



**State of Wisconsin**  
**Department of Public Instruction**  
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

\*\*\*NEWS RELEASE\*\*\*

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## Greendale educator receives Milken Family Foundation award

*Daniel Johnson to receive \$25,000 unrestricted award*

MADISON – State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster surprised Daniel Johnson, a third-grade teacher at College Park Elementary School in Greendale, with a 2008 Milken National Educator Award on Wednesday, commending him for his ability to inspire learning.

“Daniel Johnson serves as a role model for students,” Burmaster said. “He plays a key role in how the Greendale School District engages students in their learning.” Burmaster noted that Johnson is the only teacher in Wisconsin and among a highly select group of educators from around the country being rewarded by the Milken Foundation for professional excellence. “It is a great honor to join the Milken Foundation in recognizing exemplary educators with this national award,” she said.

A former Milwaukee police officer, Johnson is praised for focusing on the needs of each child and using various teaching strategies to motivate students. “Everything with Daniel is child-centered,” wrote a colleague. “Daniel’s talent and strength is his multi-level teaching style,” wrote a parent.

Johnson of Wauwatosa, was selected as Milken National Educator without his knowledge by a blue-ribbon panel facilitated by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The award, which includes \$25,000, was part of the Milken Family Foundation’s 22nd annual national notification tour.

Burmaster commended the Milken National Educator Awards for focusing on the importance of quality educators with a goal of inspiring young people to consider education as a career. “The quality of the teacher in the classroom is the single most important school-based factor in student achievement.

Attracting dedicated young people to the profession is vital to our New Wisconsin Promise: to close the achievement gap and ensure a quality education for every child,” Burmaster added.

(more)

This is the 10th year the Milken Family Foundation has presented its National Educator Awards in Wisconsin. Established in 1985 with the first awards made in 1987, the Milken Family Foundation will present \$2 million in financial awards and honor up to 80 outstanding educators across the nation this year. By the end of the 2008 notification tour, the foundation will have recognized more than 2,300 exceptional educators and awarded more than \$60 million since the Milken National Educator Awards program began.

“Nothing in America’s K-12 schools has more influence on student learning than the quality of the classroom teacher,” said Lowell Milken, chairman and co-founder of the Milken Family Foundation. “Highly effective teachers are the bedrock in constructing a world-class educational system that meets our challenges and opportunities in this 21st century. It is a national imperative that we attract, retain, and motivate people of talent to the profession. America’s prosperity depends on it.”

Recipients of the Milken Educator Awards are selected on the basis of numerous criteria, including exceptional educational talent as demonstrated by effective instructional practices and student learning results in the classroom and school; exemplary educational accomplishments beyond the classroom that provide models of excellence for the profession; strong long-range potential for professional and policy leadership; and an engaging and inspiring presence that motivates and impacts students, colleagues, and the community.

The recipients will receive their \$25,000 unrestricted cash awards at the Milken National Education Conference, an all-expenses-paid professional development conference to be held next spring in Los Angeles, Calif. The educators also are invited to join the Milken Educator Network, a voluntary association of exemplary educators and business leaders, whose expertise serves as a resource to fellow educators, legislators, school boards, and others who are shaping the future of education.

The Milken National Educator Awards were created to recognize and reward the highest caliber professionals in our nation’s schools. The Milken National Educator Awards program, dubbed the “Oscars of Teaching” by *Teacher Magazine*, is the largest educator awards program in the nation. For more information, call (310) 570-4775 or visit the Milken Family Foundation website at <http://www.mff.org>.

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**NOTES:** This news release is available electronically at [http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008\\_163.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008_163.pdf). Additional information about Wisconsin’s 2008 Milken National Educator Daniel Johnson and the Milken National Educator Award program is available on the Department of Public Instruction news release website <http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/prmenu.html>.