

FACT SHEET ON THE PROPOSED ELIMINATION OF SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES STATE AND LOCAL GRANTS

March 4, 2005

President Bush recently proposed to eliminate the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) State and Local Grants – all those funds that flow through DPI to *all Wisconsin school districts*, and funds from DHFS to certain statewide and community-based programs. **Wisconsin stands to lose \$7.2 million – our largest prevention program.**

This elimination of funding would take effect July 1, 2006. Certain federal grants would continue; however, schools would have to compete nationally and few in Wisconsin would be funded.

This proposal is based on the assumption that the SDFSC program is not effective.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Elizabeth Burmaster opposes the elimination of these funds.

Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities State Grants are the only federal or state funds available to and used by all Wisconsin school districts to prevent important barriers to learning: drug use, violence and suicide. Without these funds most school-based prevention programs would be eliminated or seriously cut. Peer substance use has been linked to lower reading and math scores. Many more students would have serious problems and fail in school.

The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program has been effective in Wisconsin and nationally. Wisconsin has seen significant decreases in alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, school violence, and suicidal thoughts. (*Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, DPI, 1993-2003). Nationally, the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities State Grants Program has contributed to the 17% overall decline in youth drug use over the past three years (*Monitoring the Future*, 2004).

Substance abuse prevention is cost effective, saving from \$2 to \$20 for every dollar spent.

Congress – via its education committees -- will first set a general budget for education. Then, the joint appropriation committee would set amounts for each program, such as Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities.

Anyone wishing to help **educate congress** about this program can best do so at **anytime this winter or spring**. There is no reason to wait. **Messages that can help educate congress** include:

- 1. how the funds are used,**
- 2. results of the program – both statistics and stories – and**
- 3. the impact of eliminating the funds. Both local and state examples are helpful.** (See state example below).

Groups that may be affected by the elimination of this program include those listed below. Share this information with them as appropriate:

- Teachers, their associations and unions
- Pupil services professionals, their associations and unions
- School administrators and board members
- Parents and parent groups
- Students and student groups
- Community-based organizations and human services agencies
- Law enforcement officers
- Juvenile justice and court officials

For contact information on your congressional representatives see: www.congress.org

Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program in Wisconsin: Statewide Strategies, Results, and Impact of Elimination

The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities State Grants funds are the ONLY grants provided to all school districts to address important barriers to learning: alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse; suicide; and violence.

Uses of funds	Results <i>(Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey)</i>	Impact of elimination of SDFSC funds
Evidence-based alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention programs in schools	<p>Fewer students drinking alcohol before age 13 (from 37% in 1993, to 25% in 2003)</p> <p>Fewer students smoking cigarettes, past 30 days (from 32% in 1993 to 24% in 2003)</p> <p>Fewer students ever smoking marijuana (from 43% in 2001 to 38% in 2003)</p> <p>Fewer student riding with a drinking driver (from 39% in 1993 to 20% in 2003)</p>	<p>Loss of school-based programs</p> <p>More students drinking alcohol</p> <p>More students smoking tobacco</p> <p>More students smoking marijuana</p> <p>More students injured from riding with a drinking driver</p> <p>More students absent from and failing in school resulting from above</p>
Evidence-based suicide prevention programs in schools	<p>Fewer students seriously considering suicide (from 27% in 1993 to 20% in 2003)</p>	<p>Loss of school-based programs</p> <p>More students seriously considering suicide</p> <p>More students absent from and failing in school resulting from above</p>
Evidence-based violence prevention programs in schools	<p>Fewer students physically fighting on school property (from 16% in 1993 to 12% in 2003)</p> <p>Fewer students carrying a weapon on school property (from 9% in 1993 to 3% in 2003)</p> <p>Fewer students threatened with a weapon on school property (from 8% in 1993 to 5% in 2003)</p>	<p>Loss of school-based programs</p> <p>More fighting at school</p> <p>More students carrying a weapon on school property</p> <p>More students threatened at school</p> <p>More students absent from and failing in school resulting from above</p>