



The Wisconsin Statewide Parent-Educator Initiative, WSPEI (CFDA#84.027) acknowledges the support of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction in the development of this Brochure and for the continued support of this federally-funded grant program. There are no copyright restrictions on this document; however, please credit the Wisconsin DPI and support of federal funds when copying all or part of this material. [34 CFR Sec.75.620]

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Department of Public Instruction  
Carolyn Stanford Taylor,  
State Superintendent

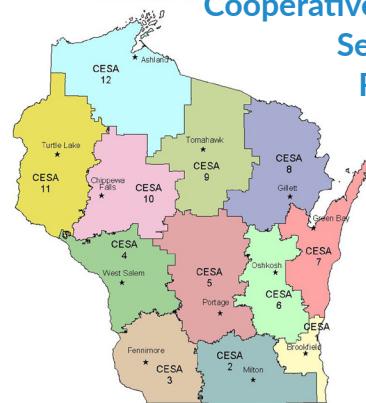


**WSPEI**  
WISCONSIN STATEWIDE  
PARENT-EDUCATOR  
INITIATIVE

**WSPEI Mission:**  
**Develop Strong Relationships -**  
**Build Effective Partnerships**

**Contact WSPEI:**  
**833-879-7734**  
**[wspei@cesa12.org](mailto:wspei@cesa12.org)**  
**[wspei.org](http://wspei.org)**

## Cooperative Educational Service Agency Regional Map



### 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:  
[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/overview.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/overview.htm)

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:  
[www.familyvoiceswi.org](http://www.familyvoiceswi.org)

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

Well Badger:  
[www.wellbadger.org](http://www.wellbadger.org)

Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin:  
[www.autismgreaterwi.org/](http://www.autismgreaterwi.org/)

ALAS - Milwaukee County:  
[www.alianzlatinawi.org/ALAS.htm](http://www.alianzlatinawi.org/ALAS.htm)

Wisconsin Council of Administrators of Special  
Services (WCASS):  
[www.wcass.org](http://www.wcass.org)

ARC:  
[arcwi.org](http://arcwi.org)

## RESOURCES

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

WSPEI has many resources available at no cost for families and educators. You can find these at [wspei.org/resources](https://wspei.org/resources).

#### Other Statewide Grant Initiatives:

Supporting Neurodiverse Students  
[sites.google.com/cesa1.k12.wi.us/ese/home](https://sites.google.com/cesa1.k12.wi.us/ese/home)

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  
[dpi.wi.gov/sped/early-childhood](http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/early-childhood)

Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports  
[www.wisconsinrticenter.org](http://www.wisconsinrticenter.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 Special Education Network  
[dpi.wi.gov/sped/educators/initiatives/regional-special-education-network](http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/educators/initiatives/regional-special-education-network)

Supports for Educating Students with IEPs  
[dpi.wi.gov/sped/supports-educating-students-ieps](http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/supports-educating-students-ieps)

Research to Practice Inclusive Communities Project  
[dpi.wi.gov/sped/educators/discretionary-grants/rpic-project](http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/educators/discretionary-grants/rpic-project)



## ABOUT WSPEI

### Wisconsin Statewide Parent-Educator Initiative

WSPEI is all about partnerships, helping families and school districts to find the resources that will 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

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Wisconsin Statewide Parent Educator Initiative

## ∴ FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

### Why should families be engaged?

The research on family engagement shows when families support their children's learning at home, their children will be more successful. The Dual Capacity-Building Framework, at [dualcapacity.org](http://dualcapacity.org), gives guidance to educators to meet the challenge of how to execute partnerships and cultivate and sustain positive relationships with families through its essential conditions. These opportunity conditions include both process and organizational conditions.

#### Process conditions of:

Relational, built on mutual trust • Linked to Learning and Development • Asset based • Culturally Responsive and Respectful • Collaborative • Interactive

#### Organizational Conditions of:

Systemic, Integrated, Sustained

Within these conditions, the goal is to build and enhance the capacity of families and educators in these 4C areas: Capabilities; Connections; Confidence; Cognition

#### So that:

Educators are empowered to:  
Connect family engagement to learning and development • Engage families as co-creators • Honor family funds of knowledge • Create welcoming cultures

#### And that:

Families engage in diverse roles of:  
Co-Creators • Monitors • Supporters • Advocates • Encouragers • Models

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

- Request that the IEP team meet again and consider including additional team members
- Contact a parent support organization for additional suggestions

Problem solving locally 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: A trained impartial professional helps the IEP team with the IEP process.  
[www.wsems.us/iep-facilitation](http://www.wsems.us/iep-facilitation)
- Mediation: Available at no cost to families and schools, a mediator helps families and schools resolve special education conflicts.  
[www.wsems.us/mediation](http://www.wsems.us/mediation)
- IDEA State Complaints: Anyone who believes a school district did not follow state or federal special education law has the right to file a complaint with DPI.  
[dpi.wi.gov/sped/dispute-resolution/complain](http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/dispute-resolution/complain)
- Due Process Hearings: Parents, adult students, and schools districts have the right to request due process hearings for special education disputes.  
[dpi.wi.gov/sped/dispute-resolution/due-process](http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/dispute-resolution/due-process)

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

For more information:  
[dpi.wi.gov/sped/topics/agreement](http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/topics/agreement)  
[wspei.org/communication](http://wspei.org/communication)  
833-879-7734

## 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 first talk directly with the people involved as soon as possible
- Call to schedule an informal meeting to discuss the situation
- Prepare for the meeting by making a list of concerns and some possible solutions

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

- See if you can agree on the concerns that must be addressed
- Listen actively to understand the other person’s perspective
- Communicate your concerns clearly
- Ask and restate questions so you and others are clear in your 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

### For families what does this mean?

#### WSPEI provides:

- Individual family support
- Strategies to navigate the school system
- Access to free 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 families disagree with a decision of the school
- Assistance 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 educators what does this mean?

#### WSPEI supports:

- 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
- Assistance 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
- Information regarding best practice in the area of Family and Community Engagement.

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILIES AND EDUCATORS

### Recognizing Families' and Educators' Professional Learning 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 professional learning 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 professional learning opportunities.

#### Learning opportunities available for families and educators include:

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

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

For more information about learning opportunities and other events, visit [www.wspei.org/event](http://www.wspei.org/event) or your local school or CESA websites.

## YiPPE

### Youth in Partnership with Parents for Empowerment (YiPPE)

An opportunity for students with IEPs and their parents to learn about the transition process in a unique way while building real life skills in the areas of employment, education, living, and health.

#### The YiPPE Program Assists Students with IEPs Ages 14-21 to:

- Learn how to make decisions for themselves
- Get involved in their school and community
- Learn how to speak up for themselves
- Prepare for college and/or work
- Meet other youth

#### The YiPPE Program Assists Parents to:

- Learn about planning for life after high school
- Learn about valuable resources and adult services
- Become part of a network of parents who have youth with disabilities
- Explore ways to share the information they have learned

#### Who Can Sign Up?

- Students with IEPs (ages 14-21) and their parent(s), foster parent(s), or grandparent(s)

#### Contact information:

[wspei.org/families/yippe.php](http://wspei.org/families/yippe.php)

## PIP

### Parent in Partnership (PIP)

The PIP and Transition PIP Programs Assists Parents of students/children with IEPs ages 6-21 to:

- Learn about valuable resources
- Plan ahead for their child and family
- Learn more within the topics of: health care, education, transition, and self-determination as well as other subject matter of interest to a particular group of parents
- Strengthen partnerships between the many professionals they interact with on behalf of their children
- Explore ways to share the information they have learned

### Who Can Sign Up?

- Parent(s), foster parent(s), or grandparent(s), who have students/children with IEPs ages 6-14 (14-21 if a Transition PIP)
- Those who have attended a PIP or Transition PIP in the past are not eligible to attend

Contact information:

[wspei.org/families/yippe.php](http://wspei.org/families/yippe.php)

## Continuous Improvement Planning with Districts

WSPEI and other Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction grants align support structures to better support coordinated and sustained improvement efforts with individual school districts to provide deeper levels of family engagement support to school districts in each of the Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) regions of the state. WSPEI family engagement coordinators provide intensive and sustained district/regional support which allows for a greater emphasis in supporting underrepresented families and engaging in deeper levels of partnerships with local and regional community family support organizations that serve those families. WSPEI services are free of charge.

### WSPEI Vision:

All families and school communities have the beliefs, knowledge, and skills to meaningfully engage in effective decision-making to improve outcomes for students of all abilities.

### WSPEI Mission:

Develop Strong Relationships - Build Effective Partnerships

## :: WSPEI FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

The Family Engagement Assessment and Planning provides districts the opportunity to assess how they currently engage families who have children with IEPs, study the data around these practices, and create an action plan to address any areas of need in order to strengthen the capacity of the staff to effectively engage families and community

WSPEI CESA Coordinators work with district teams to provide: technical assistance; assistance with data compilation and analysis; guidance in creating the family engagement capacity of families and educators; facilitation of staff professional learning options; assistance with increasing district's knowledge of resources and tools available; and general guidance and support in family and community engagement.



## :: WSPEI STATEWIDE PHONE SUPPORT

The WSPEI Statewide Phone Support Coordinators have extensive knowledge of resources and have the expertise to support questions and concerns from families and others regarding special education and other education topics. The persons in this position are able to professionally interact with those that contact them, are able to assess the need, and direct the person to resources and information.

The Coordinators listen to family and educator concerns in a way that is best able to assist and encourage callers to build positive partnerships that improve student outcomes. They also refer callers to regional CESA coordinators, agencies, or organizations for specialized regional support.

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