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(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

## 1997-98

(session year)

## Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

## Committee on Education...

### 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**

\* Contents organized for archiving by: Stefanie Rose (LRB) (December 2012)

I am giving you a copy of a letter sent to Mr. Benson, a brief letter of why we chose WSVH for our children and other correspondence. I hope you will find, through this testimony, some of the evidence you will need to convince you that WSVH , is indeed, a vital aspect of my children's' education. Please come and see first hand what WSVH can provide for students which is not offered anywhere else in the state. I hope you will consider this issue to stop John Benson's proposal to close the school once and for all. If you have any questions please contact me at:

Mary & Terry Bortz  
2741 Harvard Dr. Janesville, WI 53545

608/758-3196

Remember that she is, first of all my child  
Let me see her smiling in her sleep.  
And let me think how lovely she is....  
Not about how delayed the smile was in coming.  
Help me not lose sight of my daughter  
In the sight of her limitations.

I know that you care for my child,  
And that you work hard with her.  
I need your expertise to help her become  
all that she is capable of being.

You need my help in understanding who she really is.  
And in the following through at home  
With things that are important.

Remember though, that you send her home at night,  
And have weekends off and paid vacations.  
Let me have the luxury of having a vacation...  
Sometimes physically, sometimes emotionally.  
For a day...a week...a month...  
Without your judging me.  
I will be there for her when you are long gone.

I love my child with an intensity that  
You can only imagine.  
If on a given day, I am tired or cross with her,  
Listen to me,  
Lighten my burden,  
But do not judge me.

Celebrate with me.  
Rejoice in who she is and who she will become.  
But forgive me if, from time to time,  
I shed a tear...  
For who she might have been.

We chose to enroll two of our children, Mary Alice and Abby, at WSVH because we knew it would be the best environment for them to reach their full potential. We enrolled Mary Alice as a residential student two years ago (entering 6th grade) and were excited to see her growth in self-confidence and self-reliance. In January of 1996 we were able to make the move to Janesville and enrolled Abby in third grade. Both girls are very happy to be learning in an environment that is both nurturing and challenging. All subjects are presented to the girls in the mode that ensures most successful learning - braille, adaptive physical education, hands-on science, living skills and mobility just to name a few. This was not possible in the local school district in Portage. Their time with the vision teacher was restricted due to the amount of students she needed to serve. Daily living skills was not covered in their programming. The skills acquired during vision time were not carried through to the regular classroom. At no time did either girl have a braille available to them in the regular classroom setting. Math was taught verbally - the 'aide' asked them the problem, they did the figuring in their head then told the 'aide' the answer and she wrote it down on paper. This is NOT an effective, nor successful manner, in which to teach math. Now, at WSVH, the girls are able to take their math work in braille, compute it independently and braille the answer themselves. Would this have happened if we had not moved them to WSVH? I do not think so. No matter how important this is to everyone involved in the academic field there are too many time constraints in the LEA. There are no regular classroom teachers that I am aware of that are knowledgeable in Nemeth Code math. This is just one example - what about Music, science, etc. How many regular ed teachers have been trained to teach visually impaired/blind children? There was a science class that I recall that taught the concept of erosion. How do you successfully teach erosion to a child that has never seen this particular effect? By repeated hands-on technique using a water table - but will a regular-ed teacher have the time to do this when he/she is responsible for 30 other children? Realistically the answer is no. Realistically, no matter how good the part-time vision program might be, the regular ed classroom is just not adequately set up to accommodate a visually impaired/blind student. And what about the disaster stories? I have had a regular ed teacher hesitate allowing my daughter to use a CCTV (an enlarging device) because it would discriminate against the other students due to the fact it might block their view certain classroom areas. Another teacher did not like working with my daughter on the CCTV because the movement on the screen (which I add was the only method she could see print) made the teacher nauseous.

There is also the important problem of acceptance. A blind child cannot identify anyone who may be harassing them, either physically or verbally - and yes, it does happen more than it should. And don't forget transportation. Are you willing to spend the money to make bus drivers aware of the special needs of blind students. Not all of them are going to get the mobility training they need to successfully negotiate bus travel. We had a situation where the school bus

Mary Alice usually rode was full so she was put on an alternate bus that did not stop at her learned destination. This bus, in Portage, stopped on the opposite side of the usual spot, in the traffic lane, with no close access to the sidewalk. Don't forget there is a whole spectrum to the lives of these children. While they were in their LEA they were not given any training for cafeteria lunch line even though I repeatedly requested it. The fact was, there just wasn't time to teach them. So, to remedy the situation an aide accompanied them through the line and got their food for them. This teaches reliance on another person - not independence. Plus, what does it do for their self-esteem when the other students can do all these things and they are, once again, different. Mary Alice and Abby are also able to have a good social life following the school day. There are activities planned daily for the students to participate in such as swimming, bowling, outings to movies, going to a restaurant, shopping and even horse back riding. These extra-curricular activities are so necessary to their life. They are able to put their mobility training to good use as well as having a great time with their friends. They are with their peers, they are the norm. At WSVH they are truly in their least restrictive environment.

Our two older girls, Ellen and Betsy, are enrolled at Parker HS . They made to adjustment to the move and now think Janesville is the best place to be. We are so glad that WSVH is here for our girls - they are learning, growing and succeeding to their full potential.

October 6, 1997

State Of Wisconsin  
Department of Public Instruction  
P. O. Box 7841  
Madison, WI 53707-7841

Dear John Benson,

I am compelled to write to you after receiving your letter to parents dated October 1, 1997. How I wish you could have lived some of the horror stories that have occurred within the local school districts before you became so intense in your mission to close WSVH. Maybe if the lack of consistent vision instruction had been given to your own child you would not think it was as adequate as you imply.

We moved from the Portage School District (which, as you know is served by CESA 5 and has what you consider a viable vision program) to Janesville in 1995 so that our two VI daughters could receive what we know to be the best education for VI students available in our state. This move was not made lightly - we put it off for years hoping not to uproot our two older girls who are not visually impaired and were (and still are) doing extremely well in their high school careers. We made this move because it HAD TO BE DONE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF OUR CHILDREN! We did not move so that our children could have extra-curricular activities as you have mentioned in your letter.

Having blind/VI children is an extremely low incidence occurrence. We did not know any better - and - most parents in our position are in the same boat. When the school district tells you, and they always do, that your child is at grade level and is getting everything in the home district that could be provided at WSVH you tend to believe them. Now, we know better. A complete education is not getting VI time when it's available as it is often done now in the local districts. Complete education is receiving the instruction you need, in the mode you learn most successfully, all day long. Not just an hour of Braille, auditory math instruction, sitting in during art class and basically trying to fit in a sighted environment when you do not have the experience to do so. At WSVH my children are learning at their full potential - braille is carried on throughout the day. Math is instructed in braille, music is taught in braille, everything, including the lunch menus is available in the mode my children need. What you are proposing - that they attend a school district that cannot properly accommodate them - is cruel. I also feel it is in violation of the rights under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act. You are denying them of their proper placement in what has already been deemed their Least Restrictive Environment.

You see, per MY request, Mary Alice was attending WSVH as a residential student before we moved here to join her. Abigail was enrolled in January 1995. Now they are both 'day students' and we are enjoying the best of both worlds. Contrary to what your letter states, no one offered me any information about WSVH. Thankfully, my husband and I are the

type of parents that search out information that will benefit our family. We are the ones that requested the first vision referral for our daughter Mary Alice. At no time did any school personnel (i.e. EEN) offer any information about WSVH. Information about WSVH is not readily available to parents - it must be sought out by the parents themselves. We are the ones that asked to have outreach personnel from WSVH come to Portage to assess needs of education for our daughters. We are the ones that had to fight every inch of the way for any adaptation that our daughters received. Knowing that Abigail would lose her vision, we are the ones that insisted she start Braille lessons along with Mary Alice. I took them three mornings a week (for 45 minutes per session) before school started so that they could get their instruction without missing any class time they were responsible for. I do not believe 45 minutes, 3 times a week, is adequate instruction time. At WSVH they get braille skills reinforced constantly. Yet, you're telling me that this home school district is the best environment for my children? How can you say that? As far as I know, the Portage District has one VI instructor to cover four school buildings. Her hands are somewhat tied as to how much time she can provide to each student, don't you think? Having worked with her and knowing that she is a dedicated teacher I can't help but feel for her lack of time with each individual she is responsible to educate. But, do I want to go back to that situation? Absolutely not!

There is no way a local school district can compete with WSVH. The teachers are caring, experienced individuals. They are NOT the self-serving people you portrayed them as in various newspaper articles. How can you honestly say that? They're hanging in at WSVH knowing that DPI does not support them because they do care - they have not only helped my children to become more independent learners but they have taught me - how to adapt situations at home and out in the public so that my girls can be more successful out of school as well as in school. Prior to being at WSVH I didn't have access to any adults who could advise me how to modify things and be so helpful to the entire family unit as well as their students.

I thought IDEA guaranteed my girls an education "in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) from among a Full Continuum of Alternative Placements based on the Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each student. Educational decisions should not be made simply on the basis of philosophy, limited school budgets, administrative convenience, or concerns about socialization". Your proposal to close the school removes my children from what has already been deemed THEIR Least Restrictive Environment and for all intents and purposes takes away the full continuum of alternative placement. Also, by focusing on the education cost per pupil (which I have yet to be able to reconcile) you are negating Placement Neutral Funding. Full inclusion, as you seem to support, is nothing more than your philosophy - it is not what all students need. It appears to me that our State Superintendent of School wishes to ignore the federal mandates of IDEA.

I would like to receive a copy of the accounting records that helped you come up with the final figure. I find it hard to believe that costs to support the LEA's have been deducted from the total figure. Would you please supply the fiscal reports necessary to validate the figure of "at least \$70,000" per pupil tuition (not that it should be a factor).

I found your letter replete with misinformation about the system...inaccuracies abound. What has not been addressed is educating parents about services their children need - services that must be provided through out the entire school day and not just when time permits. WSVH provides the atmosphere of total immersion in non-sighted learning just as WSD does for the hearing impaired. They are not two different needs as you would have us believe. Visual instruction needs to be integrated fully into the school day - not just when it can be scheduled in. Why are you discriminating against blind/VI students? Why not reconsider that WSVH is necessary - once again, it cannot be duplicated.

I cannot help but wonder why I received that mailing but I have not yet received the questionnaire that was to go out to all VI parents. Is this your way of making sure your bias is, excuse me, your information is fresh in the minds of all parents before completing the survey?

I will be sending copies of this letter to representatives, the Council for the Blind and others.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Mary Bortz  
2741 Harvard Dr.  
Janesville, WI 53645



Dear Ben

I'm writing to you on behalf of Terry & myself to beg your support of WSVH here in Janesville. Remember our talk at the fair last year when I commented about the fears we had about the possible school closing? Well, it appears John Benson (not Thompson as I had heard) is trying to do just that. As you know, we tried the local school district for many years and were faced with the fact the "inclusion" just does not work for our family. It was hard to move away from everyone and everything that had been so much a part of our lives (for so many years) but it was a move that we considered to be in the best interest of Mary Alice and Abigail. That decision has proved to be a correct one in our situation and it appalls me that John Benson wants to take this choice away from families. There is no way - no matter how many funds/teacher hours were to be invested - that local districts can duplicate the atmosphere of educating the child that now exists at Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides that students be allowed to an education "in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) from among a Full Continuum of Alternative Placements based on the Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each student. Educational decisions should not be made simply on the basis of philosophy, limited school budgets, administrative convenience, or concerns about socialization." Clearly Benson's proposal to close WSVH is in non-compliance with IDEA.

Is it possible for the Legislature to have a permanent, binding recommendation that would not only save WSVH now but protect it for the future? We cannot allow DPI to close it on a whim whenever the thought arises.

Not only has Benson proposed this closure without adequate justification but is, in effect, allowing for the closure to happen just by his announcement. Already we have lost four fine, dedicated teachers that were worried about job security. There have also been instances where Al Beeler (acting superintendent) has suggested to staff that they find other positions as soon as possible and has even offered transfers to the Outreach Services to some. My understanding (of what these personnel have told me) is that if they don't accept the position -now- then they are not entitled to unemployment compensation should the school close at the end of the 97-98 year. Is this any way to run a school? And, Al Beeler is just an acting superintendent - we have been without a principal since last spring and our superintendent resigned in June. I do not think that Mr. Beeler has any credentials in Exceptional Needs Education. Why is he here? Why can't the position be filled with someone who is not only qualified but who believes in, and supports, residential school?

The building itself is having problems this year too. The elevator in the elementary portion is out of order (since the second week of school). One teacher had to move his entire classroom to the first floor to accommodate a student in a wheelchair. If anything should happen to a student or staff member while on the second floor that would render them immobile it would be extremely difficult to get them downstairs. The bell system is not working to signal class changes and now the pool is out of order for some reason.

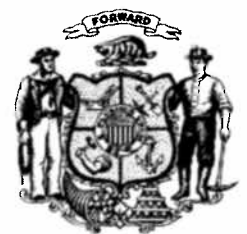
Please consider using your influence in saving the school, staff and educational opportunities for those who need it. OK?

Terry & Mary Bortz  
2741 Harvard Drive  
Janesville, WI 53545

608/758-3196



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Ass. 310 ; HB-603

REGISTERED TO SPEAK —  
BUT NEEDED TO LEAVE !

HELLO, MY NAME IS ROSE SLAGHT. I AM THE PARENT OF A NINETEEN YEAR OLD GUY NAMED DONNIE. I AM ALSO THE FOSTER PARENT OF A NINETEEN YEAR OLD GUY NAMED PAUL. THAT'S WHY I'M HERE.

IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY <sup>JOB</sup> EXPERIENCE AS A PARENT OF TWO FINE YOUNG MEN WHO BOTH HAPPEN TO HAVE SOME PROFOUND DISABILITIES; <sup>To provide</sup> THE ABSOLUTE BEST AND MOST APPROPRIATE EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES AS I'M SURE ALL OF YOU WOULD ALSO WANT FOR YOUR FAMILIES . BOTH MY GUYS ARE DEAF AND HAVE VISION CHALLENGES.

OUR STRUGGLES HAVE BEEN MANY, BUT THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE HAS PROVED PHENOMENAL!!

AS A FAMILY WE HAVE STUCK TOGETHER AND HAD THE CONTINUUM OF OPTIONS MADE AVAILABLE TO US. MY FIRST EXPERIENCE WAS IN WISCONSIN AND MY SON RECEIVED EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES IN 1978.

I WANT YOU TO KNOW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING THE FULL CONTINUUM OF SERVICES AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES. THE MENTALITY OF " ONE SIZE FITS ALL" IS MISGUIDED.

I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED IN HARD WORK, AS LIKE MANY FOLKS HERE. MY FAMILY HAS LIVED HERE FOR 37 YEARS AND IT SURPRISES ME THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT WOULD WANT TO CLOSE THE SCHOOL THAT SERVES CHILDREN WHO ARE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED. YOU MUST REALIZE THAT OF MOST OF THE OVER FIFTY STUDENTS WHO ATTEND SCHOOL AT WSVH HAVE HAD LITTLE OR MINIMAL SUCCESS AT THEIR LOCAL SCHOOLS. THIS IS DETRIMENTAL TO THEIR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND LEADS TO ISOLATION AND LESS THAN OPPORTUNITIES.

I'M SURE IF YOU WHO ARE PARENTS KNOW WE ALL WANT OUR CHILDREN TO HAVE PRODUCTIVE LIVES, FIND LOVE , BE PARENTS AND HAVE A GOOD LIFE. CHILDREN NEED TO FEEL UNDERSTOOD IN ORDER TO MAKE REAL GAINS. IT'S VERY DIFFICULT WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE THE "GEEK", OR OTHER KIDS MAKE FUN OF YOU. YOU HAVE NO CHANCE OF PLAYING BASKETBALL , SWIM TEAM, TRACK TEAM, ETC. I DON'T KNOW HOW GIVING DISTRICTS A SMALL INCREASE CAN PROVIDE FOR SELF ESTEEM AND DEVELOPMENT AS A GOOD CITIZEN. HOW DO WE ASSESS THAT??

WHEN YOU MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT FUNDING , YOU NEED TO SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING FOR THE BENEFIT OF KIDS AND KNOW THAT THE MONEY SPENT ON PROVIDING THAT FULL CONTINUUM AS STATED IN FED, LAW IS TOTALLY WORTH IT.....

The ability to enhance and benefit over fifty <sup>nine</sup> <sup>li</sup> for 4 million is worth it. MY SONS ARE THE BEST THINGS THAT EVER HAPPENED TO ME AND I TRY TO PROVIDE THAT TERRIFIC LEVEL OF HUMANISM WITH OTHER

Their differences have forced me as a parent to change and adapt, accept and accommodate things I may have never done before.

65% of information we take in is visual. That's why

I have always done a lot of research regarding education. I've tried both seg. sp. ed and reg. ed. - know u was bet for m famil

for 4 million is worth it.

~~KIDS ALSO WE OWE THESE CHILDREN THAT.~~

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.

I have worked in Early Intervention -  
I have worked in schools, I have worked  
in adult service agencies and group homes,  
to increase my knowledge and skills. I  
have worked at WSVH for 3 years in  
order to understand how and why families  
would choose residential education. I support  
the need for opportunities on the full  
continuum. One size does not fit all!

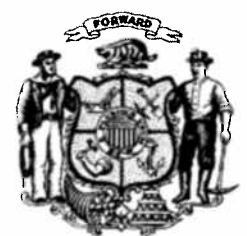
In my <sup>spare</sup> ~~other~~ I am <sup>Chair of Governors'</sup> Deafblind Advisory  
Board, I serve on a project team for IL State  
Board of Education looking at deaf education.  
Am vice president of a statewide Parent Support  
group for children/adults who are deafblind, and  
I am part of a technical assistance training team,  
serve on many committees.

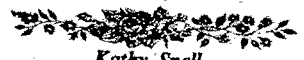
Roseann Slaght  
5178 Hutchinson Dr.  
Palmit IL 61080

815-389-1077



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





Kathy Snell  
29627 Evergreen Dr.  
Waterford WI 53185

Dear Mr. Potter,

I am writing to you on behalf of my daughter Baylee. Baylee is 6½ years old. She is totally blind due to low birth weight (1 pound 3 ounces) and oxygen to sustain her life. Besides being blind she is still very small for her age and very emotionally, socially and academically delayed. She is also very orally sensitive therefore prefers smooth foods. She has never learned how to chew, something most of us take for granted.

Until this year Baylee spent two years in the public school system. She had a teacher and a teachers aide. Neither of which had ever worked with a blind child before. Sighted children had no idea how to interact with her or her with them. She was always an outsider playing by herself. Her speech therapist had no idea how to teach a child to chew and didn't try. She had a Orientation-Mobility teacher but she was only available 3 hours a week. This is hardly enough time to teach a blind child how to get around in a sighted world.

Since August 25th of this year Baylee has been enrolled at WSVH. She stays two nights a week. My only regret is that I didn't enroll her there two years ago. Even though it has only been a few weeks the change in her is remarkable. For the first time she is excited to go to school. She is interacting with her peers and them with her and is forming real friendships. She is learning to use the braille writer and is making great gains with her white cane. And I could hardly hold back the tears when I was told that she actually

bit off, chewed and swallowed a small piece of pizza. (Since then she has tried cracker, chicken and rice krispie treat)

It goes without saying that she has improved more and is happier than she ever was in the public school system. I sincerely believe Baylee has no hope for success if forced to go back.

So please, for the sake of my daughter, and for many more like her, do not support the closing of WSVH. Their future is in your hands.

Sincerely,

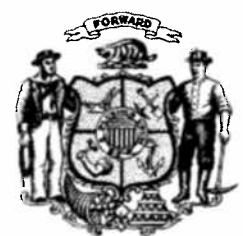
Baylee's Mom

*Kathy D. Snell*





WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Joint Education Committee.

Kate Sonka

309 Jefferson Avenue

Janesville, WI 53545

(608) 756-0154

Testimony in opposition to Assembly Bill 603 and Senate Bill 310, but in support of the alternatives, Assembly Joint Resolution 85 and Senate Joint Resolution 37.

I would like to thank the Joint Education Committee for giving me the opportunity to testify today. My name is Kate Sonka. I am from Janesville, WI. My testimony is in opposition to Assembly Bill 603 and Senate Bill 310 but in support of the alternatives Assembly Joint Resolution 85 and Senate Joint Resolution 37.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Law (IDEA) Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) provision is based on an individual's needs. IDEA Law Special Report No. 15 states, "For some students, a segregated placement is the most appropriate, least restrictive placement. The Department of Education issued policy guidelines which signal out two distinct disability populations as special for the purposes of LRE... They are the blind and the deaf... In 1995, a statement for students who were blind or visually impaired supported the guidelines that the unique communication modes used by the blind- Braille which is integrally related to the way in which they acquired information and ultimately - learned-might be better suited to an environment where they could continue to use these methods and communicate freely with their peers. The LRE for students who are blind or visually impaired must consider the student's individual needs, and specifically, the potential harmful effect of the placement on the visually impaired student and the quality of services the student requires. The options for placement which may be appropriate include both regular education and special education placements which includes placement in a special school with a residential option."

I am here to relate my experiences in public school as well as experiences at the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped (WSVH). As a high school freshman, I have many opportunities. There are sports, clubs, musicals, plays, proms and other formal dances, friends, and the list goes on. Since before I was born, my father has worked at WSVH. So I

have been in close contact with visually impaired students all of my life. I have been able to make comparisons between the two schools.

The similarities are astounding. Each school has determined school spirit. I have participated in swim meets against the school, and I have also swum with the school. In the environment of WSVH, visually impaired students feel comfortable and confident. At the same time they were swimming, they were also planning for their prom that night. They were excited to talk about their dresses and their dates. They talked about it with the same enthusiasm public school students do.

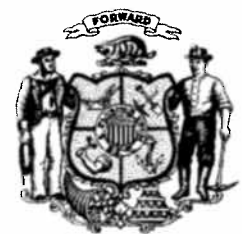
I have also attended plays and Christmas productions put on by the student body of WSVH. It was enjoyable to watch them perform with ease, and many had talent, too. From the youngest to the oldest, from the most involved to the most able, each student is given a part suitable to him or her and is able to participate successfully.

From my experience with both worlds, I have been able to make important observations. If you were to put all visually impaired students in public schools, I can almost guarantee that in most cases, the students would not become involved in a sports team; they would not want to try out for a play, and they would not feel comfortable at all. Not just because of how cruel kids can act today, but because proper facilities wouldn't be at their disposal.

So, I am speaking as an observer of both sides when I say it is in the visually impaired students' best interests to keep WSVH open as one necessary option for the overall education of visually impaired students.



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



To: The Joint Education Committee  
From: Laurel Warren, Orientation and Mobility Specialist  
1312 S. Pearl  
Janesville, WI 53546  
(608) 756-5575

Testimony in opposition to Assembly Bill 608 and Senate Bill 310, but in support of the alternatives, Assembly Joint Resolution 85 and Senate Joint Resolution 37

I have come to Madison today because of my concern for the educational opportunities for the blind and visually impaired students and adults of Wisconsin. As you know, Mr. Benson has recommended closing WSVH. Before this drastic and probably irreversible step is taken, I urge you to take a close look at the full impact of such a step which is, I believe, in the wrong direction.

I am an orientation and mobility teacher. I received a Masters Degree in this specialty area that is generally only taught to severely visually impaired persons, both adults who lose their vision later in life and, most challengingly, to children who have NEVER seen anything. My colleagues and I teach how to travel without sight, first inside, then outdoors, including taking busses.

I have taught both as an itinerant teacher going from school to school and at WSVH. I can tell you that there is no comparison to the quality, variety and intensity of teaching that I can provide in these 2 different types of environments. Most of the advantages of a center-based form of instruction accrue from having a higher volume of students to use the specialized equipment and to give each other moral support.

I would like to compare the advantages and disadvantages of both delivery systems as I have experienced them:

1. Access to models (such as intersections), tactile maps and technology (such as monoculars, talking and braille compasses, a variety of colors of sun filters). WSVH has the edge here simply because all models and maps developed serve many students over the years and do not have to be specially developed for each individual location and situation. I have been lucky in my itinerant teaching to have WSVH as a resource for these materials.

uses his skills in the natural course of his life. If he is very young with a short attention span, I can work with him 20 minutes each day without spending 40 minutes driving to his location.

Because the mainstreamed students already have a full schedule similar to their sighted counterparts, I work with the students after school when frequently they are tired from an entire day's activities and less able to take in information. With the amount of travel time involved in reaching the students, working 2 days/week for longer periods is the most efficient.

5. Case load size. At Janesville, I can serve many more students in less time because the only travel time involved is going from the school to nearby neighborhoods.

With my itinerant students, I spend almost as much time travelling as I do teaching.

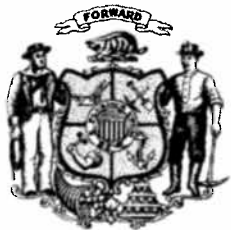
6. Becoming familiar with and traveling in the home environment. The itinerant model enables a student to travel in his actual living environment sooner.

7. Family training and involvement. The itinerant model enables the family to observe the student's progress and have realistic expectations. Families can accelerate or inhibit the student's progress at times, depending on their attitude and interest, so family involvement is crucial. Although at Janesville, report cards, phone calls and videos are used to communicate with families, with my itinerant students I see their family every day when I pick them up at their houses.

The most challenging part of travelling without vision is problem solving. This ability develops from experience. A blind student needs literally hundreds of hours of experience in order to become familiar with the wide variety of situations that are common in travel; sidewalks under construction, loud lawnmowers masking the sounds of traffic needed to decide when to cross a street, intersections where more than 2 streets cross, dead-end streets, threatening dogs, small children and mentally disabled people following you, dealing with people who would like to help but don't know how, etc. etc. etc. Travel is as varied as life itself and only experience can teach how to discern a helpful person from a dangerous person from a person without the capacity to help. Getting this



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



PANELS ORGANIZED TO FACILITATE DECEMBER 16, 1997 PUBLIC HEARING

Order of Initial Speakers

DPI Superintendent John Benson (Paul Halverson will join him to answer questions)

Senator Weeden and Representative Wood Together on Their Resolution

Jennifer Noyes from Legislative Audit Bureau—Major Points of Most Recent Audit—No More Than 8-10 Minutes For Overview

PANELS

Printed In Priority Order —Alternate Back and Forth

**DPI PANELS/INDIVIDUALS**

Panel—Jan Duxstad, Barbara Ditscheit, Sandy Adams, Julie Rogers, Diane Kaufland—Administrative and Instructional Staff in the Madison School District Vision Program

Panel—David Zadnik and Fred Weisenberger—Special Education Directors for the Green Bay and Eau Claire School Districts

Panel—Charles Hastert, Ed Hawkinson, Greg Dietz—Special Education Directors for CESA's 8, 5, and 10

Panel—John Mason and Joel Bernhard—District Administrator from Lomira and a student with visual disabilities who graduated from the Lomira district

Donnie Olson—Student with visual disabilities who graduated from the Wausau district

Marleen Osse—Representative of Milwaukee Task Force on Exceptional Education and Supportive Services

Panel—Karen Fristel, Pat Size, Stacy King—Parents of Children with Visual Disabilities



## DPI OPPONENTS

### Wisconsin Council of the Blind (4 Panels)

William English—former WSVH Superintendent—history and background  
Robert Olivero—grandparent  
William Loehler—former WSVH Superintendent  
Karen Perzentka—alumnus

Tom Hanson-WSVH teacher  
Judy Holmes-O and M instructor  
S. Lane Anthony—VI teacher  
Lisa Tomberlin—Braille instructor

John Voorhees-Director of Special Education, Oak Creek  
Paul Edwards—American Council of the Blind-National Agenda  
Michael Bina-Superintendent, Indiana School for the Blind

Amy Snow-WSVH student  
Shelly Lauer-Parent of WSVH student  
Dick Pomo—Wisconsin Council of the Blind Executive Director  
Paul Schroeder—American Foundation for the Blind Director-National Agenda

### Badger Council of the Blind (1 Panel)

Cheri McGrath, President  
Dr. Christopher Ozide  
Tom Lewandowski  
Chad Bartlett

### National Federation of the Blind of Wisconsin—Two Panels—Request Second to Immediately Follow First

Bonnie Peterson, President, NFB of Wisconsin  
Margie Watson, President Wisconsin Parents of Blind Children (must leave by 12)  
Sandra Hazelton, Parent  
Tim Lauerman, Parent  
Mary Ann Dam, Braille Transcriber

LaRee Rattle, Education Major, UW-Whitewater  
Vern Lind, WSVH graduate  
Lisa Mann, WSVH graduate  
Bernadette Krajewski, WSVH graduate

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*Left*

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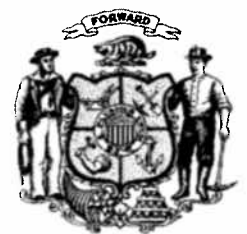
~~LaRee Rattle, Education Major, UW-Whitewater  
Vera Lind, WSVH graduate  
Lisa Mann, WSVH graduate  
Bernadette Krajewski, WSVH graduate~~

*Just Review  
Braille*

*Nicholas*



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



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Whereas, there has been a significant reduction in the number of students enrolled at the state School for the Visually Handicapped; and

Whereas, the State Superintendent of Public Schools has recommended that the school be closed; and

Whereas, there is a continuing need for support services from the school in the event of its closing; and

Whereas, there is strong opposition to the proposal to close the school; and

Whereas, there is strong interest in preserving the adult summer school program at the school, and

Whereas, there is also interest in a short term program for visually impaired students at the school;

Now, therefore, be it

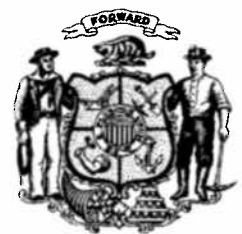
***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring***, That the joint legislative council is requested to study the following:

1. The services provided by the school with the purpose of determining if those services ~~can~~<sup>can</sup> and would be better provided by local school districts.
2. The council is requested to determine if there is a better way of providing services to visually handicapped students state wide and the cost of providing those services state wide.
3. Is there a need for a residential school.
4. Is there a need for a short term program for visually handicapped students and if there is a need how should that need be met.
5. If the school is closed should the current summer school program for adults be continued and if so where and how should it be conducted.
6. How can the visually handicapped students be best served in the state of Wisconsin.

[end]



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



A. Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped

Optional: What is the visual acuity of your child?

Legally Blind	Bilateral Cataracts (removed)	Nerve Damage	Blind (inspecific)	Cortically Visually Impaired	Visually congenitively impaired	Light Perception	Other
24.8%	0.8%	0.8%	17.3%	14.3%	0.8%	3.8%	37.6%

1. Where does your child currently go to school?

Public School	Private or Parochial School	A school for the visually impaired	Home schooled	Other	No Answer	WSVH	Central WI Center	Holy Family, Sheboygan	WI School for Deaf, Delavan	Green Valley Enterprises	Out of home therapy	Vincent HS	None/Other
76.9%	2.4%	13.4%	0.9%	6.2%	0.3%	62.7%	10.4%	1.5%	3.0%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	17.9%

If D or F, which school?

Yes	No	NA
81.6%	18.1%	0.3%

2. Were you aware that the Dept. of Public Instruction has recommended closing the WI School for the Visually Handicapped?

Yes	No	NA
74.5%	25.5%	0.0%

3. Prior to Superintendent Benson's recommendation to close the State School for the Visually Handicapped were you aware of the school?

Yes, but never attended	Yes, attended	No	NA
24.9%	19.0%	55.1%	0.9%

4. Have you ever considered sending your child to the WI School for the Visually Handicapped?

Yes	No	NA
67.0%	33.0%	3.9%

5. Would you send your child to the WI School for the Visually Handicapped for a summer school program if it met your child's needs?

Yes	No	NA
66.7%	27.4%	5.9%

WI School for the Visually Handicapped if it met your child's needs?

7. Some people feel that closing the school will keep visually impaired students from getting the educational resources they need. Others feel its closing will force public schools to better meet the needs of visually impaired students. Considering these factors, and any other thoughts you have

Keep the School Open

Close the School

	Strongly support	Somewhat Support	Neither support nor oppose	Somewh at oppose	Strongly Oppose	N/A
Keep the School Open	54.2%	15.3%	16.2%	1.9%	2.5%	10.0%
Close the School	6.2%	8.1%	16.2%	8.1%	25.5%	35.8%



**B. CURRENT EDUCATION**

1. Overall, how would you rate the quality of education your child is currently receiving?

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	NA
31.2%	29.6%	24.0%	11.2%	3.1%	2.5%

2. Does your child participate in extracurricular activities, such as sports, school clubs, etc.?

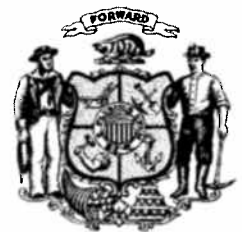
Yes	No	N/A
38.3%	55.5%	7.8%

3. For each of the skills listed below, please tell us whether you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the quality of education offered to your child at the school he/she is currently attending.

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	NA
Reading/Braille Skills	29.0%	19.0%	21.8%	4.7%	6.9%	19.9%
Orientation/Mobility Skills	34.0%	31.5%	10.3%	8.1%	5.9%	11.8%
Independent Living Skills	30.5%	22.1%	15.6%	11.5%	6.9%	15.0%
Advanced Technology Training	21.5%	20.6%	21.2%	10.0%	10.9%	17.1%
Recreation and Leisure Skills	29.9%	26.2%	14.0%	12.1%	7.5%	11.8%
Social Interaction Skills	37.1%	31.2%	8.1%	10.9%	6.5%	7.8%
Career Education	18.1%	17.8%	31.2%	5.6%	7.2%	20.9%



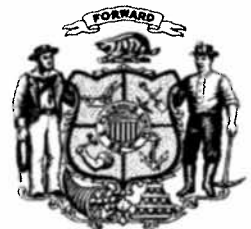
WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE







# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Miles Jim Lynch

SSA

4797

Turner  
Tom Hatch Wash

Hayes RD

Rear Col

53704

School

122

W. Washing

53703

Jr

Cheryl Miller, min  
Hayes WIP TH

Doug Harro M. P. ...  
PO 3181  
53704

Cheryl Williams



WFF - Jane Widdell

The need for res educ of the WS  
UH,

Section 34

The Joint Legislative Council is <sup>required</sup> directed to study and make recommendations for the improvement in programs and services for the visually impaired and blind children and adults in WI to include, but not limited to, residential education. The joint legislative council shall report its findings, conclusions and recommendations, if any, to the 1999 legislature.

Section 35

(1) This act takes effect on July 1, 2001 pending the recommendations of the legislative council study.

(2) If the findings of the legislative council study recommend a modification or continuation of residential services for visually impaired blind children and adults in WI, or if a study as described in Section 34 is not conducted, then the sunset of operation of WSVH referred to in Section 35

(1) shall evaporate and all provisions to cease operation of WSVH contained in this legislation will be null and void.

all  
legislation  
selected

Woods smart people will leave  
Sunset is there  
John have to keep open

should be  
repeal or modified July 1 2001  
Sunset

Moore  
Can't recommend  
sunset go away

NO one way to go  
Solve on committee  
that recommendations be  
bring back  
to the  
positive

Can't delegate to committee what happens  
School

PH Joint honest study need to be done sensed

LD Gov will decide

PH - This forum beside budget put hammer in  
bill

Section 34

The Joint Legislative Council is ~~requested~~ <sup>impaired</sup> to study and make recommendations for the improvement in programs and services for the visually ~~handicapped~~ students and adults in WI to include, but not limited to, residential education. The joint legislative council shall report its findings, conclusions and recommendations, if any, to the 1999 legislature.

Pam Hinman - Sheb. Press

1-920-457-7718

Ext. 134

Doing story on School for the  
Blind - Wants contacts of players;  
Council for the Blind etc. expected  
to testify

Cade - Sheboygan - players

- Mark Karstad - 255 116

Paul Halverson - 6-1781





WISCONSIN  
ASSOCIATION OF  
SCHOOL BOARDS

122 W. WASHINGTON AVENUE, MADISON, WI 53703

FORWARD AND ADDRESS  
CORRECTION REQUESTED.

Senator Cal Potter

414 483-3386

Bonnie Peterson

Wattford  
Federation  
of the Blind  
of Wisconsin

(off line)  
Wisconsin  
Council  
of  
Blind

---

2 groups

4  
5

Parent Support Group

(Council)

1800

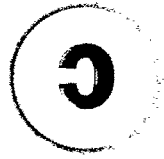
Wants out

NPC

Linda Kegan

121 E. Wilson

Wisconsin Council of the Blind



354 West Main Street,  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703  
608.255.1166  
800.783.5213  
fax/tdd 608.255.3301  
www.wcblind.org

Faint grid lines and illegible text, possibly a stamp or form.

233  
2372

STATE OF WISCONSIN

To RR

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

M Margie Watson  
of \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 845-6500

Telephoned	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please Call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Called to See You	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rush	<input type="checkbox"/>
Returned Your Call	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will Call Again	<input type="checkbox"/>

Message Rel pre registration  
Wisconsin Parents  
of Blind Children  
Party Receiving Call



NSB  
National  
Fed of  
Blind

Dec. 16th - Hearing w/ SU14  
Resident  
Balger Assoc. of Blind  
Chevina McGrath  
Speaking against the  
closing the school - (6.11)  
912 N. Hawley Rd.  
Milwaukee, 53213  
(414) 258-9200  
(414) 771-8787 (Home)

Genie Wordless  
Council on Exceptional  
WEAC - Bob Burke

PHONE CALL

FOR Georgia DATE 12/15 TIME 12:50 PM

M Lisa Tombrilne

OF Cesa 6

PHONE 920 346 2201

MESSAGE or m 920-236-0549

Usually handicapped base base  
wants to come to hearing be  
put on roster early in day

SIGNED MD

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PHONED
<input type="checkbox"/>	RETURNED YOUR CALL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PLEASE CALL
<input type="checkbox"/>	WILL CALL AGAIN
<input type="checkbox"/>	CAME TO SEE YOU
<input type="checkbox"/>	WANTS TO SEE YOU

TIPS FORM 4003

Mark J. Karstedt

Mild Miller  
256-4730  
Director

0009

0009

21  
0009

0001  
099

Karen Miller  
DPI

6-1649

Patty Reville  
6-6981  
Folder

1.5 hours - interpreter

Deaf - Interpreter  
for deaf DPI

"Independence First"  
→ Madison Voice  
\*Mary Lynn Rose  
244-4642

STATE OF WISCONSIN

To Paul  
Date 12/9 Time 10:35

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

M Lisa Young  
of  
Phone (414) 255-6844

Telephoned	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please Call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Called to See You		Rush	
Returned Your Call		Will Call Again	

Message Hearings be in other places other than in Nelson



PH  
Party Receiving Call

STATE OF WISCONSIN

To Paul  
Date 12/9 Time 10:15

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

M Sue Entwes  
of  
Phone (414) 964-1881

Telephoned	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please Call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Called to See You		Rush	
Returned Your Call		Will Call Again	

Message State Revisious of Special Education



PH  
Party Receiving Call

STATE OF WISCONSIN

To Paul

Date 11/6 Time 12:45

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

M Mike Berger

of DTA

Phone 6-5186

Telephoned	Please Call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Called to See You	Rush	<input type="checkbox"/>
Returned Your Call	Will Call Again	<input type="checkbox"/>

Message went to discuss the WSH b.1 + the amendment



PH  
Party Receiving Call

STATE OF WISCONSIN

To Paul

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

M Cheri McGrath

of Badger Assoc. of Blind

Phone 414-771-8787

Telephoned	Please Call	<input type="checkbox"/>
Called to See You	Rush	<input type="checkbox"/>
Returned Your Call	Will Call Again	<input type="checkbox"/>

Message 650 blind

3 reports to Wisc

most



PH  
Party Receiving Call Gene

STATE OF WISCONSIN

To Paul

Date 12/1 Time 12:30

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

M Bonnie Peterson

of (414) 483-3536

Phone Nation Fed of Blind

Telephoned	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please Call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Called to See You	Rush	<input type="checkbox"/>
Returned Your Call	Will Call Again	<input type="checkbox"/>

Message Questions about the 12/16 hearing about WSH.

5331 S.

9th St



PH  
Party Receiving Call

Milwau 53221

STATE OF WISCONSIN

To Paul

Date 12/8 Time 1:30

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

M Deb Wisniewski

of \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 266-7797

Telephoned	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please Call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Called to See You	Rush	<input type="checkbox"/>
Returned Your Call	Will Call Again	<input type="checkbox"/>

Message Date/Time/Place of hearing about ch. 115 - revision of State Special Ed Law IDEA Fed Law



PH  
Party Receiving Call

State Independent

Badger Federation  
Milwaukee

Resolution  
Both

Parents  
Students  
Administrators

Fully  
PH