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(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2003-04

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on Education, Ethics and Elections...

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
(**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
(**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

Senate

Record of Committee Proceedings

Committee on Education, Ethics and Elections

Senate Bill 163

Relating to: establishing a clearinghouse for information about special education transition services and vocational opportunities that are available in each county.

By Senators Roessler, Ellis, Stepp, Plale, Wirch and Robson; cosponsored by Representatives Owens, Townsend, Ladwig, Jeskewitz, J. Wood, Van Roy, Krawczyk, Bies, Loeffelholz, Musser, Hines, Berceau, Gronemus, Miller and Zepnick.

May 14, 2003 Referred to Committee on Education, Ethics and Elections.

February 25, 2004 **PUBLIC HEARING HELD**

Present: (5) Senators Ellis, Stepp, Jauch, Robson and Hansen.
Absent: (2) Senators S. Fitzgerald and Reynolds.

Appearances For

- Hunter Kurtz, Sen. Carol Roessler

Appearances Against

- None.

Appearances for Information Only

- None.

Registrations For

- Jeff Spitzer-Resnick, Wisconsin Coalition for Advocacy
- Sheri Kraus, Wisconsin Association of School Boards
- Joe Wieser, New Holstein School District
- John Forester, School Administrators Alliance, Madison, WI
53704

Registrations Against

None.

March 11, 2004 Failed to pass pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 1.

Michael Boerger
Committee Clerk





Carol Roessler
STATE SENATOR

February 25, 2004

Senator Michael G. Ellis
Chairman
Committee on Education, Ethics and Elections
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Senator Ellis,

I am writing to encourage you to support Senate Bill 163 and Assembly Bill 343. These bills will set up an easily accessible clearinghouse of information about special education transition services and vocational opportunities that are available in each county.

The information will be available on the websites of the Departments of Public Instruction, health and Family Services and Workforce Development. Currently the information at the DPI and DWD website is incredibly difficult to find and in some cases incomplete.

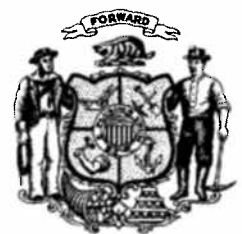
In our current age of technology, establishing a clearinghouse will provide a network for parents, teachers, students and others to know what is available in each county about special education transitional services. By establishing a clearinghouse we will continue to ensure the success of students after they leave the classroom. Often students are unaware of potential opportunities outside the classroom and by passing this legislation we hope that there will be greater communication about opportunities available in each county.

Sincerely,

CAROL ROESSLER
State Senator
18th Senate District



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



2/25/04

Members of the Committee. Thank you for holding this hearing today regarding Assembly Bill 343. My name is Deb Wisniewski and I work with the Wisconsin Healthy & Ready to Work Project, a federally-funded 4-year project through the Children with Special Health Care Needs Program. We are based at the Waisman Center, where I am an Information and Resource Specialist with the project. Basically that means that I try to answer people's questions regarding transition.

Every week, I talk with youth, family members, educators, medical professionals, and other service providers about what the options and choices are for youth with disabilities.

I can tell you that even in a state as wonderful as Wisconsin, there is a lot of confusion, a lack of resources, and too much misinformation out there.

Youth and their family members in particular are confused by this huge change coming into their lives.

Where will I live?

Where will I work?

Can a person with disabilities go to college?

Does my daughter need a guardian?

What is going to happen to my son's health insurance?

What happens to his health care?

I could go on & on with the questions.

To me, having a website to serve as a clearinghouse for transition information is one step in the right direction. Since I spend a good portion of my worktime looking for information for families, I can share my ideas about what would be necessary.

First, it must be youth and family-friendly. Lots of jargon, acronyms without explanation and technical mumbo-jumbo are NOT what they want. They want straight-forward information.

What do I need to do?

Who do I contact?

What are my rights?

How does the system work?

We need to remember also that youth are learning how to make decisions and to advocate for themselves. The website should be designed in a way that supports their efforts. This can only be done by involving youth in meaningful ways in the development of the website.

Secondly, the website should address the WHOLE person, not just the parts





WISCONSIN COALITION FOR ADVOCACY

THE PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY SYSTEM FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SB 163/AB 343

by

Jeffrey Spitzer-Resnick
Managing Attorney

As many of you know, the Wisconsin Coalition for Advocacy (WCA) is Wisconsin's protection and advocacy agency for people with disabilities. In my position at WCA, I focus much of my attention on special education. It is with that perspective that I am pleased to testify in favor of SB 163 and AB 343.

As you are probably aware, these bills would create a transition clearinghouse, which would provide information about services which would assist the transition of special education students from school to adulthood. These services would include vocational opportunities, as well as important information about benefits and other adult activities. Moreover, these bills would require that these services be listed by county, so they are easy to find for students, parents and educators. Through our work, we have discovered that all too often, the only thing that prevents an older special education student from receiving appropriate transition services is the lack of information. This bill would go a long way to address that problem.

The bill requires that DPI, in collaboration with DHFS and DWD, create this clearinghouse on its web site, and that the DHFS and DWD web sites would also have the same information. To date, no such clearinghouse exists, despite DPI's grant to a CESA to create one.

In addition, the establishment of this clearinghouse would mean that for the first time, Wisconsin residents and policymakers would be able to examine both the strengths and weaknesses in our current transition programs for teens and young adults with disabilities. Once this information is readily available, policymakers can more effectively consider options to address any shortcomings in the availability of transition services and programs.

The Assembly passed AB 343 on a voice vote. This is a bill that legislators from both sides of the aisle can easily support as it will increase information without any budgetary cost. WCA urges you to quickly approve these bills so that the Senate may vote on them before the end of this session. If you have any questions about these bills, I would be glad to respond to them.