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(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

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

### 2003-04

(session year)

### Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

### Committee on Education, Ethics and Elections...

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

#### INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

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

## Senate

### Record of Committee Proceedings

#### **Committee on Education, Ethics and Elections**

##### **Assembly Bill 343**

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

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

October 22, 2003      Referred to Committee on Education, Ethics and Elections.

February 25, 2004      **PUBLIC HEARING HELD**

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

##### Appearances For

- Jacqueline Dicks, For Rep. Carol Owens

##### Appearances Against

- None.

##### Appearances for Information Only

- Deb Wisniewski, Waisman Center

##### Registrations For

Caesar Stinson, Milwaukee Public Schools  
Michael Walsh, Wisconsin Education Association Council, Madison, WI  
Senator Carol Roessler  
Tom Johnson, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
Dawn Wians, Verona, WI  
Sheri Kraus, Wisconsin Association of School Boards  
Joe Quick, Madison Metropolitan School District, Madison, WI  
Shel Gross, Wisconsin Mental Health Association, Madison, WI 53703  
Jeff Spitzer-Resnick, Wisconsin Coalition for Advocacy

##### Registrations Against

None.

March 4, 2004

**EXECUTIVE SESSION HELD**

Present: (7) Senators Ellis, S. Fitzgerald, Reynolds, Stepp, Jauch,  
Robson and Hansen.

Absent: (0) None.

Moved by Senator Ellis that **Assembly Bill 343** be recommended for  
concurrence.

Ayes: (7) Senators Ellis, S. Fitzgerald, Reynolds, Stepp, Jauch,  
Robson and Hansen.

Noes: (0) None.

CONCURRENCE RECOMMENDED, Ayes 7, Noes 0

Michael Boerger  
Committee Clerk





Date: February 25, 2004

To: Sen. Mike Ellis, Chairperson, and Members  
Senate Committee on Education, Ethics and Elections

From: Gerry Born, Chairperson

Re: AB 343: Transition Clearinghouse Website Bill

Thank you very much for having this hearing. The Council was one of the initial promoters of a transition clearinghouse as an invaluable tool for parents and students in planning for adult life.

Each year over 5,000 students with disabilities graduate from Wisconsin high schools. Some of them will make smooth transitions to adult lives, but most will not. Preparing for the transition from high school to adulthood is supposed to be a part of the students' Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process, however, for a variety of reasons it does not happen or happen effectively.

Most transition efforts focus on the school-to-work aspect. This is, of course, a key issue, but transition means so much more. Students with disabilities need information and encouragement to transition fully from the teen years to adulthood. A full life includes not just a job, but a place to live, transportation, health care, friends and family, recreation, education, and involvement in civic or spiritual organizations.

Parents and students need comprehensive information about the resources in their local communities so they can take the lead role in planning for life after graduation. A clearinghouse website that is designed to be user-friendly for parents and students can greatly facilitate transition planning.

The Department of Public Instruction has made a start in presenting transition information on the Internet through its contract with CESA #3. The website, however, is clearly designed for use by educators, not by parents and students.

Over the years, the Council has gathered a great deal of knowledge on communicating and working with parents and students with disabilities. The Council has numerous suggestions to make the website more informative and easy to access by parents and students. The suggestions include eliminating jargon such as Points of Entry Manuals (POEMs), categorizing information by type of service or resource provided, linking to estate and resource publications designed for parents, and many others.

Pages from the website are attached for your information from a parent's perspective. Please note the difficulty parents and students have in finding information on the site. The pages are in the order parents and students would click on as they navigate the website.

Sen. Mike Ellis, Chairperson, and Members  
Senate Committee on Education, Ethics and Elections  
February 25, 2004  
Page 2

The fiscal estimate submitted by DPI states that its current efforts meet the requirements of the bill. The Council strongly disagrees that the current efforts meet the needs of parents and students. The Council is hoping that members of your Committee make it absolutely clear to the Department of Public Instruction that the current website needs substantial work to meet the requirements of the bill.

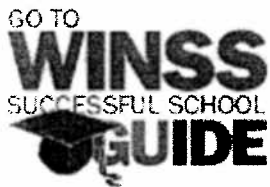
Thank you very much for your consideration of this testimony and assistance with this bill. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Ondrejka, Executive Director, at 266-1166 or [ondrejm@dhfs.state.wi.us](mailto:ondrejm@dhfs.state.wi.us).

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**Elizabeth Burmaster**  
State Superintendent

**Weekly Message**



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DPI Contact and Address Info  
1-800-441-4563 (U.S. Only)

[DPI Nondiscrimination Clause](#)

Submit questions or comments  
to the [webmaster](#).



# WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

DEDICATED TO CHILDREN AND LEARNING

FOR PARENTS    FEATURED PROGRAMS    DPI SUBJECT INDEX    SEARCH

## Five PK-16 partnerships receive math and science grants

Five math and science partnerships will share about \$1 million in federal funding to improve mathematics and science instruction in high-need districts throughout the state. The one-term projects begin in March.

"Interest in this program was overwhelming," said State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster. "It is encouraging to know that so many PK-12 and postsecondary educators want to work together to improve teaching and learning for the benefit of our students and to close the achievement gap."

For the complete news release [click here](#).

## Principals and educational services administrator of the year named

Elizabeth Burmaster, state superintendent of public instruction, and Thomas Beattie, executive director for the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators (AWSA), announced the names of Wisconsin's three 2004 Wisconsin Principals of the Year and the state's 2004 Educational Services Administrator of the Year.

Principals of the Year are **Nancy Hackbarth**, Rosenow Elementary School, Fond du Lac; **Charlotte Hall**, Kettle Moraine Middle School, Dousman; and **Martin Van Hulle**, Pewaukee High School. **Karen Farley Halverson**, assistant superintendent for curriculum, learning, and student achievement at Stevens Point Area School District, was selected as the Educational Services Administrator of the Year

For the complete news release [click here](#).

Updated February 20, 2004

### DPI SERVICES

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- [Advisor](#)
- [Educator L](#)
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## DPI Parents' Page



DPI is committed to helping parents realize their roles as children's most influential teachers. If you are a parent, grandparent, or guardian of a preschool or school-aged child, the Department of Public Instruction would appreciate your help to make our programs and services better by taking a few minutes to complete our online Parent Satisfaction Survey (click on the survey graphic).



Elizabeth Burmaster

The following alphabetical listing by subject has been developed to help parents navigate the DPI website and quickly locate the information they want about children's learning and schools. Some items listed have been specifically developed for parents. Other topics link to DPI web pages developed for educators or the general public.

To locate your area of interest, click on a letter below or scroll down to the subject you want. Clicking on a topic will link you to a page on the DPI website that contains more information about that topic, including how to reach a DPI staff contact and useful links outside of DPI.

-Elizabeth Burmaster  
State Superintendent

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W  
X Y Z

**A**

↑ (transition)

[achievement; student achievement facts brochure](#)

**AIDS/HIV**

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[results; see Wisconsin School Performance Report](#)

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[theatre; Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Theatre](#)

### **Title 1 program**

[general information](#)

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[Wisconsin Literacy Education and Reading Network Source \(WiLEARNS\)](#)

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Elizabeth Burmaster

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-Elizabeth Burmaster  
State Superintendent

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X Y Z

A

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*↑ special education?*

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[Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Science](#)

---

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[sex equity see equity; gender equity](#)

## **Social studies**

[education](#)

[Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Social Studies](#)

## **Spanish language materials**

[An Introduction to Special Education](#)

[Information for Parents on Student Expulsion \(157.5KB\)](#)

[Special Education Rights for Parents and Children](#)

[Spanish materials with child care connections](#)

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## **Special education**

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**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**  
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## Special Education Index



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- [Special Education Complete Website Topical Index \(index below\)](#)

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<a href="#">advocacy</a>	<a href="#">alternate assessment-WAA</a>
<a href="#">alternative performance indicators</a>	<a href="#">assessment/accountability</a>
<a href="#">assistive technology</a>	<a href="#">attention deficit disorder</a>
<a href="#">attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)</a>	<a href="#">audiology</a>
<a href="#">autism</a>	
B	
<a href="#">blind</a>	<a href="#">bulletins</a>
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<a href="#">categorical aids</a>	<a href="#">Chapter 115, Wis. Stats.</a>
<a href="#">charter schools</a>	<a href="#">child caring institution</a>
<a href="#">child count</a>	<a href="#">child find notice Spanish, 6/24/02</a> <a href="#">Hmong, 6/24/02</a>
<a href="#">cognitive disability</a>	<a href="#">complaints</a>
<a href="#">comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD)</a>	<a href="#">consent for placement</a>
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<a href="#">council on special education</a>	<a href="#">cross categorical</a>

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regulations, special education	related services
residential care centers (RCC)	
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school psychological services	Section 504
significant developmental delay (SDD)	social work services
special education plan (SEP) info.	special education plan (SEP) narrative
special education plan software	special education reports
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staff list, Special Education Team	state improvement plan (SIP)
State Superintendent's Fall Leadership Conference	State Improvement Grant (SIG)
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WSPEI	





WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

### By Disability:

Autism  
Cognitive Disability  
Deaf-Blind  
Deafness  
Emotional Behavioral Disability  
Hearing Impairment  
Specific Learning Disability  
Other Health Impairment  
Orthopedic Impairment  
Speech/Language  
Traumatic Brain Injury  
Vision

### Other Services:

Assistive Technology  
Cross Categorical  
CSPD/Inservice  
Early Childhood  
Leadership, Special Education  
Occupational Therapy  
Parent Partnerships  
Physical Therapy  
Residential Care Centers  
Transition

### Other Agency Services:

Counseling  
School Nursing & Health  
School Psychology  
School Social Work

## Transition Services for Students with Disabilities as Required by the IDEA



With the advent of the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the amendments of 1997, the provision for transition services continues to be a primary focus of the legislation. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 1997 Amendments (P.L. 105-17) Section 602(30), defines transition services as: ". . . a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that:

(A) is designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation;

(B) is based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests; and


(C) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation."

In 1999, the State of Wisconsin concluded a five-year project titled, "Wisconsin's Design for Transition Success." The project evaluation data defined the following transition service and process needs in the State of Wisconsin:

"(1) Collection of and program modification based upon exited students' follow-up information;

(2) Application of strategies that improve parent and student participation and leadership in the IEP transition planning process;

Transportation

 These documents are in ".pdf" format and require Adobe Acrobat Reader. A free Acrobat Reader is available from Adobe.




(3) Practices to improve community agency participation, collaboration and shared ownership in IEP transition planning and services;

(4) Development of policy and practices to insure all school staff understand the purpose and process of IEPs and transition services, and appropriate school staff effectively participate in transition IEP meetings and provide accommodations in general education - guidance counselors, vocational educators, social workers, general educators, administrators, etc.,



(5) Practices to insure all students with disabilities have developed realistic post-high school plans,

(6) Strategies to improve post-school employment rates, higher education enrollment and independent living of students with disabilities; and

(7) Practices to bring districts into compliance with the new transition service requirements."

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) provides leadership and funding for a statewide systems change grant project titled: "Piloting A Comprehensive Multi-CESA Approach to provide Transition Services in the State of Wisconsin" also known as the Wisconsin Statewide Transition Initiative (WSTI). The primary purpose of this project is to assist local school districts in addressing the mandates of "The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act and the Amendments of 97 (IDEA '97)" and the transition service and process needs identified in the Wisconsin Design for Transition Success Project. The WSTI state discretionary project features a comprehensive approach to providing transition services in the State of Wisconsin. Twelve Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) Transition Coordinators, a project director, and a DPI Transition Consultant offer comprehensive transition support services, information dissemination, and staff development to parents, education professionals, and community agency professionals throughout Wisconsin. Complete information on the resources and services offered by the Wisconsin Statewide Transition Initiative (WSTI) can be found at <http://www.wsti.org>. 

**Other Information and Resources**

- Transition to Adulthood: Resources for teachers working with students with emotional behavioral disabilities (EBD)  (Word) (10/15/03)
-  Opening Doors to Postsecondary Education and Training: A Handbook for Students, School Counselors, Teachers and

**WSTI.ORG**

**Wisconsin Statewide Transition Initiative**

[WSTI Home](#)

[About WSTI](#)

[Project Narrative \(PDF\)](#)

[Statewide Contacts](#)

[Interagency Agreements](#)



[Point of Entry Manuals  
\(POEMS\)](#)

[Upcoming Conferences](#)

[Resources - Web](#)

[Resources - PDF Files](#)

[Resources - Powerpoint Files](#)

**Transition Training**

[Visit the new online training  
program for Transition IEP!](#)

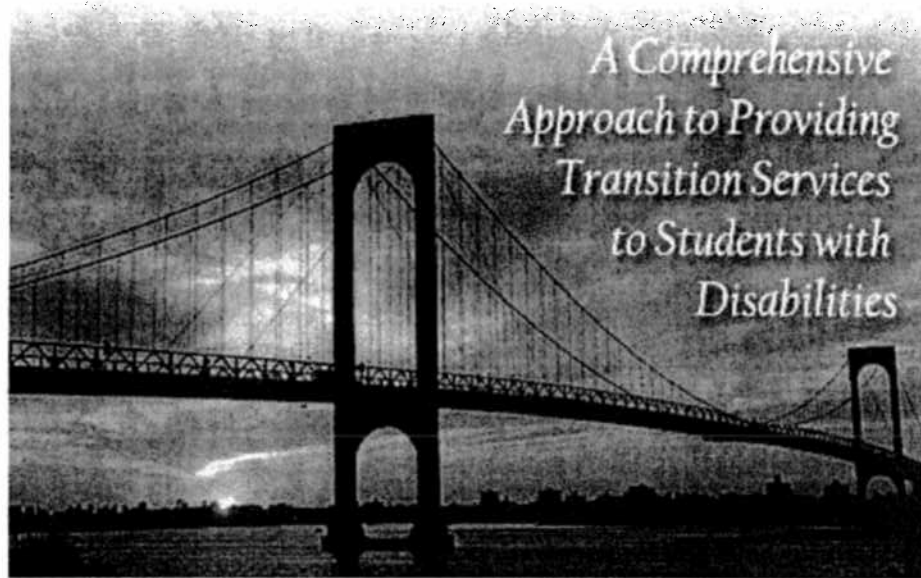
**Coordinator Log In**

Username

Password

Log In >

# WISCONSIN STATEWIDE TRANSITION INITIATIVE (WSTI)



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**WSTI.ORG** Wisconsin Statewide Transition Initiative

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**WSTI - WI Point of Entry Manuals (POEMs)**

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- [Milwaukee County](#)
- [Ozaukee County](#)
- [Waukesha County](#)

**CESA #5**

- [Adams County](#)
- [Columbia County](#)
- [Juneau County](#)
- [Marquette County](#)
- [Portage County](#)
- [Sauk County](#)
- [Waushara County](#)
- [Wood County](#)

**CESA #9**

- [Langlade County](#)
- [Lincoln County](#)
- [Marathon County](#)
- [Oneida County](#)
- [Vilas County](#)

← sample

**CESA #2**

- [Dane County](#)
- [Green County](#)
- [Jefferson County](#)
- [Kenosha County](#)
- [Racine County](#)
- [Rock County](#)
- [Walworth County](#)

**CESA #6**

- [Dodge County](#)
- [Fond du Lac County](#)
- [Green Lake County](#)
- [Outagamie County](#)
- [Washington County](#)
- [Winnebago County](#)

**CESA #10**

- [Chippewa County](#)
- [Clark County](#)
- [Eau Claire County](#)
- [Rusk County](#)
- [Taylor County](#)

**Transition Training**  
[Visit the new online training program for Transition IEP!](#)

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Username

Password

**CESA #3**

- [Crawford County](#)
- [Grant County](#)
- [Iowa County](#)
- [Lafayette County](#)
- [Richland County](#)

**CESA #7**

- [Brown County](#)
- [Calumet County](#)
- [Door County](#)
- [Kewaunee County](#)
- [Manitowoc County](#)
- [Sheboygan County](#)

**CESA #11**

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- [Burnett County](#)
- [Dunn County](#)
- [Pepin County](#)
- [Pierce County](#)
- [Polk County](#)
- [St. Croix County](#)
- [Washburn County](#)

**CESA #4**

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- [Jackson County](#)
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- [Trempeleau County](#)
- [Vernon County](#)

**CESA #8**

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- [Forest County](#)
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- [Menominee County](#)
- [Oconto County](#)
- [Shawano County](#)
- [Waupaca County](#)

**CESA #12**

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# POINT OF ENTRY MANUAL {POEM}

Lincoln County Public Schools  
Merrill Public Schools  
Tomahawk Public Schools

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## Purpose

The intent of this Point of Entry Manuel is for the successful transition of students with disabilities from the Merrill Area Public School System to live and work in their community in which they reside. Seeking opportunities for education and recreation in their communities is also advocated in this manual. By no means is this an exhaustive and exclusive manual. It is a beginning "point" for agency reference and assistance in making a successful transition. As agencies and services change and are updated, so too, will this manual. It is a work in progress.

\*All information is in the public domain, found in other public packets or service directories.

**Behavioral Consultation–Transition Planning–Assisted  
Employment**

**Agency Mission: Students identified with Autism, emotional/behavioral disabilities, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, deaf/blindness, or severe-mild cognitive disabilities are assisted in analyzing their life challenges (school, community & work) and then given recommendations and assistance in meeting those challenges in each of their environments.**

**Stacy Graff, M.S.  
Training and Consultation  
P.O. Box 3512  
Madison, WI 53704-0512  
608-241-1030**

## Central Wisconsin Guardianship Services

### Agency Mission:

- A decision making guide for family members, friends and advocates to help guardianship issues for people with disabilities.
- Guardianship issues may include decisions about:
  - Residential
  - Vocational
  - Medical
  - Financial
  - Legal
  - Other services to-be-determined

Central Wisconsin Guardianship Services: 715-359-0457

## ChalleNGe Academy Wisconsin National Guard (WING)

Agency Mission: Is a residential program committed to:

- Challenging *at-risk* 16-18 year old Wisconsin residents
- Offering habitual high school truants an opportunity to obtain a High School Equivalency Diploma
- Offering classroom instruction, outdoors skills, community service projects, and leadership experiences, physical fitness, sex education and nutrition, life coping skills, and responsible citizenship indoctrination
- Providing a two-phase component of education
  - Phase I offers a 22-week residential stay at Fort McCoy in a quasi-military environment
  - Phase II is a 12-month post-residential mentoring opportunity

Additionally:

- Each teen attending the ChalleNGe Academy must achieve 80% of each of the ChalleNGe's objectives before graduating from the residential program.
- Each teen will be offered a very structured environment that offers a goal and an experience of success each and every day
- Each teen must be free of drugs (routine urinalysis will be conducted), not currently on probation or parole (other than juvenile status offences) and not under indictment, charged or convicted of a felony.
- Smoke free or willingly to go nicotine free (cold turkey)

\*The Department of Defense, the State of Wisconsin, and private donations fund the ChalleNGe Academy (incidental/personal items are the exception on a limited basis).

Challenge Academy  
656 South "O" Street  
Fort McCoy, WI 54656  
608-269-9000  
E-mail: [academy@dma.state.wi.us](mailto:academy@dma.state.wi.us)

Cooperative Educational Service Agency #9 (CESA #9)

Agency Mission: Is to help school districts identify the educational needs of children and to provide services to meet those needs in a cooperative manner that elicits community and school district support.

CESA #9 is made up of 22 school districts in north central Wisconsin. CESA #9 provides service to 2,800 teachers and 38,000 students in 100 public school buildings.

CESA #9 supports the following services (this list is not all inclusive):

- ATOD – Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Prevention, Comprehension School Health Programs, and Citizenship programs
- School Improvement – purpose is to assist districts improve achievement for **all** students
- Educational Technology
- School to Work
- Parent Partnerships
- Crisis Management

CESA #9 Special Education Director  
P.O. Box 449  
Tomahawk, WI 54487  
(715) 453-2141  
Fax: (715) 453-7519  
<http://www.cesa9.k12.wi.us>



**Council on Mental Health  
C/O Bureau of Community Mental Health**

**Agency Mission:**

- Providing Mental Health Care counseling, advice and information regarding patient needs

1 West Wilson Street  
P.O. Box 7851  
Madison, WI 53707-7851  
(608) 267-7792

## Department of Health and Social Services

Mission: To lead the nation and WI in fostering healthy, self-reliant individuals and families.

The Department is committed to:

- Promoting independence
- Strengthening families
- Encouraging healthy behaviors
- Promoting community responsibility
- Protecting vulnerable children, adults and families
- Preventing individual and social problems
- Providing services of value to taxpayers

Lincoln County Department of Health and Social Services  
607 N. Sales St.  
Merrill, WI 54452  
Phone: (715) 536-6200  
Fax: (715) 536-2753

**Division of Care and Treatment Facilities**

Agency Mission: Administers state mental health institutes and centers for the developmentally disabled.

1 West Wilson Street  
P.O. Box 7851  
Madison, WI 53707-7851  
(608) 266-8740

**Department of Workforce Development  
Lincoln County Job Center**

Provides services in career planning, finding a job, training and education, special events, workers rights/benefits.

Lincoln County Job Center  
607 Sales Street  
Merrill, WI 54452  
(715) 536-8499  
TDD/TTY Relay (800) 947-3529





## **Mental Health Association in Milwaukee County**

*Leading the way for Wisconsin's Mental Health*

### **Position Statement: AB343**

**Shel Gross, Director of Public Policy  
Mental Health Association in Milwaukee County**

**Senate Education, Ethics and Elections Committee  
February 25, 2004**

The Mental Health Association in Milwaukee County (MHA) requests that the Senate Education, Ethics and Elections Committee approve AB343. The experience of adolescents "aging out" of the child/adolescent mental health system has often been described as "falling off the edge of the earth." A wide variety of services and supports, many mandated through child protective services, others prescribed through individualized education plans, often cease once a child becomes 18 or graduates from high school. Because of differences in definitions of who is eligible for care, and because services may no longer be mandated, the transition to adult mental health care does not happen automatically, and often does not happen at all. Even youth interested in services can have a difficult time identifying such services. Parents are left scrambling to try to put the pieces together.

The Transition Clearinghouse that would be created by AB 343 will begin to address this problem by providing citizens the information about what might be available and where they can go for assistance. We are talking about a potentially huge audience for this clearinghouse. The Department of Public Instruction reported in 2000 that 6,555 children 15 years and older were receiving special education services under the designation of "emotionally disturbed." The Department of Health and Family Services estimates that overall there are about 35,000 children in Wisconsin age 9-17 who have mental illnesses severe enough to cause some degree of impairment. And these are only the numbers for youth with emotional disturbances.

The Transition Clearinghouse is not a total solution to the issues faced by youth transitioning into the adult world. For instance, limited health insurance coverage for mental disorders will continue to be a barrier to receiving mental health services until that issue is addressed by the Legislature. However, the Clearinghouse is a useful first step. I urge your support of this measure.

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Milwaukee, WI 53203-2102  
Tel: (414) 276-3122 • Fax: (414) 276-3124  
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Office of Public Policy  
133 South Butler Street, Lower Level  
Madison, WI 53703  
Tel: (608) 250-4368 • Fax: (608) 442-8036  
Email: [shelgross@tds.net](mailto:shelgross@tds.net)

[www.mhamilw.org](http://www.mhamilw.org)  
(877) 642-4630 (for information and resources only)  
An affiliate of the National Mental Health Association







**Carol Roessler**  
STATE SENATOR

February 25, 2004

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

Dear Senator Ellis,

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

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

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol".

CAROL ROESSLER  
State Senator  
18th Senate District







**WISCONSIN COALITION FOR ADVOCACY**

THE PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY SYSTEM FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

**TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SB 163/AB 343**

by

Jeffrey Spitzer-Resnick  
Managing Attorney

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

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

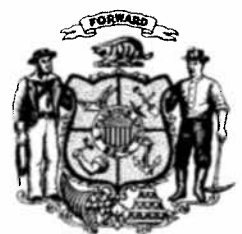
The bill requires that DPI, in collaboration with DHFS and DWD, create this clearinghouse on its web site, and that the DHFS and DWD web sites would also have the same information. To date, no such clearinghouse exists, despite DPI's grant to a CESA to create one.

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

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



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



2/25/04

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

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

I can tell you that even in a state as wonderful as Wisconsin, there is a lot of confusion, a lack of resources, and too much misinformation out there. Youth and their family members in particular are confused by this huge change coming into their lives.

*Where will I live?*

*Where will I work?*

*Can a person with disabilities go to college?*

*Does my daughter need a guardian?*

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

*What happens to his health care?*

I could go on & on with the questions.

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

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

*What do I need to do?*

*Who do I contact?*

*What are my rights?*

*How does the system work?*

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

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