

# WISCONSIN STATEWIDE PARENT-EDUCATOR INITIATIVE

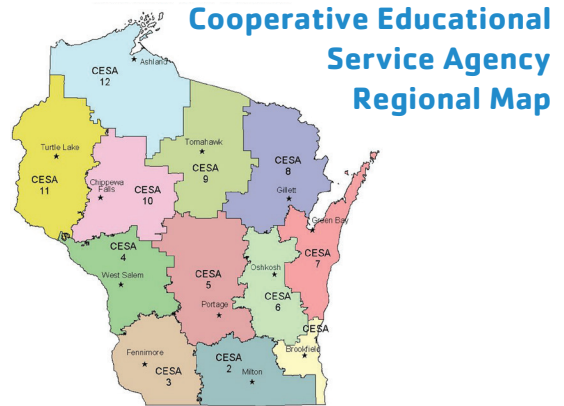


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Creating Partnerships Between  
Families and Educators for  
Students with Disabilities



### **Additional Statewide Resources:**

Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for  
Education, Training and Support:  
[www.wifacets.org](http://www.wifacets.org)

Wisconsin Family Ties:  
[www.wifamilyties.org](http://www.wifamilyties.org)

Children and Youth with Special Health  
Care Needs:  
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/index.htm>

The Wisconsin Board for People with  
Developmental Disabilities:  
[www.wi-bpdd.org](http://www.wi-bpdd.org)

Parent to Parent of Wisconsin:  
[www.p2pwi.org](http://www.p2pwi.org)

Family Voices of Wisconsin:  
<http://fvofwi.org>

Family School and Community Partnerships:  
[www.fscp.dpi.wi.gov](http://www.fscp.dpi.wi.gov)

Disability Rights WI:  
[www.disabilityrightswi.org](http://www.disabilityrightswi.org)

Wisconsin First Step:  
[www.mch-hotlines.org](http://www.mch-hotlines.org)

Wisconsin PTA:  
[www.wisconsinpta.org](http://www.wisconsinpta.org)

## RESOURCES

### What resources are available to parents and educators?

Books, brochures, CDs/DVDs, online learning modules, and other information pertaining to special education are available free to individuals. Multiple quantities may be ordered at a cost from the Wisconsin Special Education Product Order Form at [www.wspei.org/resources/](http://www.wspei.org/resources/).

Parent-friendly materials in Spanish and Hmong are available.

**For more information click on the resources tab on our website at [www.wspei.org](http://www.wspei.org) or contact your local WSPEI Family Engagement Coordinator.**

### Other Statewide Grant Initiatives:

Wisconsin Response to Intervention Center  
[www.wisconsinrticenter.org](http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org)

Transition Improvement Grant (TIG)  
[www.witig.org](http://www.witig.org)

Wisconsin Early Childhood Initiative  
[http://www.ec.dpi.wi.gov/ec\\_home](http://www.ec.dpi.wi.gov/ec_home)

Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports  
[www.wisconsinpbisnetwork.org](http://www.wisconsinpbisnetwork.org)

Disproportionality Technical Assistance Network - (DTAN)  
[www.thenetworkwi.com](http://www.thenetworkwi.com)

Wisconsin Special Education Mediation System  
[www.wsems.us](http://www.wsems.us)

Regional Service Network (RSN)  
[www.sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped\\_rsn](http://www.sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped_rsn)

## ABOUT WSPEI

### Wisconsin Statewide Parent-Educator Initiative

WSPEI is all about partnerships, helping families and school districts find the resources that help them build positive working relationships leading to shared decision making and positive outcomes for children's learning. WSPEI services are free of charge.

### The Wisconsin Statewide Parent-Educator Initiative (WSPEI) supports:

- Meaningful parent participation on IEP teams and other decision-making groups
- Collaboration among general education, special education and other programs that support family engagement
- Increased sharing of information among parents, schools, projects, organizations and agencies through networking meetings, conferences, person-to-person contact, and media
- Collaboration with the twelve Regional Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs)
- Alignment with and access to state and federal initiatives

**To reach a WSPEI coordinator, visit [www.wspei.org/contact/](http://www.wspei.org/contact/)**

## ●● FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

### Why should families be engaged?

The research on family engagement in education spans 30 years and shows when families support their children's learning at home, their children will be more successful.

Anne Henderson, a Senior Consultant with the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, national researcher and consultant on family involvement practices, reports "when families are involved at home and at school, children do better in school, and schools get better. If their parents are involved, students from all backgrounds tend to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Enroll in higher-level programs
- Be promoted and earn credits
- Adapt well to school and attend regularly
- Have better social skills and behavior
- Graduate and go on to higher education."



### What if concerns are not fully resolved in the meeting?

- Request a break or ask the IEP team to meet again and consider including additional team members
- Call others for suggestions on possible future action

### Problem solving at the school level gives families and school districts more collaborative options on outcomes for children.

### Next Steps: What can be done if these attempts at solving problems don't work?

**Facilitated IEP:** An option from WSEMS for early conflict resolution Wisconsin has chosen to make available to families and schools. A neutral, trained professional helps the IEP team with the IEP process.

[www.wsems.us/iep-facilitation/](http://www.wsems.us/iep-facilitation/)

**Mediation:** An option from WSEMS where a mediator helps families and schools work toward early conflict resolution on Special Education conflict/issues.

[www.wsems.us/mediation](http://www.wsems.us/mediation)

**IDEA State Complaints:** Anyone who believes a school district violated state or federal special education law has the right to file a complaint with DPI.

[http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped\\_complain](http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped_complain)

**Due Process Hearings:** Parents, adult students, and schools districts have the right to request due process hearings for special education disputes.

[www.sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped\\_dueproc](http://www.sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped_dueproc)

Access to WSPEI Family Engagement Coordinators and the WI Mediation System are provided at no cost to parents.

For more information visit [www.wspei.org](http://www.wspei.org)

## :: Communication Options for Families

### Options available if you have questions or disagree with a decision of the school.

Families and schools have a “built-in” partnership with the child as the focus. This partnership will grow when parents and school staff work together. Disagreements may happen, but working together improves your child’s education.

#### What can you do if questions or concerns arise?

- If concerns arise, families are encouraged to talk directly with the people involved as soon as possible
- First, call to schedule an informal meeting to discuss the situation
- Then, prepare for the meeting by making a list of concerns and some possible solutions

#### What can you do in the meeting?

- Identify student’s strengths and acknowledge what is working
- Identify concerns of families and educators
- Use active listening in order to understand the other person’s perspective
- Ask questions and restate ideas so the team has a clear understanding
- Work together to suggest some possible options to resolve the concerns
- Analyze all of the options to see if you can find areas of agreement
- Discuss what should happen next

### For families what does this mean?

#### WSPEI provides:

- Individual family support
- Strategies to navigate the school system
- Access to free electronic or hard copy educational materials
- Connections to families and organizations
- Educational opportunities to learn how to participate in their child’s development and learning
- Information about options if parents disagree with a decision of the school
- Assist with connecting learning at home to a child’s IEP goals, supports, and accommodations
- Strategies to engage in conversations with schools about a child’s reading and literacy

### For schools what does this mean?

#### WSPEI’s role is to support schools in the:

- Recruitment and support of district family engagement liaisons
- Development of family engagement teams and family engagement plans which address the State Performance Plan Indicator #8 Data
- Access to educational materials to support engagement and collaboration with families
- Assist with connecting students’ IEP goals, supports, and accommodations to learning at home
- Strategies to engage in conversations with families about their child’s reading and literacy

## EDUCATION

### Recognizing Families' and Educators' Training Needs

WSPEI offers families and educators opportunities to expand the knowledge and skills needed to develop positive and collaborative relationships. WSPEI recognizes that families and educators in a school district have unique training needs. The scope and format of educational services WSPEI provides reflects these needs. WSPEI can help families and school districts connect with local, state and national conferences and training opportunities.

#### Educational/training topics families and school districts may request are:

- Effective Communication for Partnerships
- Navigating the Special Education Maze
- Individual Education Plan (IEP) Understanding the Process
- Transition Planning for Youth and Families
- Serving On Groups that Make Decisions
- Family Engagement

An opportunity for families to participate in more intensive training is also available through the Parents in Partnership (PIP) and Youth in Partnership with Parents for Empowerment (YiPPE) programs.

**For more information about training events or the District Family Engagement Liaison Program, visit [www.wspei.org/training/](http://www.wspei.org/training/) or your local school or CESA websites.**

## YiPPE

### Youth in Partnership with Parents for Empowerment is an Opportunity for Youth with Disabilities and Their Parents to Learn About the Transition Process in a Unique Way!

Youth and their parents will hear from speakers and take part in hands-on activities in parallel programs over five weekends.

#### The YiPPE program assists youth ages 15-20 to:

- Make decisions for themselves and become as independent as possible
- Get Involved in their school and community, make friends and have fun
- Become self-advocating and self-determined
- Learn what the future could hold for them; living on their own, college, work and health

#### YiPPE assists parents to plan for their youth's future by:

- Enhancing their leadership, communication, and social skills
- Providing information in the areas of health, employment, education, inclusion, legislation, and adult services
- Connecting them to national, state, and local resources that will help their youth make a smoother transition

**For more information about YiPPE, visit: [www.wspei.org/families/yippe.php](http://www.wspei.org/families/yippe.php)**

## PIP

### Parents In Partnership is a Leadership Development Opportunity for Parents of Children with Disabilities

PIP is a group of parents and other caregivers who meet together five times during the year to share their family stories, challenges, joys, and triumphs of raising their children. They will learn about community and statewide resources for children with disabilities; explore issues around health, education, policy making, legislation, inclusion, self-determination, family well-being, and IDEA Special Education Law.

#### The Program Assists Parents in Developing:

- Communication Skills
- Leadership Skills
- Positive Advocacy Skills
- Collaboration Skills
- Their own Community Action Plan

#### Who Can Sign Up?

- Families who have children with disabilities ages 6-14
- Children must be receiving special education services
- Must be able to attend all five weekends

PIP is a statewide program with several trainings running concurrent throughout the state.

**For more information about PIP, visit:**  
[www.wspei.org/families/pip.php](http://www.wspei.org/families/pip.php)

## EDUCATION

### District Family Engagement Liaison Program

Since 2000, WSPEI has been helping school districts to facilitate Family Engagement in Special Education. The District Family Engagement Liaison Program is one way to support this work. The School District identifies a parent to serve as their District Liaison and provides guidance for their role. The WSPEI Grant provides training and support throughout the partnership.

#### Roles of a District Family Engagement Liaison:

- Assist local districts in developing family engagement activities and supports which welcome, honor, and connect all families to student learning
- Promote positive working relationships between families, students, staff and community agencies
- Disseminate information about special education topics, family engagement, and DPI grant-initiative resources
- Encourage positive communication for problem solving
- Refer students and families to CESA Family Engagement Coordinators and DPI Initiative contacts for support
- Attend WSPEI Core trainings in 1<sup>st</sup> year and additional training in subsequent years
- Collaborate with special education staff as required
- Assist the school district with strategies regarding Indicator #8 - Parent Involvement survey which welcome, honor, and connect all families to student learning

## CONTACT US

To reach WSPEI or to learn more about family engagement activities in Wisconsin, contact the WSPEI Family Engagement Coordinator in your area. ([See map on back cover](#))

View an updated contact list on the WSPEI website [www.wspei.org/contact/](http://www.wspei.org/contact/)

### CESA Family Engagement Coordinators

#### CESA 1:

N25W23131 Paul Rd 100, Pewaukee WI 53072  
262-787-9500

#### CESA 2:

Whitewater Innovation Center  
1221 Innovation Dr, Whitewater, WI 53190  
262-473-1456

#### CESA 3:

1300 Industrial Dr, Fennimore, WI 53809  
608-822-2140

#### CESA 4:

923 Garland St E, West Salem, WI 54669  
608-786-4800

#### CESA 5:

626 E Slifer St, Portage, WI 53901  
608-745-5400

#### CESA 6:

2300-WI State Rd 44, Oshkosh, WI 54904  
920-233-2372

#### CESA 7:

595 Baeten Rd, Green Bay, WI 54304  
920-492-5960

#### CESA 8:

223 W Park St, Gillett, WI 54124  
800-831-6391

#### CESA 9

304 Kaphaem Rd, PO Box 449, Tomahawk, WI 54487  
715-453-2141

#### CESA 10

725 W Park Ave, Chippew Falls, WI 54729  
715-720-2064

#### CESA 11

225 Ostermann Dr, Turtle Lake, WI 54889  
715-986-2020 ext. 2168

#### CESA 12

618 Beaser Ave, Ashland, WI 54806  
715-682-2363 ext. 115

### Statewide Coordinators

#### Martha DeYoung

WSPEI Training Coordinator  
Parents In Partnership (PIP) and Youth In Partnership  
for Empowerment (YIPPE)  
608-745-5435

#### Kedibonye Carpenter

WSPEI Family Engagement Coordinator  
Additional Support for African American Families  
608-786-4895

#### Hector Portillo

WSPEI Family Engagement Coordinator  
Additional Support for Spanish Speaking Families  
608-745-5446

#### Daniel Parker

DPI Consultant and WSPEI Grant Director  
[daniel.parker@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:daniel.parker@dpi.wi.gov)  
608-266-5194

**To reach the WSPEI Grant Coordinator  
or Administrative Program Assistant,  
please contact:**

CESA 12 : 618 Beaser Ave, Ashland, WI 54806  
715-682-2363 ext. 112