

WISCONSIN STATE
LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE HEARING
RECORDS

2005-06

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

**Committee on
Education
(SC-Ed)**

File Naming Example:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- > 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01a
- > 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01b
- > 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt02

Published Documents

> Committee Hearings ... CH (Public Hearing Announcements)

> **

> Committee Reports ... CR

> **

> Executive Sessions ... ES

> **

> Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

> **

*Information Collected For Or
Against Proposal*

> Appointments ... Appt

> **

> Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

**

> Hearing Records ... HR (bills and resolutions)

> **05hr_sb0529_SC-Ed_pt01**

> Miscellaneous ... Misc

> **

Vote Record Committee on Education

Date: 2/14/06

Moved by: Olsen

Seconded by: Jauch

AB _____ SB _____ Clearinghouse Rule _____
 AJR _____ SJR _____ Appointment _____
 AR _____ SR _____ Other _____

A/S Amdt _____

A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Amdt _____

A/S Sub Amdt 1 (URB s 0526/3)

A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Sub Amdt _____

A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Sub Amdt _____

Be recommended for:

- Passage Adoption Confirmation Concurrence Indefinite Postponement
 Introduction Rejection Tabling Nonconcurrency

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
Senator Luther Olsen, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Alberta Darling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Sheila Harsdorf	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Glenn Grothman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Robert Jauch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Jon Erpenbach	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator David Hansen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals:	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>	_____	_____

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

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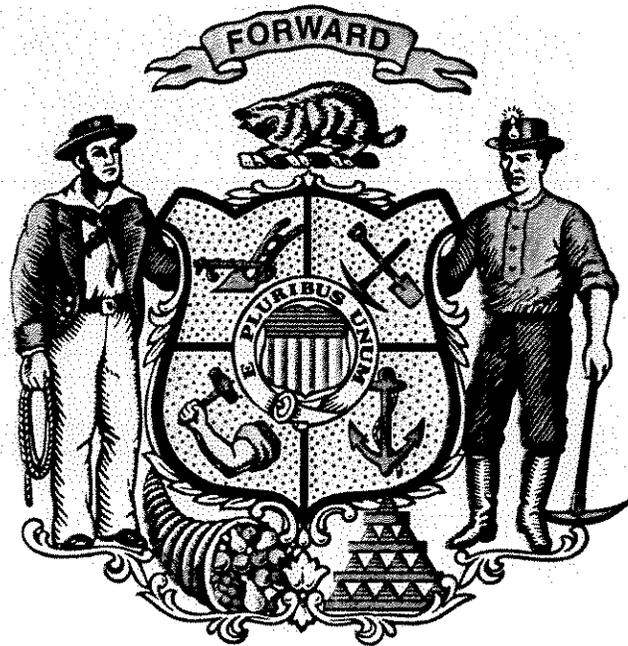
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Motion Carried Motion Failed



WISCONSIN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

Affiliated with the National Education Association

*Every kid
deserves a
Great School!*

TO: Senate Committee on Education
Assembly Committee on Education

FR: Diane Craney, Government Relations Program Specialist
Wisconsin Education Association Council

RE: Support Passage of Senate Substitute Amendment to SB529 –
Education for Children with Disabilities

DA: Tuesday February 14, 2006

WEAC supports Senate Substitute Amendment to SB529

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) was signed into law on December 3, 2004. Its provisions, with the exception of highly qualified teacher requirements which were effective immediately, became effective on July 1, 2005. With this reauthorization of IDEA 2004, Wisconsin is reviewing and revising current state statutes.

Chapter 115 Update Process

DPI brought together special education stakeholders (parents, educators, administrators, school boards) in an attempt to reach consensus on legislation to update Chapter 115. Senate Substitute Amendment to SB529 is the result of this process.

WEAC supports Senate Substitute Amendment to SB529 because it does all of the following:

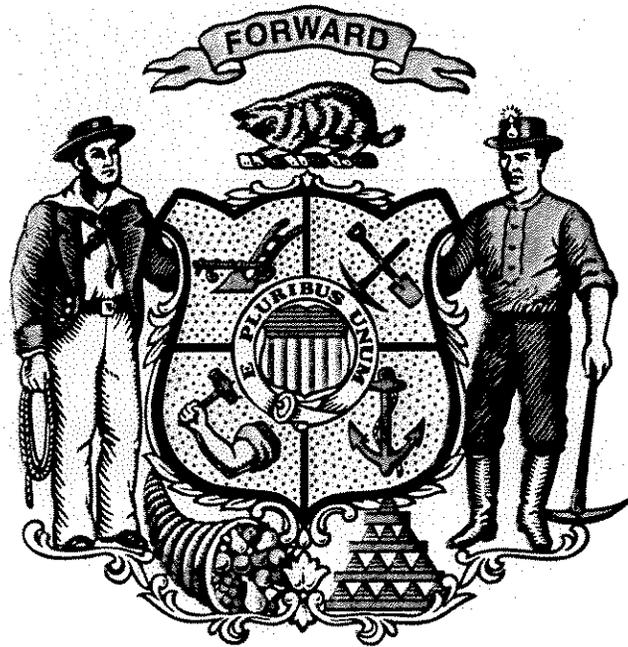
- Maintains Wisconsin's seamless Individualized Education Program (IEP) process
- Requires post-secondary transition planning at age 14
- Allows revision without re-convening the IEP team for a meeting
- Puts into place a complete timeline for the evaluation process
- Allows the option for more time at an IEP team meeting
- Requires the special education teacher on the IEP team to have recent training or experience in the child's special education needs

For more information:

Please feel free to contact Diane Craney, Government Relations Program Specialist, with any questions or comments about this memorandum. Diane can be reached by e-mail at craneyd@weac.org or by phone at 608-298-2356. Thank you.

Stan Johnson, President
Dan Burkhalter, Executive Director







**State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction**

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

**Joint Committee on Education
February 14, 2006**

**Department of Public Instruction
Testimony on 2006 Senate Bill 529/Assembly Bill 945**

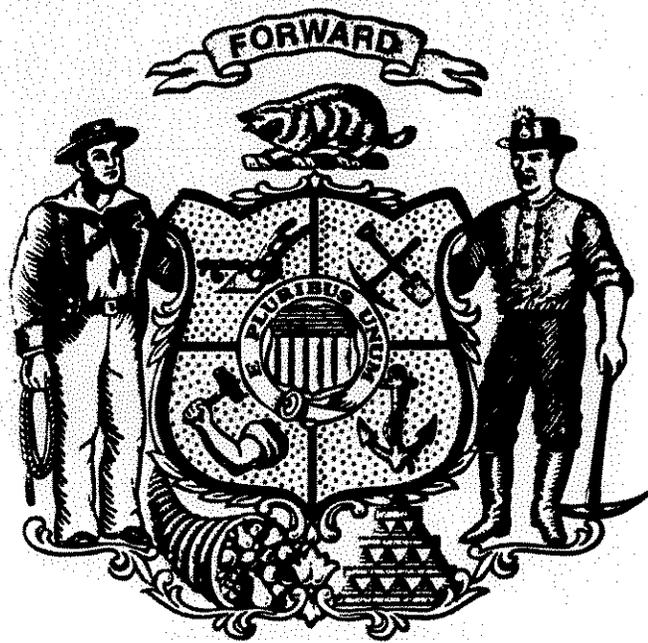
My name is Carolyn Stanford Taylor. I am the Assistant State Superintendent, Division for Learning Support: Equity and Advocacy, at the Department of Public Instruction. On behalf of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, thank you, Chairpersons Olsen and Towns and members of the Joint Committee for the opportunity to be here today to testify on Senate Bill 529/Assembly Bill 945. This bill would amend Wisconsin special education law. The department is so pleased to support this bill.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) was reauthorized and became effective in July 2005. In response to a number of new provisions, the department established a stakeholder group to provide

input, advice and multiple perspectives in the implementation of the new law. The group includes representatives from major education groups—School Administrators Alliance, Wisconsin Education Association Council, Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Cooperative Education Service Agencies, Department of Health and Family Services, Department of Corrections as well as individuals representing principals, large urban districts and classroom teachers. Parent organizations, including Wisconsin Coalition for Advocacy, Family Assistance Center for Education, Training and Support, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Wisconsin Statewide Parent Educator Initiative and Quality Education Coalition also are members.

This group has provided valuable input and advice to the department around many of the new provisions in federal law. These include data collection and reporting, establishment of goals to improve results for children with disabilities, the focus of the department's monitoring role, and, in addition, an examination of state special education law to determine what additional state law requirements should be maintained in Wisconsin.

From the outset, the State Superintendent's position regarding state special education law has been the department would not support legislation without stakeholder consensus. The large stakeholder group worked hard to reach consensus. When the stakeholder group was struggling to move ahead, State Superintendent Burmaster responded by appointing a smaller representative group from the larger group and the department contracted with a seasoned arbitrator to mediate the process.



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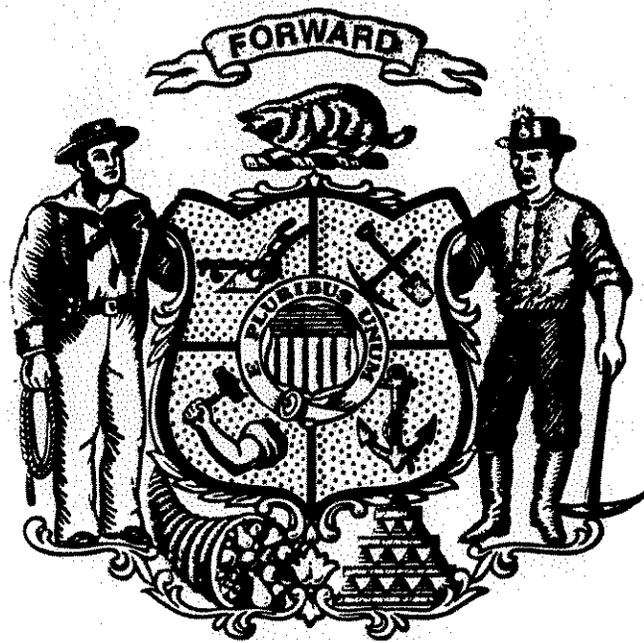
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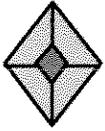
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Stan Johnson, President
Dan Burkhalter, Executive Director







WI FACETS

Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training and Support, Inc.
2714 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Drive ♦ Milwaukee, WI ♦ 53212
(414) 374-4645 ♦ 877-374-4677 ♦ FAX (414) 374-4655 ♦ TDD (414) 374-4635
www.wifacets.org ♦ wifacets@wifacets.org

February 14, 2004

Re: SB 529 and AB 945 – Speaking in Favor

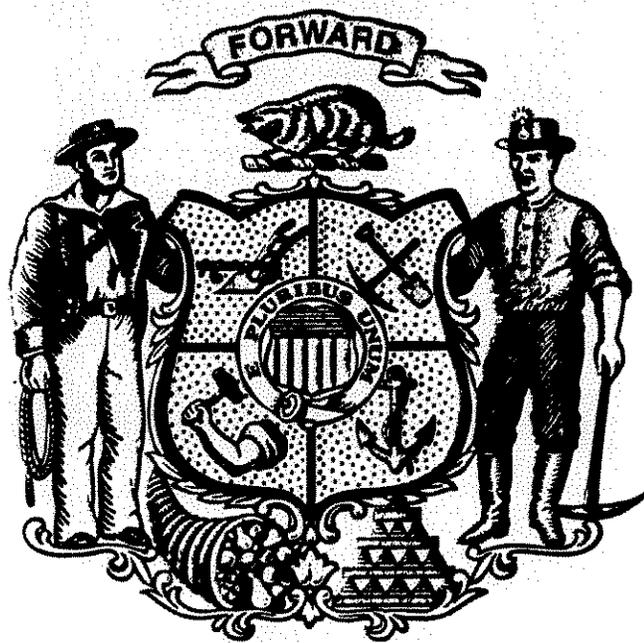
When federal law, IDEA 2004, was reauthorized in December 2004, all special education stakeholders were keenly aware of the many significant changes contained in the law, including a very controversial requirement for all state education agencies to justify any deviations in state rules from federal rules. Parents were very aware that our current state law, Chapter 115, has traditionally offered stronger protections for parents and children with disabilities than federal law. Parents truly hoped that our legislators would uphold important parts or all of our current state law and not allow the federal government to define what special education should be in Wisconsin. Parents were horrified when key school stakeholder groups initiated SB 529 to “federalize” Chapter 115 – which meant losing many beneficial provisions for families and children.

The Quality Education Coalition (QEC), a coalition of over 50 parent groups, disability-related organizations and many individual parents, identified **33 key areas** that parents felt important related to Chapter 115. Some of these areas included: loss of short term objectives; elimination of the 90 day seamless timeline from referral to placement; delay transition-planning from 14 to age 16; elimination of the requirement to have a teacher with “recent and extensive expertise and training in the disability of the child” on the IEP team; and the lack of clear guidelines for “informed parent consent” especially when waiving rights.

WDPI brought together 24 stakeholders to try to reach consensus on conforming Chapter 115 with IDEA 2004. I was one of four stakeholders representing parents. When this group reached impasse, State Superintendent Libby Burmaster asked 7 of us to meet with a mediator to try to reach consensus. The mediation group included 3 parent representatives and representatives of WEAC, Milwaukee Public Schools, WI School Board Association and WI School Administrators Alliance. After nearly 58 hours of work and considerable (and painful) give and take, the small group reached consensus on amendment language on **10 items** related to SB 529 which meant that the law will now at least meet some of the needs of all stakeholders. On February 8th, the large stakeholder group unanimously supported the consensus language. Since February 8th, QEC has attempted to alert its members and parents statewide that a consensus document was reached which **QEC is supporting**.

I am the parent of a son with autism. I also serve as the Co-Director for Wisconsin FACETS, one of two IDEA-funded WI FACETS is one of two IDEA-funded Parent Training and Information Centers in Wisconsin and also Wisconsin's only IDEA-funded Community Parent Resource Center. Last year, WI FACETS' PTIC project services reached 161,822 parents and 69,470 professionals in Wisconsin. WI FACETS has worked hard to arrive at consensus language. While we don't have everything that we feel parents and children need, we are supporting the bills.

Sincerely,
Jan Serak



February 14, 2006

Senate Bill 529 and Assembly Bill 945

Members of the Senate Committee on Education

Members of the Assembly Committee on Education

Good Morning!

My name is Patricia Yahle. I am the Director of Special Services for the Milwaukee Public Schools and am the Chairperson of the State Superintendent's Council on Special Education. I am here to testify on behalf of Senate Bill 529 and Assembly Bill 945.

I have provided services to students with disabilities in MPS and their families since 1972. My career has spanned the entire life of the federal legislation regarding educational services for students with disabilities now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

Special Education laws incorporate three very important principles that when combined and appropriately implemented ensure access, achievement and post-school success for students with disabilities.

- Data driven decision making throughout the planning process we have all come to know as the IEP process incorporates the use of carefully gathered data to support decisions that form the basis of educational planning for the student.
- Individualized decision making requires that team members to look carefully at each student and note their unique strengths, challenges, their interests and dreams to craft a program of learning that will spell success long after their school career has ended.
- Parents as valued partners in the education process of their children ensure those family members who know their children best contribute important clues to the best possible program decisions. Parents then provide the essential home implementation component and support for the carryover of skills and practice while at the same time supporting and rewarding their child's' hard work at school. Over the years the parent role changed from observers to equal participants in the education planning process for student with disabilities.

The federal laws and state laws have seen many changes throughout the years but these basic elements...data driven decision making, individualized decision-making and parents as partners.... remain critical elements for student success.

The recent reauthorization of IDEA in December of 2004 brought a renewed emphasis on increased outcomes. The IEP decision-making process and procedures remain important components to the design of individualized programs to guarantee a student's success. The reauthorized IDEA seeks to reduce paperwork and causes professionals to focus on sound strategies that guarantee higher educational outcomes.

Last spring, the State Superintendent directed the Department of Public Instruction to gather a group of twenty three stakeholders together to review current state law and make recommendations for changes, if any, to conform state law to federal law. Two months ago, a group of seven of the original stakeholders, along with a group of four additional advisors, completed the necessary consensus decision-making process and recommendations. I was honored to be a part of this group and pleased to be a part of such an important activity.

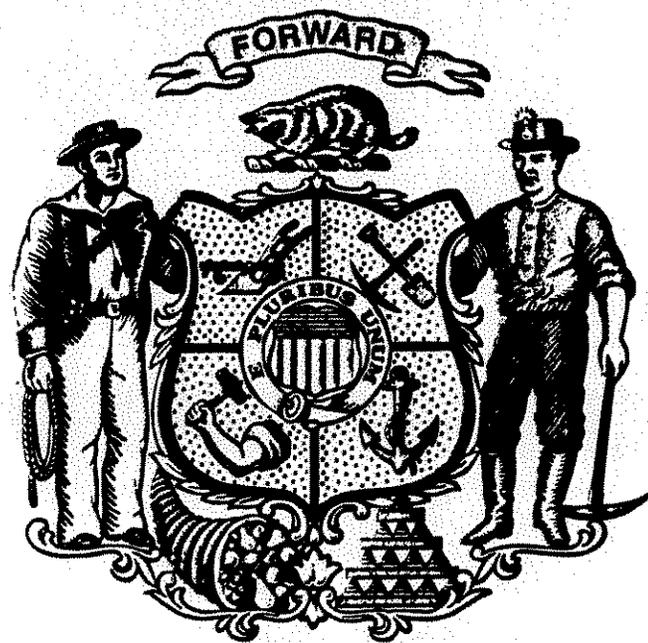
As a representative of the Milwaukee Public Schools my focus during the stakeholder process was to keep children at the center of the discussion, to increase local decision-making and flexibility, to reduce unnecessary paperwork and to preserve parent partnerships in the educational process. From the onset, I recognized the importance of reaching consensus on this Bill to enable our state to move forward and maintain its excellent educational history. I believe this legislation accomplishes these goals.

Wisconsin has a rich history of excellence in education and a legacy of strong parent support and partnership with school districts and educational agencies and support groups in matters of the education of Wisconsin's youth. It was of no surprise that the conversations regarding state law revisions included a wide variety of opinions and ideas. There was, however, one common interest that was shared among every stakeholder and one common interest that guided the stakeholder group to its final consensus decision. This common interest was a steadfast commitment to the highest quality education and outcomes for students with disabilities throughout the State. Students were the center of every discussion.

It is with that student focus that parents, teachers, district administrators, advocates, educational agencies and school boards across the state joined in reaching a consensus agreement with the proposed legislation that is before you today.

I congratulate the stakeholder group for this strong showing of support and commitment. I want to express my appreciation to the Department of Public Instruction for their commitment to the stakeholder process.

I urge you to move this legislation forward and to adopt it as the law for students with disabilities across the great state of Wisconsin.



TO: Members of the Senate and Assembly Committees on Education
FROM: Vicki Brown
DATE: February 14, 2006
RE: SB 529 and AB 945

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today on SB 529/AB 945. While I have been before several of you before in my capacity as the Rock County Treasurer, it is as the mother of Genevieve Brown, an 8th grade Special Education student in the Janesville School District that brings me to today's hearing.

In speaking with Representative Town's, who is my own personal representative in the Assembly, I was told the intent of the bill was for state law to be in line with federal law as well as to reduce paperwork for school staff. I support the intent, however **there are two specific items in this bill that I ask you to amend.**

First, current law requires that an evaluation, an IEP, and a placement determination for a child must be completed within 90 days after referral of the child. This bill requires an evaluation to be completed within 60 days but removes the deadline for the IEP and placement.

Speaking from personal experience, when our daughter, Genevieve, was in third grade in a parochial school it became apparent during the January parent-teacher conferences that she needed to be assessed for a learning disability. Geni had an uncontrolled seizure disorder and was having multiple seizures most every day, including many drop-attack grand mal seizures. In early February we asked our local public school district for an assessment. With Geni's teacher becoming more and more frustrated and with the amount of homework and catch-up work increasing daily, we pulled our daughter out of the parochial school on February 19. The assessment was done the first few days of March and it was determined that for many subjects our daughter was well below grade level.

It was not until April 23rd that our daughter went back to school, this time at the public elementary school. The assessment was requested the first of February. It was determined the first of March Geni needed Special Ed classes. However the elementary school she would be attending had not dealt with uncontrolled seizures before and it was nearly the full 90 days allowed by law before the school felt prepared for Geni to attend classes there.

I would ask that this bill be amended to continue the current requirement that each of the evaluation, the IEP and the placement be done within 90 days of initial referral of a child. Three months is ample time. Removing a deadline for the IEP and placement

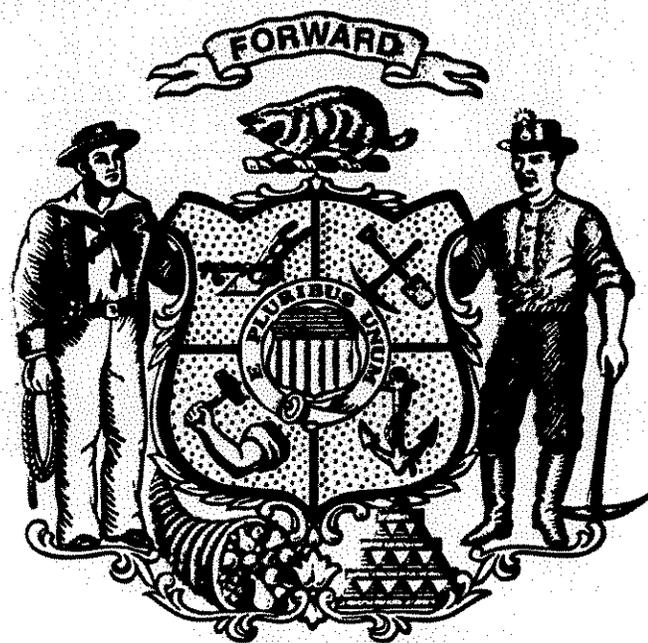
will mean other children like my daughter will not be returned or placed in an appropriate classroom setting for who knows how long. Would my daughter, or other children like my daughter, have missed the entire second semester of third grade and perhaps even some of fourth grade if there were no IEP or placement deadlines? Please amend this bill to keep the current timeline in place.

The second item in this bill I ask you to amend concerns the age at which Special Education students prepare for the transition to post secondary goals. Under current law, beginning when a child is 14 the annual IEP must include the courses of study needed to prepare the child for a success transition to their postsecondary goals. Under this bill, postsecondary goals are not addressed until the child is 16.

My daughter is 14 and her next IEP will cover her first year of high school. While the number of Geni's seizures has been greatly reduced as a result of the brain surgery she underwent the summer between her sixth and seventh grades, it is very unlikely that she will be going on to a four-year college. Geni, and other children like her, will need all four years of high school to prepare them for their postsecondary goals. **Please amend this bill to keep the current requirement of addressing post secondary goals at age 14 so Special Ed kids have a better chance of becoming successful adults.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Vicki L. Brown
5504 W Fenrick Rd
Janesville, WI 53548



February 14, 2006

To The Joint Education Committee:

I thank you for the opportunity to speak in favor of aligning the federal IDEA with Wisconsin Chapter 115. My opinions are based upon 30 years of special education administration, research conducted to study effectiveness of the IEP, serving on a local school board, and most importantly as a parent of a child with cognitive disabilities and other health impairments. I wish to speak as a parent.

The success my daughter experienced in public school was due to her primary teacher, an administrator who cared, and the level of participation I, as a parent, was encouraged to engage. Her success was based on several creative education decisions that were not rule driven, but were care driven, it was coordination of school and home, it was collaboration of ideas and it was an understanding of my daughter's unique and individual needs.

I believe the alignment of IDEA and Chapter 115 allows more flexible and creative ideas to be generated around student interests and needs, permit student-based decisions in local schools and communities, and be driven by local resources. The more the state rule exceeds federal requirements, the more rigid and stricter service delivery becomes: Special Education is already rule-intensive and the focus of service is compliance, alignment helps us to understand student achievement and student success.

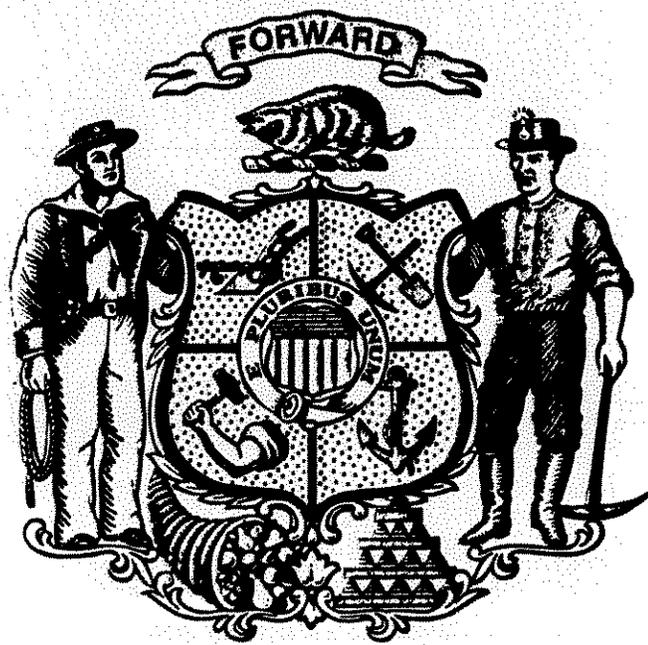
We have seen success in Wisconsin's special education program. Most success stories happen as parents, teachers, and students develop meaningful education programs together. These are developed in school building IEP teams, not necessarily because of enhanced rule implementation, but where students, teachers, and parents are free to set a realistic course of action. These are local decisions, not State directed rules. For example under IDEA there is no mention for short-term objectives like we saw in IDEA-97. There has been discussion that short-term objectives should be part of Chapter 115. The real issue is some students need short-term objectives and others do not. IDEA and Chapter 115 are too broad to specifically direct individual student needs. This is a decision that needs to be made locally, not through entrenching Chapter 115 with stricter rules.

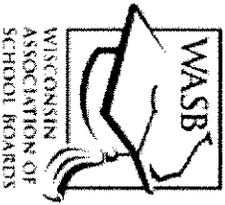
The federal IDEA covers education programming covering thirteen disability groups - a wide spectrum of definitions. The IDEA is not meant to be prescriptive; it was originally focused on generalized principles of known educational practices. It has become prescriptive and this has meant increased compliance to rules, not service delivery.

We now have a choice to continue the "enhanced rules" or to improve student achievement. The "enhanced rules" do not relate to student achievement or success; flexibility in meeting individual needs does.

Today my daughter is doing great, she is happy, and she lives a life with value and meaning. Today we can allow this same flexibility and local decision-making work for other students in our Wisconsin special education programs around the state. We can do this by aligning Chapter 115 to the federal IDEA. Thank you for your attention.

Respectfully,
Kirby Lentz, Ed.D.
President/CEO
Chileda
1020 Mississippi Street
La Crosse, WI 54601
608-782-6480, ext 237





LOCAL LEADERSHIP ON SPECIAL EDUCATION
The Alignment of State and Federal Special Education Laws
Support for Senate Bill 529/Assembly Bill 945
February 14, 2006

The Wisconsin Association of School Boards is calling for the alignment of Wisconsin's special education laws with federal laws to promote greater local leadership on special education.

In 2004, Congress reauthorized the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The new law recognizes three decades of school districts' developed experience and professional judgment in meeting the educational needs of students with disabilities while maintaining students' basic civil rights and procedural safeguards.

For decades, Wisconsin has been a pioneer in serving special education students, adopting the nation's first special education law in 1973. Two years later, the federal government followed suit and adopted its own special education law. What has followed has been more than 30 years of overlapping state and federal regulations, aiming at the same goal with different specifics. This has caught school boards and administrators between layers of inconsistent federal laws, federal administrative policies, state laws, state administrative policies and court precedents, leaving little room for local accountability.

Aligning state and federal laws will eliminate these overlapping requirements and propel special education toward a system that focuses on academic achievement and outcomes for all students. It will give school boards and administrators the opportunity to govern special education, hold staff accountable and use their professional judgment to a greater degree.

Below are highlights of Wisconsin Chapter 115 requirements that exceed IDEA 2004 and a rationale for alignment. Consensus agreements are noted.

IEP TEAM PROCESS	
<p>1) At least one special education teacher must have extensive and recent training and experience in the disability area.</p>	<p>IDEA 2004 requires all teachers to be highly qualified in alignment with the No Child Left Behind Act.</p> <p>The state's outdated model focuses on labels, not children.</p>

	<p>Regardless of disability label – or lack thereof – children have a wide range of needs. There is no one set of training that will meet the needs of all children in a disability area. Rather, teachers should have the training and experience that meet the particular needs of the children they are teaching.</p> <p>Furthermore, Congress adopted the provisions of IDEA 2004 with the specific intent “to reduce the need to label children as disabled in order to address the learning and behavioral needs of such children.”</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Require at least one teacher to have “recent training or experience related to the child’s known or suspected special education needs.”</p>
<p>2) The individual education plan (IEP) team conducts evaluation and determines placement in addition to developing the IEP.</p>	<p>IDEA 2004 directs the IEP team to develop the IEP based on the results of the initial evaluation or the most recent evaluation of the child. It does not direct the IEP team to determine placement. A seamless process in which the IEP team conducts evaluations, develops an IEP and determines placement may be best, but it is not necessary to require it in state statute.</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Maintain the seamless process so that the IEP teams continue to conduct evaluations, develop the IEP and determine placement.</p>
<p>3) Additional rights are discussed at the beginning of every IEP team meeting.</p>	<p>Currently, paperwork drives the process rather than a child’s needs. IDEA 2004 already adequately ensures that parents are</p>

<p>4) Copy of evaluation report provided with notice of placement.</p> <p>5) A copy of procedural safeguards is to be provided more frequently than federal law.</p>	<p>informed of the rights and protections available to them under the law. As just one example, the detailed procedures required under the law must be summarized in readable form (in "language understandable to the general public" and in the primary language of the parents) and distributed to parents at every IEP meeting, whenever any change is being made to an IEP or placement, and when a due process hearing is requested by the parents.</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Eliminate requirements.</p>
<p>6) The local education agency (LEA – usually a school district) must identify educational needs/services for a child who is determined not to be a child with a disability.</p>	<p>School districts are already required to provide services to all children, regardless of need for disability. If a child is struggling in the regular education classroom, referred for an evaluation, and determined not to be a child with a disability, then it is incumbent upon the district to evaluate the curriculum and teaching style, and identify strategies to assist that child.</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Eliminate requirement.</p>
<p>7) If the parents or staff determine at any meeting that additional time is needed to permit meaningful parental participation, the LEA shall provide it.</p>	<p>Consensus agreement: Maintain requirement.</p>
<p>EVALUATIONS</p>	
<p>1) The LEA shall notify the parents of qualifications and names (if known) of the individuals who will conduct the evaluation.</p>	<p>School officials make every effort to select individuals most appropriate for any given evaluation. At times, however, the individuals conducting an evaluation may change depending on a child's needs. This requirement can hinder school</p>

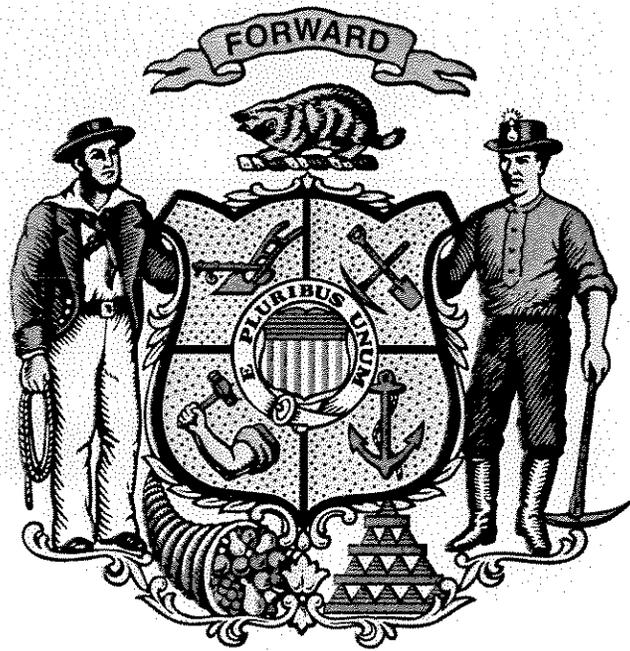
	<p>officials' ability to move forward with an evaluation. This information is and will continue to be available to the parents upon request.</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Continue notifying the parents of the names (if known) of individuals who will conduct the evaluation, but eliminate the requirement for parents to be notified of the evaluators' qualifications.</p>
<p>2) The IEP team reviews previous interventions and the effects of those interventions.</p>	<p>Reviewing previous interventions and the effects of those interventions is the substance of IEP meetings and thus, this is an unnecessary mandate in state law.</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Maintain requirement for IEP team to review previous interventions and the effects of those interventions.</p>
<p>3) The IEP team identifies the qualifications of the evaluators who are needed.</p>	<p>All state-licensed staff employed by a district are highly qualified to participate in the IEP process. School officials make every effort to select individuals most appropriate for any given evaluation.</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Eliminate requirement.</p>
<p>4) Each IEP team participant who administers tests, assessments, or evaluation materials as part of an evaluation or reevaluation provides a written summary of the participants' findings.</p>	<p>At times, this requirement creates unnecessary paperwork. Staff administering tests or evaluating materials should have the ability to submit collaborative reports when appropriate.</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Eliminate requirement.</p>

<p>5) Ninety-day time limit from receipt of referral to placement.</p>	<p>IDEA 2004 requires school officials to complete an initial evaluation within 60 days from <i>receipt of consent</i>. State law requires school officials to make a placement determination within 90 days from <i>receipt of referral</i>.</p> <p>To comply with both state and federal law for initial evaluations, schools must complete the evaluation within 60 days of receipt of consent, and make a placement determination within 90 days from receipt of referral. It is impractical to have two timelines with two different starting and ending points for the same process. This causes unnecessary confusion.</p> <p>During the initial evaluation process, getting the parent's consent can be time consuming. Rather than requiring the clock to start ticking at the point of referral, it makes more sense for it to start ticking when the parent has given his or her consent.</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Align the timeline with federal law and include requirement for districts to send request for consent within 15 business days of receiving a referral and require placement within 30 days of completing the evaluation.</p>
<p>6) The reevaluation of a student more than once a year if requested by a parent.</p> <p>7) Reevaluations every three years to determine eligibility.</p>	<p>Consensus agreement: Eliminate requirements.</p>

IEP CONTENT	
<p>1) Benchmarks or short-term objectives for all students with disabilities.</p>	<p>IDEA 2004 maintains the requirement for annual goals. State law adds the additional requirement of benchmarks or short-term objectives for each annual goal.</p> <p>The writing of formal short-term objectives or benchmarks for each annual goal takes a significant amount of time by the members of a student's IEP team, both in preparation for the meeting and at the IEP meeting. The elimination of this requirement should significantly reduce staff time engaged in the IEP "process" and instead, give teachers more time to spend with their students.</p> <p>Although formal benchmarks are not necessary under IDEA 2004 for most students, IEP teams often still will need interim points of measurement in the annual goals to help determine if the goal will be reached by the end of the school year. In addition, parents can request more formal benchmarks if so desired.</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Eliminate requirement.</p>
<p>2) Transitions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fourteen-year old transition statement. b. When appropriate, a statement of interagency transition responsibility. c. Measurable annual goals. 	<p>Congress increased the age to begin transition services for children with disabilities to 16 and enacted several changes to focus the transition process on outcomes for students.</p> <p>In the past, schools had to consider transition issues for disabled students, but did not have to set clear goals for life after school. Now, appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills are required.</p>

	<p>Additionally, the statement of transition services needed to assist the child in reaching those goals must also include "courses of study."</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Maintain 14-year old transition statement, but eliminate statement of interagency transition responsibility and measurable annual goals requirements.</p>
<p>3) Statement of how the child's parents will be regularly informed of the extent to which the child's progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the effective period of the IEP.</p>	<p>IDEA 2004 added a requirement for an IEP to include a description of how the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured and when periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals (such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards) will be provided. An additional statement as required by state law is no longer necessary.</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Eliminate requirement.</p>
<p>SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN</p>	
<p>School districts are required to report on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Extent to which special education and related services are or are not organized around particular disabilities. 2) Age ranges of pupils who are children with disabilities. 3) The range of severity of disability among children with disabilities. 	<p>Under IDEA 2004, states will be required to report on 20 special education indicators. In addition, the No Child Left Behind Act requires school districts to provide extensive information about the performance of their students. As such, a separate state special education report is no longer necessary.</p> <p>Furthermore, district staff spend an extensive amount of time preparing reports for the state which can be meaningless at the local level. Rather, school boards should work with their staff and interested parents to develop their own set of</p>

<p>4) The ratio of pupils to full-time equivalent staff including the ratio of pupils assigned both to special education instructional and related services staff and to total special education instructional support and administrative staff.</p> <p>5) The way parents participate in the development and review of the plan.</p> <p>6) The extent to which children with disabilities receive special education or related services beyond the school term.</p> <p>7) The LEA's plan for evaluating its staff special education in-service needs and the plan for meeting those needs.</p> <p>8) The LEA's plan for evaluating its system for the design and delivery of special education and related services and for addressing any needs that are identified by the evaluation.</p> <p>9) Annually the LEA shall provide a special education performance report to all parents of children enrolled in the LEA that evaluates the LEA's performance with regard to the factors referenced in the agency's evaluation of its plan.</p>	<p>improvement goals for special education and collect data meaningful for those goals.</p> <p>Consensus agreement: Eliminate requirement.</p>
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The Modernization and Improvement of Chapter 115

The Assembly and Senate Education Committee

February 14, 2006

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I) **A HISTORICAL VIEW – 1970 TO PRESENT**

A) **STATE OF WISCONSIN - 1973**

Wisconsin Chapter 89

B) **SPENDING CLAUSE STATUTE – FEDERAL - IDEA**

- 1) Seeks to ensure that "all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education."
- 2) Congress first passed IDEA as part of the Education of the Handicapped Act in 1970, 84 Stat. 175.
- 3) Congress amended it substantially in the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, 89 Stat. 773.
- 4) At the time the majority of disabled children in America were "either totally excluded from schools or sitting idly in regular classrooms awaiting the time when they were old enough to 'drop out,'" H. R. Rep. No. 94-332, p. 2 (1975).

C) **IDEA WAS INTENDED TO REVERSE THIS HISTORY OF NEGLECT ON A NATIONAL LEVEL**

- 1) The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., was designed to overcome the pattern of disregard and neglect disabled children historically encountered in seeking access to public education. See § 1400(c)(2) (congressional findings); S. Rep. No. 94-168, pp. 6, 8-9 (1975); *Mills v. Board of Ed. of District of Columbia*, 348 F.Supp. 866 (DC 1972); *Pennsylvania Assn. for Retarded Children v. Pennsylvania*, 334 F.Supp. 1257 (ED Pa. 1971), and 343 F.Supp. 279 (ED Pa. 1972).
- 2) As of 2003, the Act governed the provision of special education services to nearly 7 million children across the country. See Dept. of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Data Analysis System, http://www.ideadata.org/tables27th/ar_aa9.htm

- D) **IDEA IS "FREQUENTLY DESCRIBED AS A MODEL OF 'COOPERATIVE FEDERALISM.'"** *Little Rock School Dist. v. Mauney*, 183 F.3d 816, 830 (CA8 1999)
- 1) Congress has made clear that the Act itself represents an exercise in "cooperative federalism."
 - 2) Respecting the States' right where education is at issue, where expertise matters, and where costs are shared, is consistent with that cooperative approach. *See Wisconsin Dept. of Health and Family Servs. v. Blumer*, 534 U.S. 473, 495 (2002).
 - 3) It "leaves to the States the primary responsibility for developing and executing educational programs for children with disabilities, [but] imposes significant requirements to be followed in the discharge of that responsibility." *Board of Ed. of Hendrick Hudson Central School Dist., Westchester Cty. v. Rowley*, 458 U.S. 176, 183 (1982).
 - 4) Participating States must certify to the Secretary of Education that they have "policies and procedures" that will effectively meet the Act's conditions. 20 U.S.C. § 1412(a).
 - 5) State educational agencies, in turn, must ensure that local schools and teachers are meeting the State's educational standards. 20 U.S.C. §§ 1412(a)(11), 1412(a)(15)(A).
 - 6) Local educational agencies (school boards or other administrative bodies) can receive IDEA funds only if they certify to a state educational agency that they are acting in accordance with the State's policies and procedures. § 1413(a)(1).

II) **THE CORE OF THE FEDERAL STATUTE - 2004**

- A) **COOPERATIVE PROCESS THAT IT ESTABLISHES BETWEEN PARENTS AND SCHOOLS.** *Rowley, supra*, at 205-206.
- 1) "Congress placed every bit as much emphasis upon compliance with procedures giving parents and guardians a large measure of participation at every stage of the administrative process, ... as it did upon the measurement of the resulting IEP against a substantive standard".
 - 2) The central vehicle for this collaboration is the IEP process.

B) **STATE EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES MUST IDENTIFY AND EVALUATE DISABLED CHILDREN**, §§ 1414(a)-(c), develop an IEP for each one, § 1414(d)(2), and review every IEP at least once a year, § 1414(d)(4).

- 1) Each IEP must include an assessment of the child's current educational performance, must articulate measurable educational goals, and must specify the nature of the special services that the school will provide. § 1414(d)(1)(A).

C) **PARENTS AND GUARDIANS PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE IEP PROCESS**

- 1) They must be informed about and consent to evaluations of their child under the Act. § 1414(c)(3).
- 2) Parents are included as members of "IEP teams." § 1414(d)(1)(B).
- 3) They have the right to examine any records relating to their child, and to obtain an "independent educational evaluation of the[ir] child." § 1415(b)(1).
- 4) They must be given written prior notice of any changes in an IEP, § 1415(b)(3), and be notified in writing of the procedural safeguards available to them under the Act, § 1415(d)(1).
- 5) If parents believe that an IEP is not appropriate, they may seek an administrative "impartial due process hearing." § 1415(f).

D) **THE IDEA IS ATYPICAL**

- 1) It casts an affirmative, beneficiary-specific obligation on providers of public education.
- 2) School districts are charged with responsibility to offer to each disabled child an individualized education program (IEP) suitable to the child's special needs. 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400(d)(1), 1412(a)(4), 1414(d).

Reference: BRIAN SCHAFFER, a minor, by his parents and next friends, JOCELYN AND MARTIN SCHAFFER, ET AL., PETITIONERS v. JERRY WEAST, SUPERINTENDENT, MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, ET AL. U.S. Supreme Court, 04-698, November 14, 2005

III) **KEY CONCEPTS**

A) **A FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE)**

- 1) IDEA recognizes that, to the extent possible, children with disabilities are entitled to the same educational experience as their non-disabled peer.
- 2) Centerpiece of the law is the FAPE concept.
- 3) Generally, FAPE means that children with disabilities are entitled to a publicly financed education that is appropriate to their age and abilities.
- 4) Specifically, FAPE means special education and related services that are available to all children with disabilities in a state that:
 - a) Are provide at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge;
 - b) Meet the standards of the state educational agency (SEA);
 - c) Include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school in the state; and
 - d) Are provided in conformity with the Individualized Education Program established for the child.

B) **LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)**

- 1) Congress recognized that many children with disabilities were unnecessarily separated from their peers and educated in alternative environments.
- 2) IDEA recognizes that there is an array of placements that meet the general requirements of providing FAPE in the least restrictive environment (LRE).
- 3) LRE may change from child to child, school to school, and district to district.
- 4) In developing the IEP, parents and the local educational agency are empowered to reach appropriate decisions about what constitutes LRE for the individual child, including placements that may be more or less restrictive in order to maximize the child's benefit from special education and related services.

C) **AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)**

- 1) The Individualized Education Program, or IEP, is the key document developed by the parent and their child's teachers and related services personnel that lays out how the child receives a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.
- 2) Among other components, the IEP lays out:
 - a) The child's academic achievement and functional performance,
 - b) Describes how the child will be included in the general education curriculum,
 - c) Establishes annual goals for the child and described how those goals will be measured,
 - d) States what special education and related services are needed by the child,
 - e) Describes how the child will be appropriately assessed including through the use of alternate assessments, and
 - f) Determines that accommodations may be appropriate for the child's instruction and assessments.

Reference:
Guide to "Frequently Asked Questions"
Committee on Education and the Workforce
Subcommittee on Education Reform
February 17, 2005

IDEA 2004 REQUIRES STATES TO:

- 1) Identify any of their requirements that exceed those in IDEA 2004. (Appendix)
- 2) Minimize the number of such requirements.

IV) **THE MODERNIZATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF CHAPTER 115**

A) **STATE OF WISCONSIN UPDATE**

**Wisconsin Chapter 115
Updated 1997**

1) **All primary disabilities**

Cognitive Disability (CD)
Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD)
Specific Learning Disability (LD)
Speech or Language Impairment (SL)
Autism (A)
Deaf-Blind (DB)
Hearing Impairment (HI)
Other Health Impairment (OHI)
Orthopedic Impairment (OI)
Significant Developmental Delay (SDDD)
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
Visual Impairment (VI)

2) **WI Data Collection Systems**

Implemented in 2004-2005; 2004-05 enrollment data were included in this transition year collection and are not comprehensive so should be interpreted with caution.

*Enrollment by Primary Disability All Students Groups Arranged Alphabetically Left to Right Entire State: (ALL School Types) 2004-2005								
	School Type	Enrollment PK-12	CD	EBD	LD	SL	Other Primary Disab	w/o Disability
State	Elem	402,737	0.9%	1.1%	3.1%	5.6%	2.9%	86.3%
	Mid/Jr Hi	168,151	1.4%	2.3%	6.7%	1.2%	2.2%	86.2%
	High	286,262	1.6%	2.3%	7.1%	0.4%	1.7%	86.9%
	El/Sec	6,345	3.1%	2.8%	5.3%	1.3%	2.9%	84.7%

*WINSS/Data Analyses

B) CONSENSUS REPORTS: SPECIAL EDUCATION

- 1) **Fordham Foundation/ Progressive Policy Institute: Rethinking Special Education (2001)**
www.edexcellence.net/library/special_ed/index.html
- 2) **OSEP: Learning Disabilities Summit (2001)** www.air.org/ldsummit
- 3) **National Research Council: Minority Over-Representation in Special Ed (2002)** <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10128.html>
- 4) **President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (2002)**
www.ed.gov/inits/commissionsboards/whspecialeducation/index.html

C) REPORTS CALL FOR CHANGE

Change in:

-  **How Children are Taught.**
-  **How Teachers are Prepared.**
-  **How Children are Identified for Special Education.**
-  **The Role of Research for Informing Instruction and Behavior.**

Goal: Prevent academic and behavioral difficulties through effective instruction.

D) A NEW FOCUS ON READING

- 1) **6% of all students in schools are identified as LD; 52% of the special ed population.**
- 2) **90% with high incidence disabilities.**
- 3) **80- 90% of those identified as LD are impaired in reading.**
- 4) **2/5 children in special education because they can't read adequately.**

Wait to Fail model that sometimes stabilizes but rarely remediates.

E) **RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION: PROBLEM SOLVING**

- 1) *Focus shifts from who is eligible to concerns about providing effective instruction.*
- 2) **Scientifically Based Research for Instruction:**
 - a) Ensures that practices and programs are the most effective approach for individual students and their needs.
 - b) Practices that are grounded in scientific research are actually tested to determine which students will benefit most.
 - c) Best practices should be proven practices.

What Works Clearing House - [http://www.w-w-c.org/Ed. Gov](http://www.w-w-c.org/Ed.Gov)
<http://www.ed.gov/ncib/methods/whatworks/research/index.html>

V) **SUMMARY**

A) **OLD THINKING TO NEW THINKING**

- 1) **The best way to influence behavior** is to influence people's feelings. (Kotter, J.P. and Cohen, D.S. (2002). *The heart of change: Real-life stories of how people change their organizations*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.)
- 2) **The heart of change** is in the emotions.

Large-scale change is accomplished when people are shown a truth that influences their feelings rather than just given an analysis that alters their thinking about an issue.

B) **EMPHASIS**

- 1) Identify.
- 2) Minimize.
- 3) Modernize.
- 4) Improve.

- | |
|--|
|  Positional conflict/continuum of no chance. |
|  Principled conflict/continuum of chance. |

C) **REPORT DUE**

- 1) Beginning 2 years after the date of enactment of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.
- 2) The Secretary shall submit an annual report to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate regarding the effectiveness of the program under this paragraph and any specific recommendations for broader implementation of such program, including:
 - 3) **Reducing.**
 - a) The paperwork burden on teachers, principals, administrators, and related service providers; and
 - b) Noninstructional time spent by teachers in complying with this part.
 - i) Enhancing longer-term educational planning;
 - ii) Improving positive outcomes for children with disabilities;
 - iii) Promoting collaboration between IEP Team members; and
 - iv) Ensuring satisfaction of family members.

CHAPTER 115 REQUIREMENTS THAT EXCEED IDEA 2004

A) IEP TEAM PROCESS

- 1) The special education teacher has extensive/recent training and experience in the disability area.
- 2) IEP team conducts evaluation and determines placement in addition to developing the IEP.
- 3) Additional rights are discussed at the beginning of every IEP team meeting.
- 4) Copy of evaluation report provided with notice of placement.
- 5) The LEA must identify educational needs/services for a child who is determined not to be a child with a disability.
- 6) A copy of procedural safeguards is to be provided more frequently than federal law.

B) EVALUATIONS

- 1) The LEA shall notify the parents of qualifications and names (if known) of the individuals who will conduct the evaluation.
- 2) The IEP team reviews previous interventions and the effects of those interventions.
- 3) The IEP team identifies the qualifications of the evaluators who are needed.
- 4) Each IEP team participant who administers tests, assessments, or evaluation materials as part of an evaluation or reevaluation provides a written summary of the participants' findings.
- 5) Ninety-day time limit from receipt of referral to placement.

C) IEP CONTENT

- 1) Benchmarks or short-term objectives for all students with disabilities.
- 2) Fourteen-year old transition statement.

- 3) When appropriate, a statement of interagency transition responsibility.
- 4) Statement of how the child's parents will be regularly informed of the extent to which the child's progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the effective period of the IEP.

D) SPECIAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE REPORT

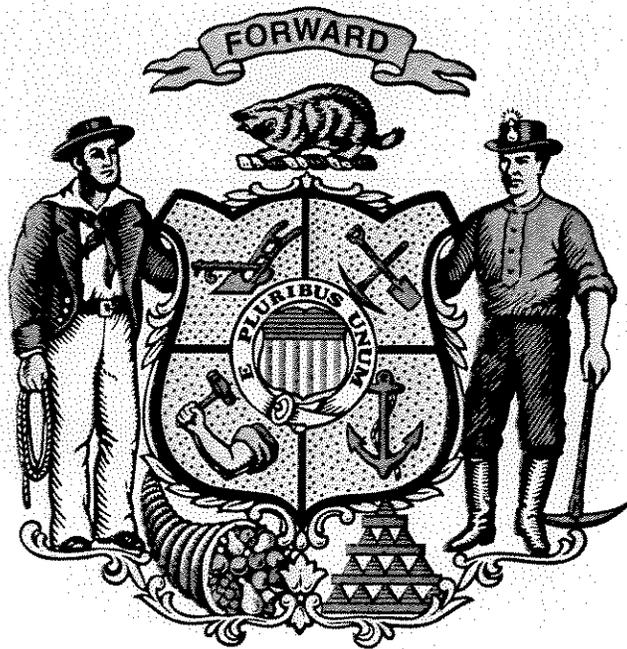
- 1) Extent to which special education and related services are or are not organized around particular disabilities.
- 2) Age ranges of pupils who are children with disabilities.
- 3) The range of severity of disability among children with disabilities.
- 4) The ratio of pupils to full-time equivalent staff including the ratio of pupils assigned both to special education instructional and related services staff and to total special education instructional support and administrative staff.
- 5) The way parents participate in the development and review of the plan.
- 6) The extent to which children with disabilities receive special education or related services beyond the school term.
- 7) The LEA's plan for evaluating its staff special education in-service needs and the plan for meeting those needs.
- 8) The LEA's plan for evaluating its system for the design and delivery of special education and related services and for addressing any needs that are identified by the evaluation, including all of the following (these are only covered in state statute):
 - a) The number of referrals under s. 115.777, Wis. Stats., and the percentage of those referrals resulting in the provision of special education and related services.
 - b) General information about the satisfaction of parents of children with disabilities and adult pupils who are receiving special education and related services with special education and related services.
 - c) General information about persons who no longer attend high school and who received special education and related services

provided by the LEA, such as whether they are employed, are living independently, and are enrolled in postsecondary education.

- d) If the LEA is a school district, the number of children with disabilities who attend the school district under s. 118.51, Wis. Stats., the disability of each such child, and the special education or related services received by each such child.
- 9) Annually the LEA shall provide a special education performance report to all parents of children enrolled in the LEA that evaluates the LEA's performance with regard to the factors referenced in the agency's evaluation of its plan under sub. (4)(j) as well as the statewide average with regard to factors in sub. (4)(j) 1-5.

Note: The Wisconsin one-year statute of limitation for Due Process Hearing is compatible with "federalization".

Reminder: Any school district can create and implement district specific policies.



Testimony in favor of Senate Bill 529/AB 945
By Senator Luther Olsen
Prepared for the Senate and Assembly Education
Committees

Good morning members of the Senate and Assembly Education Committees. It is my pleasure to testify before you today on this piece of legislation.

Representative Towns and I have worked diligently to put legislation before you today that everyone in the special education community agrees with.

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who was involved in the mediation group's efforts. Their hard work made today possible.

Some of you may be aware that Congress took a hard look at their special education laws and passed monumental legislation called IDEA 2004. This legislation was intended to help children with disabilities achieve high standards by:

- Promoting Accountability for results
- Enhancing parental involvement
- Using proven practices and materials
- Providing more flexibility and reducing paperwork burdens for teachers, states, and local school districts.

In addition, IDEA 2004 called upon individual states to review their special education laws and eliminate duplication or burdensome requirements that go above and beyond the new federal regulations.

This piece of legislation is Wisconsin's response to IDEA 2004. Because of the hard work of parents, advocates, educators, administrators, attorneys and all other interested groups, we have this piece of compromise legislation.

Like IDEA 2004, this bill will:

Allow teachers to spend less time on process, paperwork, and meetings, and instead spend more time with their students.

Currently, there are significant additional requirements that special education teachers must comply with at the state level in regards to

the education of their students. The focus of our efforts should be improving educational outcomes of students with disabilities, not with process and paperwork.

Simplify the myriad of regulations.

When Congress passed IDEA 2004, they wanted individual states to identify any state requirements not necessary to implement federal special education law and then minimize such requirements. Wisconsin has found significant overlap that we can address with this legislation.

Reduce costs.

Reducing paperwork requirements, meetings and reevaluations will provide savings that can be redirected to meet the priority needs of students in the district.

Reduce costly and time-consuming litigation.

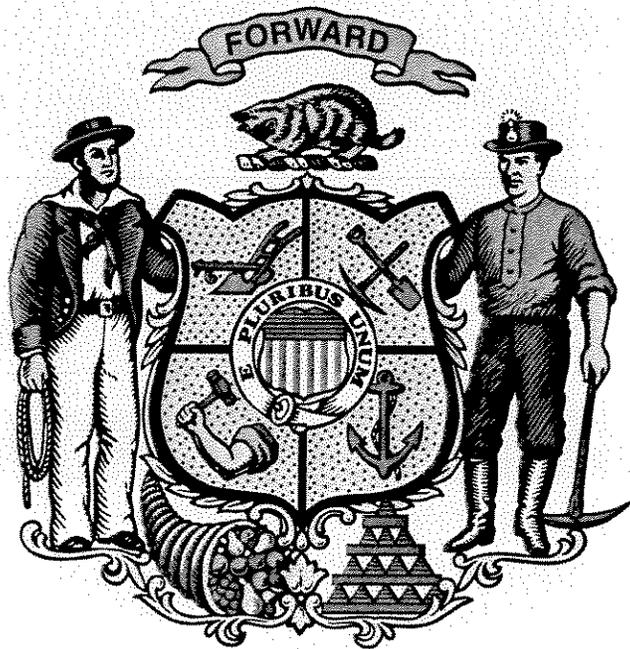
While our laws will always protect the procedural and civil rights of any student, this legislation will give schools and parents an improved complaint resolution process. It will also discourage frivolous due process claims that school districts do not have the resources to finance.

Simplify discipline procedures.

The discipline of schoolchildren with disabilities is a serious issue on which all administrators, teachers and parents want to agree. IDEA 2004 makes disciplining these students much less complicated while giving individual states a guide on appropriate discipline measures.

This bill may be packed full of specific detail and information, but it all boils down to one point: this bill makes educational outcomes for children with disabilities a priority. Because of the tireless efforts of the mediation group, we have a piece of compromise legislation that will give kids with special needs a better education.

Representative Towns may have some additional comments, if not; we are prepared to take questions if you have any.



Good Morning,

I am the Special Education director for CESA 7, a consortium of 38 school districts in northeast Wisconsin.

I am also the president of the Wisconsin Council of Administrators of Special Services (WCASS),

And the chair of the SAA (School Administrators Alliance), an umbrella organization that encompasses the state associations of District Administrators, Building Principals, Business Officials and Special education Directors.

It is with pleasure and great satisfaction that I am testifying this morning in support of SB 529 and AB 945.

It is with pleasure and great satisfaction, BECAUSE these two bills incorporate the consensus that was reached by the Wisconsin special education stakeholders on February 8th, 2006.

This agreement created a new Chapter 115 – one that incorporates the interests of all stakeholders, parents and schools, resulting in a new state law that is good for children with disabilities.

It is good because it includes:

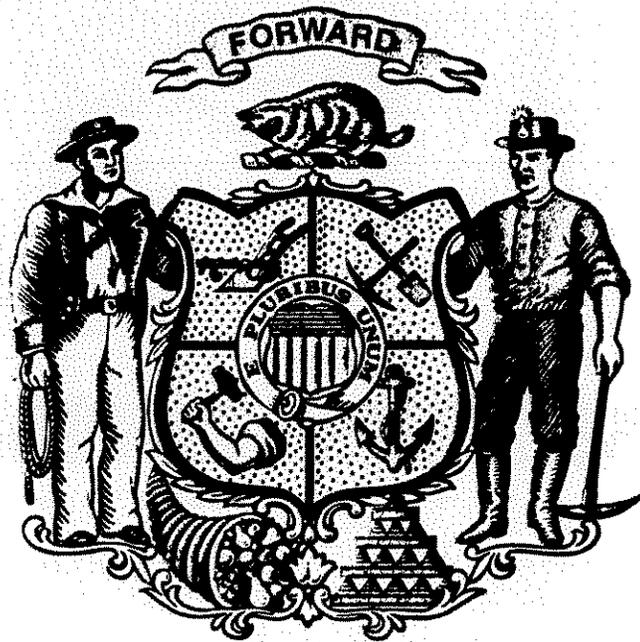
1. Planning and implementing meaningful transition services for 14 year old children with disabilities;
2. It provides the IEP team with ample time to engage in a meaningful evaluation of the child's needs;
3. It assures that the Wisconsin's efficient "seamless" IEP process will continue, its members identifying specific categories of the child's disabilities, and incorporating previous interventions in the IEP report, as well as allowing the LEA to designate its representative to the IEP team.
4. It allows IEP members to ask for additional time in order to engage in meaningful participation;
5. In addition, the new law calls for ongoing staff training in "special education needs" in order to insure that teachers bring "state of the art" knowledge to the IEP process.

My personal satisfaction with the consensus is also driven by another part of my professional life in which I am one of 3 partners administrating the WSEMS. This is a statewide system that dispatches professional mediators to resolve disputes between parents and schools at the local level. I represent the schools' interests and perspectives in this system. A parent advocate represents the parents' interests and perspectives. Jointly, we have also engaged in outreach training throughout the state, promoting the use of the mediation system (rather than

engaging in costly litigious proceedings). Our joint presentations, standing in front of the audiences side by side, promote collaboration between parents and schools. This consensus on SB 529 & AB 945 provides us, with another shining example to showcase to parents and schools that when there is a will to collaborate, there is a way to reach consensus.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify before you.

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DPI

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Beginning on December 8 and concluding on Tuesday, February 7, the smaller group met for close to fifty hours. The charge to this group was to work toward a goal of consensus and to report back to the large group and the department. I am so pleased to tell you they accomplished that goal. As you know, a bill was introduced by some schools' groups during this process. Changes to that language were made by the small group and have been agreed to by the large stakeholder group.

The following major elements are provisions in state law that would be different or that would exceed federal special education law. Agreements were reached in the areas of:

- Transition at 14 years
- A "new" 90-day timeline for evaluation, program planning and placement
- IEP members who need additional time
- The seamless IEP team process
- The IEP team identifies the child's category of disability
- Training/experience of the special education teacher on the IEP team

- Requirement for the evaluation report to include previous interventions and their effect
- LEA representative with the authority to commit resources
- Names of evaluators when known

It cannot go without saying that the work of the stakeholder group was difficult. All members approached this process with an understanding of its importance. They represented their constituencies well and argued enthusiastically for their positions. At the same time, each of them demonstrated again and again their commitment to working together and to preserving the positive environment for schools and parents we have worked so hard to establish and support in Wisconsin.

Everyone is likely to have a different reaction to elements in this consensus bill. People will like some of the things they see; probably no one will like everything. In the consensus-building process, no one at the table got everything he or she wanted. This consensus bill represents the very best efforts of the stakeholders to represent their constituencies.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.