

Vote Record

Senate - Committee on Education

Date: 9-26-01
 Moved by: ROBSON Seconded by: ERPENBACH
 AB: _____ SB: 176 Clearinghouse Rule: _____
 AJR: _____ SJR: _____ Appointment: _____
 AR: _____ SR: _____ Other: _____

A/S Amdt: _____
 A/S Amdt: _____ to A/S Amdt: _____
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- Be recommended for:
- Passage
 - Introduction
 - Adoption
 - Rejection
 - Indefinite Postponement
 - Tabling
 - Concurrence
 - Nonconcurrence
 - Confirmation

Committee Member	Aye	No	Absent	Not Voting
Sen. Richard Grobschmidt, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Robert Jauch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Kevin Shibilski	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Jim Baumgart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Judith Robson <u>ERPENBACH</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Carol Roessler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Alberta Darling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Mary Lazich	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Sheila Harsdorf	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Ted Kanavas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Totals: _____

September 26, 2001

To: Joint Committee on Education
From: Timothy A. Jaech, Deaf Parent of a Deaf Adult

SB 176

Re: Testimony in support of the Center Concept of Services to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

Good morning, Senator Grobschmidt and Representative Olson. I come before you first and foremost as a deaf consumer who is a father of a deaf adult, who has given me a one-year old grandson who was identified at birth as a profoundly deaf child.

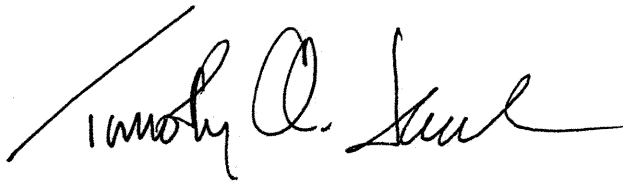
I work for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction as an outreach consultant to families, agencies, and school districts who are involved with deaf and hard of hearing children.

Early identification of hearing loss via the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening program made possible by recent legislation is proving to be one of the most important efforts to help families cope and enhance the early learning of language and communication skills for our deaf and hard of hearing children. Until this legislation was passed, children with hearing loss were identified as late as 30 to 40 months of age. This has had significant adverse impact on the language development and ultimately the quality of education of our deaf and hard of hearing children.

Parents are now becoming well informed and prepared to deal with the difficult task of raising and helping a deaf or hard of hearing child learn in an optimum manner. Indeed, this may very well alleviate the currently very challenging tasks before teachers of deaf and hard of hearing children in our schools.

Mentoring of these families by deaf adults is a growing successful program, one that should normalize as much as possible the efforts of families to maximize their children's educational opportunities.

The formation of a statewide center service program for the education of deaf and hard of hearing children in Wisconsin would greatly assist in making the futures of our children who suffer hearing loss a much brighter one, in creating a much better quality of life for these persons.





Wisconsin School for the Deaf

Educational Service Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Alex H. Slappey, WSD Superintendent

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

September 25, 2001

Testimony in favor of SB 176, Establish Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Good morning Chairman Grobschmidt and members of the Committee. On behalf of the Department of Public Instruction and State Superintendent Libby Burmaster, I am speaking in favor of SB 176.

I believe that the establishment of the Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is an essential element of providing vital services to school age children who are deaf or hard of hearing in Wisconsin.

Mission: The Wisconsin Educational Services Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is a statewide center with specialized personnel, resources and information that provides families and educators access to coordinated services unique to the needs of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Summary

We are proposing that DPI restructure the current delivery of outreach services for children who are deaf or hard of hearing to an expanded outreach structure that includes regional services under a comprehensive center concept. The center concept would include the Wisconsin School for the Deaf (WSD) as part of the full continuum of services available to students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Background Information

In June of 1994, the legislative audit bureau (LAB) report on the DPI residential schools reported that the level of outreach services provided to students who were deaf or hard of hearing was insufficient. The LAB also cited requests from LEAs for more technical services and support. In January of 1995, Superintendent John Benson recommended a multiple phase expansion of outreach services. To date the Department of Public Instruction has not been able to realize this recommendation due to insufficient resources.

This proposal is in response to needs identified by the LAB audit and a constituency that includes educators, families, and other key stakeholders including representatives from organizations that advocate for the advancement of the welfare of deaf and hard of hearing persons. Since 1998, the DPI has utilized a series of town hall meetings and other venues with persons throughout Wisconsin who have a vested interest in the comprehensive educational life of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The

information gathered has provided valuable input for the *State Superintendent's Advisory Committee on the Education of Pupils who are the Deaf and Hard of Hearing* when drafting both the Strategic Plan and this Action Plan to expand services for deaf and hard of hearing children under a comprehensive center concept.

Community Input and Agency Support

Several activities were conducted between 1998 and 2000 by the DPI to gain a clearer understanding of the needs for educational programs for children who are deaf and hard of hearing. These include:

- A 1998 statewide survey on needed outreach services,
- A series of open forums for teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing to solicit input regarding current services,
- A 1999 DPI workgroup developed a list of major areas of need through a review of the statewide community input. The following eight areas were identified.
 1. Birth to Six
 2. Enhanced Educational Opportunities for Students
 3. Family Support Services
 4. Media and Materials
 5. Professional Development
 6. Regional Sites
 7. Residential School
 8. Technical Assistance
- In April of 2000, six town hall meetings were conducted to share summaries of the information gathered and solicit specific input on the eight areas of focus.
- A review of the input by the *State Superintendent's Advisory Committee on the Education of Pupils who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing*
- Development of the Action Plan.

In addition to the activities mentioned above, two statewide initiatives have occurred which contribute to the need for these expanded outreach services. Those initiatives are:

- Passage of the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (UNHS)
- Creation of the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

State Superintendent's Advisory Committee on the Education of Pupils who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

The *State Superintendent's Advisory Committee on the Education of Pupils who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing* was first established in the mid 1970s to respond to the changes in the education of students who are deaf or hard of hearing. In 1998, the committee began a process of developing a formalized Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan includes 3 goals. They are:

- 1) Align expectations for students who are deaf or hard of hearing with the general education curriculum and instruction addressing the child's unique needs through collaboration with educational staff, students and parents. (standards)

- 2) Support an evaluation and accountability system that encompasses all aspects of programming for deaf and hard of hearing students. (data collection)
- 3) Families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing shall be aware of and have access to services and resources within but not limited to their communities. (support to families)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the demand for expanded outreach services for students who are deaf or hard of hearing has been underscored by recommendations made by several parties, namely, the Legislative Audit Bureau, the Department of Public Instruction, the *State Superintendent's Advisory Committee on the Education of Pupils who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing*, educators, a state-wide constituency of parents and adults who are deaf or hard of hearing, and other invested community members.

This proposal is designed to address the needs indicated by these parties.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



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Elizabeth Burmaster
State Superintendent

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
September 25, 2001

Testimony in favor of SB 176, Establish Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, by Jerry Landmark, State Schools Administrator, DPI.

Good morning Chairman Grobschmidt and members of the Committee. On behalf of the Department of Public Instruction and State Superintendent Libby Burmaster, I am speaking in favor of SB 176.

In her address to the State Superintendent's Fall Conference for District Administrators, State Superintendent Libby Burmaster stated "My administration is committed to actively serving the children and school districts of our state by working collaboratively with you, the educational leaders of your communities, to ensure that Wisconsin students have the skills and tools they need to compete and win in the new, knowledge-based economy." SB 176 creates an opportunity for the Wisconsin School for the Deaf to be refocused as a statewide educational resource program to students who are deaf and hard of hearing, in order to allow them the opportunity to acquire the special skills and tools they need to compete and win. While traditionally WSD has an excellent nationwide reputation for its educational opportunities to students who attend the school, it has been difficult to extend its reach to students outside its campus. Passage of this bill will help provide that reach to students who remain in their home schools.

As Director of State Schools for DPI for the past year, I have the responsibility to oversee the operations of both the WSD and Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, or WCBVI. As the so-called "center-concept" is being implemented at WCBVI as a result of legislation passed in 1999 Wisconsin Act 9, there has been a noted increase in the resources and services provided to students statewide who are blind and visually impaired, to the teachers who teach them, and to their parents. WCBVI has five outreach specialists housed in five different CESA's throughout the state. Each specialist attempts to identify each blind and visually impaired student in their area, contacts the student and their parents, gets to know the student and determine their needs, and provide appropriate resources, information and training opportunities to the teachers who work with that student. This contact and help has been a real benefit to students who stay in their own school districts. Other efforts for the blind and visually impaired have included increased technology training for students, developing a professional library, acting as a clearinghouse of information, and providing enhanced assistive technology services. We want to extend those efforts to students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

The main areas of focus for the statewide Educational Services Program will be:

- providing technical assistance and training for the deaf and hard of hearing, including the use of technology devices;
- providing media and materials to enhance learning opportunities, such as distance learning, webcasting, library materials, professional development courses;
- maintaining and improving the residential school program;
- establishing a wider variety of birth to three services, including providing parents with information on program options and strategies, providing inservice for speech and language professionals, and providing mentor services;
- providing training and workshops to enhance professional development for teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing, including sign language classes, as well as advanced ASL and ESL courses;
- increasing services to families of students who are deaf and hard of hearing;
- establishing regional service sites to provide support for school districts, providing an information clearinghouse, coordinating regional events for families.

Passage of SB 176 will allow for all students statewide who are deaf and hard of hearing to receive the services necessary to allow them to become active and responsible citizens, to allow them to compete and win in our knowledge-based economy. Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

To: Senator Grobschmidt, Representative Olsen and the Senate Education Committee,

Wisconsin schools support the educational needs of over 2000 children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Many of these children – approximately half - are in the more urban areas where schools can hire staff to provide the needed services and support to the students, staff who work with the students and their families. In the more urban areas, district administrators more often have general knowledge of the unique needs of these students.

This is not the current situation in our rural schools. For rural districts, there may be one or two students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Districts contract for supportive services through CESA's. These teachers, educational audiologists and educational interpreters can provide basic support, but they are not able to provide the in-depth programming and informational resource equivalent to that in the more urban districts. Parents often are called upon to be the sole advocate for their child's needs. Local services such as school psychology, and child assessment is a challenge for these districts. Erroneous assumptions are often made by well meaning staff, and when challenged by parents, too often leads to discord.

The education and lives of people who are deaf or hard of hearing is uniquely different than that of other children in that access to language and language development – the heart of life - is the barrier. This means it is a barrier even to those in our schools who know and love children. It can even be barrier within families. The expertise of those who know people who are deaf or hard of hearing, and the type of services needed is critical to meeting the basic needs of these children. I often hear from parents and staff about the need for expertise in advising schools regarding appropriateness of services, providing inservice training and information to parents and staff – both in special and general education. They seek people who can provide on-site support without depleting already limited school budgets.

Some of the more than 2000 students have needs in addition to their hearing impairment. Several of these students have additional learning needs, significant emotional needs, and most have additional social needs. Families need informational resources and support in their communities and state. Local agencies, such as county Birth to 3 programs and DVR need information, training and support in working effectively with this population.

There is an opportunity here for the state to provide needed support through the expansion of outreach services. This is long overdue and is an appropriate resource for providing a non-biased, cost effective, knowledgeable statewide resource.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill and its benefit to the many children and families in Wisconsin.

Carol Schweitzer

September 26, 2001

Dear Senator Grobschmidt, Senate Education Committee

I regret I am unable to participate in the Senate Education Committee hearing this morning due to family reasons. I wanted to take this opportunity to write a letter supporting the expansion of DPI outreach services for deaf or hard of hearing youths as a representative from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, State Superintendent's Advisory Committee on the Education of Pupils who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, parent, Wisconsin Association of the Deaf Education Committee and Deaf community member.

In my position as the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Coordinator with the University of Wisconsin, McBurney Disability Resource Center, I have long witnessed the "end results" of a K-12 education. The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) law was passed just a little over ten years ago. Boom! Deaf and hard of hearing students have seen the world of opportunities opened up to them and wasted no time in seizing opportunities long repressed to them. In the past ten years, the UW Law School has graduated a number of deaf students. The nationally ranked exclusive elementary education program have and will admit a total of 4 deaf and hard of hearing students. There are students with hearing loss in the UW Medical School, Veterinary School, School of Engineering as well as a wide array of academic disciplines. The skyrocketing enrollment trend is consistent across the country with low attrition rates.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing people did not do anything different. For long, deaf and hard of hearing people knew their potential was unprecedented, the beliefs of society restricted opportunities. In reality, the ADA basically created opportunities. We need to continue this diligence through the expansion of the DPI outreach team, especially with the recent passage of the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (UNHS). Timely diagnosis of hearing loss is now possible as a result of UNHS. A critical mass exists among adults that serve as a role model for youngsters. There exists a gap in the years between diagnosis of hearing loss and beyond the post-secondary years.

Timing is of essence. This is why moving forward with the expansion of outreach intervention is absolutely necessary. Deafness is a simple condition full of misconceptions. Societal misconceptions need to cease controlling the opportunity roulette. **Enter outreach.** Awareness is a powerful tool to curbing the cycles of missed opportunities. **Enter outreach.** Parents of deaf and hard of hearing children need to no longer view their child(ren) as a stranger in their midst. **Enter outreach.** Teachers and administrators need to no longer assume anything less than the true potentials of youths with hearing loss. **Enter outreach.** Deafness is a life condition that happens to be scattered all over Wisconsin. **Enter outreach.**

I know the Senate Education Committee recognizes the significance of expanding the DPI outreach team. I am optimistic the committee will move forward with the expansion as there is full community backing, both paid and volunteerism, long ready to move forward with optimizing the quality of education and access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Wisconsin citizens.

Sincerely,

Rick Postl

1st yr. no new costs
Set up action plan -
list timelines

2nd yr. poss. some new positions
(1 or 2)
- vacant positions directed
- federal funds outreach
- or refocus