



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

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Understanding Suspensions for a Child with an IEP

By Wendy Overturf

The information below and corresponding links can often be confusing. The Help Desk Specialists at [WI FACETS](#) can help you navigate through your own situation. They can be reached at 414-374-4645/877-374-0511.

Often parents of children with IEPs call the WI FACETS Help Desk because they are frustrated with being asked repeatedly to pick up their child early from school due to behavioral issues. When parents call with this concern, we ask them if the school is suspending their child. Sometimes, their answer is “no.” This practice is known as *de facto suspensions or informal suspension*—removing a student from school without recording it as an official suspension. In these cases, we suggest to parents that unless their child is suspended, they do not need to pick them up from school.

Something that parents could say when receiving a call from school to pick up their child is, “Unless this is an official suspension, I believe my child should remain in school. Can you document this in writing?”

Also, it is always a good idea to keep a folder of communications with the school such as:

- Noting the dates and times of removals.
- Recording who contacted them and what was said.
- Keeping copies of discipline forms or emails.
- Making notes from IEP or manifestation determination meetings.

Why It Is Important to Document Removals of a Student with an IEP as Suspensions

When a student with an IEP is sent home early or told not to come to school because of behavioral issues, it should be documented as a suspension. This is important because when a student has been removed for more than 10 cumulative school days during the school year, the Local Education Agency (LEA) must determine whether there is a pattern of removals that constitutes a change in placement. (Note that the LEA is typically the school district.) It is considered a change in educational placement for a child with a disability when a child is removed for their educational placement for more than ten consecutive school days. A change of placement also occurs if the child has been subjected to series of removals that constitute a pattern. A series of removals constitute a pattern when:

- the student has been removed for more than 10 cumulative school days in a single year;
- the behavior is substantially similar to previous incidents; and
- other additional factors are considered, such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

After the student has been removed for more than 10 cumulative school days, the LEA must review

If the LEA determines there is a pattern of removal, the student must remain in their current placement until the LEA, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team hold the [manifestation determination review \(MDR\)](#). A manifestation determination is the process used to determine whether the behavior that resulted in the proposed disciplinary change of placement is a manifestation or result of the student's disability. If the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability, then except under limited circumstances ([Q7 and Q8](#)), the LEA cannot unilaterally proceed with changing the student's placement. The parent and the LEA, however, could agree to a change of placement. Behavior is determined to be a manifestation of a student's disability if:

- If the IEP team determines the student's behavior *is a manifestation of the student's disability*, the LEA cannot move forward with the change of placement and the IEP team must conduct a [functional behavioral assessment](#) (FBA), if one has not already been conducted before the specific behavioral incident. A [behavioral intervention plan](#) (BIP) must be implemented to address the student's behavioral needs. If a BIP has already been developed, the IEP team must review the current BIP and modify, as necessary, to address the behavior.

Additionally, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires the IEP team to consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies to address behaviors that interfere with the student's learning or the learning of others. ([See Information Update Bulletin 23.01.](#)) Therefore, if your child is having behavioral difficulties, contact your special education case manager to schedule an IEP team meeting to discuss potential interventions and supports.

Join us for a Serving on Groups webinar: November 6, 2025 | 12:00-1:00pm
[Registration](#) and additional information.

[IEP 8: Writing the IEP \(Part 4\) \(Pre-recorded\)](#)

Date: November 4, 2025

Presenter: Ann Zielke, WI FACETS

[Attendance Concerns and Special Education/ Preocupaciones sobre la asistencia y educación especial](#)

Date: November 5, 2025

Presenters: Eva Shaw and Dr. Sara Totten, WI DPI

[Serving on Groups: The Role of Families and Skills for Serving on Groups \(Sec7 & 8\)](#)

Date: November 6, 2025

Presenter: Jan Serak, Serak Consulting

[¿Cómo conseguir y mantener tu primer trabajo?: Para jóvenes con discapacidades y aquellos que le apoyan](#)

Date: November 6, 2025

Presenter: Nathaly Silva, WI FACETS

[The Role of Medical and Clinical Information in Special Education Evaluation and IEP Development](#)

Date: November 12, 2025

Presenter: Eva Kubinski, WI DPI

[IEP 9: Revisions and Extended School Year \(ESY\) \(Pre-recorded\)](#)

Date: November 18, 2025

Presenter: Ann Zielke, WI FACETS

[Act 20 and Special Education](#)

Date: November 19, 2025

Presenters: Rose Kilmurray and Sharon Madsen, WI DPI

[Sección 504: Lo que los padres y los estudiantes deben saber](#)

Date: November 20, 2025

Presenter: Nathaly Silva, WI FACETS

HOME LEARNING



Veterans Day is November 11, 2025.

This is the day our country honors the men and women who have served in the United States military. Did you know that red poppies are worn on Veterans Day to symbolize for those who died in service? This symbol of remembrance was inspired by the poem "[In Flanders Fields](#)" and the sight of poppies growing on the battlefields. Check out these [poppy craft ideas](#) in honor of this special day.



Daylight Saving Time Ends

In most states, daylight saving time (DST) ends on November 2, 2025. Older children may enjoy this [video](#) about the history of DST.



Grocery Store Math

Using a grocery store to practice math skills shows your children how useful math is for everyday tasks. Check out some of the examples below.

Counting & Cardinality (Early Learners)

- Count apples, bananas, or cereal boxes.

- Put 5 items in the cart or “Count how many things we have so far.”

Addition and Subtraction

- “We have 3 oranges. If we add 2 more, how many will we have?”
- “We bought 6 eggs, but used 2—how many are left?”

Multiplication & Grouping

- Count by 2’s the number of items in the cart.
- “Each muffin costs \$2. How much for 4 muffins?”

Money and Financial Literacy

- Identify coins and bills.
- Estimate the total cost before checkout.
- Compare two prices to find the better deal.

Measurement & Estimation

- Weigh produce (pounds, ounces, kilograms).
- Estimate which bag is heavier/lighter.
- Calculate price per pound.

Fractions and Decimals

- Find the unit cost. “If a 6-pack of soda is \$6.00, how much is each can?”
- Reading prices with decimals (e.g. \$2.49, \$3.75).



Think-Alouds to Build Comprehension

Children deepen their learning when they make connections between what they read and what they already know. One method you can use to help make these connections is called a think aloud, where you pause to talk through your thoughts as you read. Below are some examples of what you can say as you are reading with your child.

Strategies to Model with Think-Alouds

- **Predicting** – “Based on the title and cover illustration, I think this story might be about a girl who goes on an adventure.”
- **Visualizing** – “When the author says ‘the forest was dark and tangled,’ I picture tall trees with vines hanging down.”
- **Making connections** – “This part reminds me of when I moved to a new school and felt nervous, just like the character.”
- **Questioning** – “Why did the author describe the storm in so much detail? Maybe it’s important for what happens next.”
- **Clarifying** – “I’m not sure what the word reluctant means... let me reread. Oh, it seems like it means ‘not wanting to.’”
- **Summarizing** – “So far, the character has met two new friends and discovered a secret door.”



[Thanksgiving Turkey Pretzel Rod Treats](#)



[I Am Thankful: A Thanksgiving Book for Kids](#)

[Kid's Thanksgiving Read-Alouds](#)

Check out this video featuring four read-alouds:

- How to Catch a Turkey
- There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Turkey
- Turkey Trouble"
- Twas the Night Before Thanksgiving

Teach young children about coming together with loved ones to give thanks! / *Am Thankful* is an adorable, rhyming storybook that follows three different families as they celebrate the holiday with their own traditions, acts of kindness, and ways of giving back.

[Essential Steps for Practicing Gratitude with Children](#)

UPCOMING STATE EVENTS

[Building the Heart of Successful Schools](#)

Date: December 11, 2025

Location: Glacier Canyon Resort, Wisconsin Dells, WI

This year's keynote, Dr. Andréa Michel, will share practical, trauma-informed strategies to support schools as safe, supportive spaces for all students.

[Training for Home Language Interpreters: Supporting Families through the Special Education Process](#)

For those seeking training for home language interpreters for families at IEP meetings, DPI has partnered with WI FACETS, LEAs, and other organizations to develop a one-day training for home language interpreters who interpret for families at IEP meetings. Language interpretation training is a requirement to meet the provisions outlined in DPI's Providing Language Assistance to Parents guidance document. The training provides increased awareness of state and federal regulations related to the educational rights of students who receive special education through an IEP and who may also be English Language Learners. The training also provides increased knowledge and resources related to legal responsibilities and ethical considerations for translation and interpretation of special education terms and concepts.

Virtual trainings:

February 6, 2026 (8am-2pm) – [Registration Information](#)

February 20, 2026 (8am-2pm) – [Registration Information](#)

In-person trainings:

January 7, 2026 - Escuela Verde - Check the [WI FACETS website](#) for registration information – coming soon

March 12, 2026 - **CESA 6** - Check the [WI FACETS website](#) for registration information – coming soon

March 13, 2026 - **CESA 1** - [Registration Information](#)

[24th Annual WI Transition Conference](#)

Dates: February 12-13, 2026

Location: Kalahari Resort, WI Dells, WI

The conference will have two knowledgeable and humorous keynote speaker presentations. Spend all Thursday morning with the extremely informative and funny, Pam Schuller and all Friday morning with the hilarious "Shut Up Sisters", Patricia Terrasi and Gina Gallagher. Both keynotes bring a wealth of knowledge, from different perspectives, regarding the challenges faced in the world of special education. In addition, there are over 20 breakout sessions to choose from, relevant exhibitors, and networking time.

[2026 Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin and the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin Annual Conference-Call for Proposals](#)

Dates: April 24-25, 2026

The Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin and the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin are currently accepting proposals for the 2026 annual conference. The purpose of the annual conference is to provide a wide range of information to those within the autism community. Their goal is to provide relevant information

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

ONLINE RESOURCES: Social & Emotional Learning



This updated document from July 2022 includes additional questions and answers that are related to the discipline regulations of a child with an IEP.

[Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports \(PBIS\)](#)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based, tiered framework for supporting *students'* behavioral, academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. When implemented with fidelity, [PBIS improves](#) social emotional competence, academic success, and school climate.

[Mental Health America of Wisconsin \(MHA\)](#)

Mental Health America of Wisconsin is an affiliate of Mental Health America. MHA is dedicated to improving the mental health of all individuals through advocacy, education, and service.

[Youth Suicide Prevention](#)

Visit the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's website for Information and resources related to youth suicide prevention.

[Wisconsin Family Ties](#)

Wisconsin Family Ties (WFT) is a statewide nonprofit organization run by families for families with children and adolescents impacted by social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health challenges. The [WFT Facebook page](#) has links to a variety of resources related to emotional behavioral disabilities.

[NAMI \(National Alliance on Mental Illness\) Wisconsin](#)

NAMI Wisconsin provides support, education, and advocacy for people affected by mental illness. They offer family support groups and programs like "Family-to-Family," which helps families better understand and support their loved ones with mental health conditions. NAMI also has a [resource guide](#) to help families navigate the mental health care system.

[Anxiety and Depression Association of America \(ADAA\)](#)

ADAA is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to the prevention, treatment, and cure of anxiety, depressive, obsessive-compulsive, and trauma-related disorders through education, practice, and research. Their mission focuses on improving the quality of life for children and adults affected with these disorders.

[Providing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports to Students with Disabilities and Use of Functional Behavioral Assessments](#)

This is an Information update bulletin from the Wisconsin DPI intended to assist IEP teams in understanding the technical and procedural requirements in identifying and supporting students' behavioral needs. This is done through changes in adult practices using comprehensive special education evaluations, functional behavioral assessments (FBAs), IEP development, behavior intervention plans (BIPs), and the implementation of positive behavioral interventions and supports.

[Seclusion and Restraint in Wisconsin Schools](#)

WI FACETS, Wisconsin Family Ties, and Disability Rights Wisconsin collaborated to develop a brochure explaining seclusion and restraint which can be downloaded from the WI FACETS website.

[International OCD \(Obsessive Compulsive Disorder\) Foundation \(IOCDF\)](#)

The mission of the IOCDF is to help those affected by obsessive compulsive disorder and related disorders to live full and productive lives. There is information and resources on the website specifically intended for parents and children.

[WISE \(Initiative for Stigma Elimination\)](#)

WISE is a national coalition of organizations and individuals promoting inclusion and support for all affected by mental illness by advancing evidence-based practices for stigma reduction efforts. The Community Learning and Engagement Department of [Rogers Behavioral Health](#) provides the staff to support the work of WISE. People with mental health challenges sharing their recovery experiences is the current, primary, evidence-based practice to reduce stigma, and drives the focus of WISE. They promote the power of strategic contact with people in recovery to end stigma in schools, healthcare, congregations, workplaces and wherever humans interact.

Functional Behavioral Assessment Resources

In collaboration with partners across the state, the Wisconsin DPI has updated resources on conducting functional behavioral assessments (FBA) for students with individualized education plans (IEPs). The goal of an FBA is to identify the function and underlying root cause of behavior in order to develop a plan for adults to better support the student's academic and functional needs. The updated information includes building readiness, when teams should consider use of an FBA, consent requirements, the components of an FBA, and using the results. The FBA resources and information on FBA professional learning opportunities can be found on the DPI [Functional Behavioral Assessment webpage](#).

RESEARCH

An Investigation of the Qualities, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective Teachers for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders: The Teacher Perspective

Leggio, J. C., & Terras, K. L. (2019). An Investigation of the Qualities, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective Teachers for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders: The Teacher Perspective. *Journal of Special Education Apprenticeship* 8(1), n1.

[Read Full Article](#)

This study investigated the qualities, knowledge, and skills of effective teachers for students with emotional/behavioral disorders (EBD) from the perspective of six special education teachers. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and a focus group. An analysis of the data yielded three themes. First, effective EBD teachers develop unconditional teacher-student relationships. No matter how many setbacks a student with EBD may experience, the effective EBD teacher relentlessly affirms his or her belief in the student's ability to succeed. Second, effective EBD teachers create positive classroom environments. When students with EBD are removed from the general education setting or experience a crisis at school, the effective EBD teacher provides a safe, consistent, and nonjudgmental haven. Finally, effective EBD teachers individualize instruction. Having knowledge of behavioral disorders and effective strategies is insufficient. The effective EBD teacher identifies the unique needs of each student and designs instruction that meets students' individual academic and behavioral needs.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Newsletter Topics:

December: Communication

January: Transition

February: Intellectual Disabilities

To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources you may use the [Word document](#). Send submissions to [Wendy Overturf](#). If you are unable to access the form, you may send the information in an email.

Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.

This monthly update is provided by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement. If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please email [WI FACETS](#).

The WI FACETS Family Engagement E-Newsletter can be found online: www.servingongroups.org/newsletter



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