

Letter to Senate President Pro-Tem Long and Speaker Bosma

September 6, 2013

Dear Senate President Pro-Tem Long and Speaker Bosma:

We are pleased to inform you that we have completed the work that you requested we perform in assessing the development and implementation of the new A-F school accountability system developed by former Superintendent Bennett and first used to determine school grades for the 2011-12 academic year. The attached report endeavors to address the five specific tasks identified in your correspondence to us dated August 2, 2013.

We have attached an Executive Summary from our complete report, which briefly describes the two primary tasks we completed in performing the work requested by you, and summarizes our findings and recommendations.

As indicated in our report, we believe that the memorandum of understanding executed by you, the Governor, and Superintendent Ritz, which provides for a special advisory panel to advise the State Board of Education as it revises the state's accountability system rule as required by HEA 1427, is a wise initiative. It is our belief that the work of this advisory panel can counter some of the issues we have discovered through our efforts. We trust that the findings and contents of our report can be utilized to inform the work of this committee as it seeks to design a revised accountability system that best serves Indiana students, schools, and the general public, and which ultimately results in increased student achievement.

Thank you for offering us the opportunity to be of service to the state, and for the independence that you and your staff afforded us in the conduct of our analysis. We also thank those who participated in interviews, Indiana Department of Education staff, who were most responsive and helpful, and to the staff who assisted us from the Legislative Services Agency.

Sincerely,

William Sheldrake

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John Grew

Executive Director for State Relations and
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