of your work test scores are up, graduation rates are up, and the future of education and our young people has never been brighter.

I look forward to your reply regarding this proposal to engage the National Association of State Boards of Education to assist the Indiana State Board of Education in moving forward for the good of all Hoosiers and stand ready to offer any and all assistance in making this happen in a timely manner.

Sincerely,


Michael R. Pence
Governor of Indiana