WI FACETS
Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support







FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

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Understanding Manifestation Determination Reviews: What Every Parent Should Know

by Wendy Overturf

For many parents, receiving a notice inviting them to a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) meeting can be unsettling. Parents often call WI FACETS feeling concerned or having questions after receiving a notice about the meeting. They may not understand the purpose of the meeting, what decisions could be made, or what the next steps may be for their child. It is common for parents to worry that their child may face a significant disciplinary consequence or a change in school placement. It is important to know that receiving an invitation to a manifestation determination meeting does not automatically mean that a particular disciplinary action has been decided. Instead, the meeting is an important safeguard under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that helps ensure the school considers whether the child's disability played a role in the behavior before making certain disciplinary decisions.

One of the first things parents should understand is the 10-day rule. A student with a disability may be removed from school for up to 10 school days in a school year for violating the school code of conduct, just as a student without a disability may be.

When Must a Manifestation Determination Occur? (Cited from Special Education Information Update Bulletin 14.02**,** Question 3) When Must a Manifestation Determination Occur? (Cited from Special Education Information Update Bulletin 14.02, Question 3)
"A manifestation determination must occur whenever an LEA (school district) decides to change the student's placement because of a violation of the code of student conduct. A disciplinary change of placement occurs when the student's removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days (10 school days in a row) or when a series of removals constitutes a pattern.

When a student has been removed for more than 10 cumulative school days during the school year, the LEA must determine whether there is a pattern of removals that constitutes a change in placement. 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 each subsequent removal to determine if a pattern of removals exists. The decision as to whether there is a pattern of removals is made on a case-by-case basis by the LEA. If the parent disagrees with the LEA's decision as to whether there is a pattern of removals, then the parent may request a due process hearing, mediation, or file an Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) complaint."

During the meeting, the parents and members of the IEP team review all relevant information. This includes the student's IEP, teacher observations, information provided by the parents, and the details of the incident. The team must consider two important questions:
· Was the behavior caused by, or did it have a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability or
· Was the behavior the direct result of the school's failure to implement the student's IEP?

If the answer to either question is yes, the behavior is considered a manifestation of the student's disability. When behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, the school generally cannot move forward with the disciplinary change of placement unless parents agree to the change. Instead, the IEP team works together to identify supports that can help prevent similar behavior in the future. Additionally, the IEP team must conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) unless one has been conducted before the behavioral incident and implement a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) to address the student's behavioral needs. However, if a BIP has already been developed, then the IEP team must review the BIP and modify, as necessary, to address the behavior. If the school did not fully implement the IEP, it must correct that problem.

There are a few important exceptions to these rules. In situations involving weapons, illegal drugs, or the infliction of serious bodily injury at school or during a school activity, the school may move a student to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days, even if the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability. An IAES is a temporary educational placement where the student continues to receive educational services and work toward their IEP goals while the disciplinary issue is addressed. During this time, the student must still receive the special education services and supports needed to participate in the general education curriculum and make progress toward their IEP goals.

If the team determines that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may apply the same disciplinary consequences that would apply to students without disabilities. However, a student with a disability continues to have the right to receive educational services so they can continue participating in the general education curriculum and make progress toward their IEP goals.

Parents are important members of the manifestation determination review team. Before the meeting, parents should review their child's IEP, think about how their child's disability may have affected the behavior, and write down any questions or concerns. Parents may also bring information from outside providers if it helps explain their child's needs. Parents should not hesitate to ask the team to explain anything they do not understand.

Remember, a manifestation of determination is not about deciding whether the behavior happened. Instead, it is about making sure the team carefully considers whether the behavior was connected to the student's disability or whether it resulted from the school's failure to implement the IEP. This process helps ensure that discipline is fair while protecting the child's right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

For more detailed information, visit the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's Manifestation Determination Review (Form I-12) and Special Education Information Update Bulletin 14.02. Parents can also contact WI FACETS (414-374-4645) if they have additional questions or need clarification on the process. Please note that WI FACETS does not attend MDR meetings.

HOME LEARNING



November 1, 2026-Daylight Savings Time Ends

Talk to your child about Daylight Savings Time. Explain that in November in Wisconsin, we turn our clocks back one hour. This means it will be darker an hour earlier.

Ask questions such as:

- If it is 8:00am and we turn the clock back one hour, what time is it?
- If bedtime is 8:30pm, what time will the clock show after we "fall back"?
- If you typically wake up at 7am, will it be lighter or darker at that time after the clocks have been changed?



Veterans Day is November 11, 2026
This is the day our country honors the men and women who have served in the United States military. Older children can write a thank-you letter to a veteran. If you don't know a veteran, the letter could be sent to one of the Veterans Hospitals. Addresses for a Veterans Home in Wisconsin can be found here.

Check out these read alouds.
Veterans Heroes in Our Neighborhood
The Poppy Lady: Moina Belle Michael and Her Tribute to Veterans



Mental Math
Mental math games are a fun way to help children build confidence and strengthen



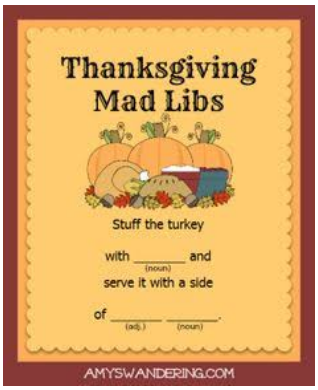
Using Read Alouds as a Parent:

Turning Story Time into Learning Time
Although children can enjoy a read-aloud on their own, they learn the most when they watch and listen with a parent or caregiver. As you read together, pause the video from time to time to ask questions about the story, talk about the illustrations, and encourage your child to predict what might happen next. You can also use these pauses to discuss new vocabulary words and what they mean. These simple conversations help children build comprehension, expand their vocabulary, and develop language skills that are essential for success in reading and learning.

their math skills without using paper, pencils, or calculators. Whether you're in the car, waiting at a restaurant, or spending time together at home, these quick games turn everyday moments into learning opportunities. Listed below are some suggestions.

Play Guess My Number
Think of a number between 1-100 and have your child ask yes or no questions to figure out the answer. Encourage your child to use math vocabulary terms such as greater than, less than, odd, even, before, after, etc. This game could be modified for younger children by using a smaller range of numbers such as 1-20.

One More, One Less
Say a number and ask: What is one more? What is one less?
For older children, ask: What is 10 more? What is 10 less? What is 100 more?



Thanksgiving Mad Libs for Kids
Mad Libs are a fun reading and writing activity for older children. Click on the link above to check out this printable Thanksgiving mad lib. This would be a fun activity to do with family while waiting for Thanksgiving dinner to be done!



Sweet Treats - Thanksgiving Crafts for Kids
Get your child excited for Thanksgiving by helping them make some Thanksgiving themed treats. Click the link above to learn how helping children prepare recipes builds their reading and math skills, including measuring ingredients!

WI FACETS EVENTS

IEP 6: Writing the IEP (Part 2) (Pre-recorded)
Date: November 3, 2026
Presenter: Ann Zielke, WI FACETS

Serving on Groups: The Role of Families and Skills for Serving on Groups (Sections 7 & 8) (Pre-recorded)
Date: November 5, 2026
Presenter: Jan Serak, Serak Consulting

¿Qué se escribe en un IEP? Parte 2: Servicios, adaptaciones y metas (Pregrabado)
Date: November 5, 2026
Presenter: Nathaly Silva, WI FACETS

IEP 7: Writing the IEP (Part 3) (Pre-recorded)
Date: November 10, 2026
Presenter: Ann Zielke, WI FACETS

IEP 8: Writing the IEP (Part 4) (Pre-recorded)
Date: November 17, 2026

Presenter: Ann Zielke, WI FACETS

Holding onto Hope in the Midst of Change
Date: November 18, 2026
Presenter: Tim Markle, Forgiveness Factor

¿Qué se escribe en un IEP? Parte 3: Metas claras, servicios y el resumen del programa (Pregrabado)
Date: November 19, 2026
Presenter: Nathaly Silva, WI FACETS

UPCOMING STATE EVENTS



2027 WI FACETS Endless Possibilities Conference - Save the Date
We're moving the conference to JUNE!
Date: June 17, 2027
Location: Waukesha County Technical College (AJN Center), Pewaukee, WI

The annual Endless Possibilities conference invites families and professionals who support students with disabilities to learn and grow together. We encourage open dialogue between families and professionals to discuss positive solutions for all our students with special needs in Wisconsin. Join us in JUNE of 2027!

Join the 2026-27 Supporting Neurodiverse Students Learning Events
The Supporting Neurodiverse Students (SNS) Professional Learning System provides support for educators and families serving students with disability-related needs in the area of social and emotional learning (SEL). The SNS provides learning opportunities with a focus on regulation, social communication, flexibility, resilience, sensory processing, and executive functioning. SNS offers access to information in a variety of ways, so no matter how you learn, you can participate.
To find subjects, dates, and registration, please visit the SNS Learning Events Registration webpage. To book a time to discuss learning events, coaching, and technical assistance click on this booking link. Additionally, there are many resources to explore on the SNS website, including recordings of past trainings and quick videos on specific topics. For more information, please visit the SNS Website.

Youth Mental Health Resource Fair-Reserve a Spot
Come and meet with local providers and community organizations. There are many other fun activities planned. This is a no cost event and free food will also be available.
Date: November 5, 2026, 5-7 pm
Location- Burlington, WI High School

One Thing I Wish You Knew Community-Mental Health Event
This event will highlight the vulnerability and honesty of our four keynote teen speakers. They will open up about what they wish others understood about their journeys with mental health through sharing the challenges they have faced and what often goes unseen beneath the surface. It will be held at the Italian Community Center, 631 E Chicago St, Milwaukee, WI 53202 from 3-5 pm on Sunday, November 15, 2026. Use this link to RSVP.

Children Come First Conference
Dates: November 16-17, 2026
Location: Kalahari Resort, WI Dells, WI
As one of the largest and longest-running family-driven events in the state, this conference is dedicated to addressing the pressing needs of children and families living with mental and behavioral health issues.

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 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.

Each training date covers the same content areas detailed in the description above, it is not necessary to register for more than one date. For virtual trainings, due to the high level of interaction among participants, registration is limited to the first 30 registrants. There is no fee for virtual trainings, but you must register.

Virtual trainings:
January 29, 2027 (8am-2pm) – **Registration Information**
February 5, 2027 (8am-2pm) – **Registration Information**

In-person trainings:
March 29, 2027 – Beaver Dam Unified School District – More information available soon!

Leadership in Action: Finding the Leader in You Click Here for Flyer / Click Here for Flyer in Spanish
Date: February 10 & 17, 2027 6pm to 8pm
Parent leadership goes beyond volunteering. This 2-part series focuses on empowering parents and family members to join a school group that promotes and builds strong family-school partnerships.
Participants will learn about:
• Working in partnership to effectively communicate with schools
• Building engagement and ensuring relevant parent participation
• Supporting teams to work together by setting up clear meeting guidelines and using conflict resolution to turn problems into success.
All participants will receive printed training manuals from Serving on Groups and Leading by Convening.
**Spanish Interpretation is available for this training

ONLINE RESOURCES: Emotional Behavioral Disabilities

Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)
This site has information about the definition, characteristics, causes, and frequencies of emotional and behavioral disorders, as well as brief information related to specific disorders. Links to numerous other resources are also included on the website. This is the **link** to this information in Spanish.

Emotional Behavioral Disability-Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
This site has a variety of technical assistance and best practice resources related to **comprehensive special education evaluations** in which the characteristics of emotional behavioral disabilities are assessed. The website also includes the emotional behavioral disability category criteria worksheet in Wisconsin.

Inclusive Strategies to Address Behavioral Needs for Students with IEPs-Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
This professional learning series provides resources and strategies to help adults address the behavioral needs of students with individualized education programs (IEPs).

Questions and Answers: Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities and IDEA's Discipline Provisions (from U.S Department of Education, Office of Special Education and

Rehabilitative Services)
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.

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 by 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 are 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.

When Mental Health Challenges Contribute to Absences
This document from the WI DPI is intended to provide answers to frequently asked questions regarding situations involving mental health challenges and absences.

Your Child's Return Home from Juvenile Detention to School and Community

Do you need help as your child exits the juvenile justice system and returns to your local school? Check out the website for information and resources.

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 using an FBA, consent requirements, the components of an FBA, and using the results.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Council on Special Education 2026 Fall Public Forum
The Council on Special Education will be hosting a virtual public forum on November 18, 2026, from 5:00pm-6:30pm. The Public Forum allows the State Superintendent's Advisory Council on Special Education to:

- Listen to families, school administrators, educators, community representatives, etc.
- Gather input on the unique challenges and successes of special education in Wisconsin
- Advise the State Superintendent and the Department of Public Instruction
- Hear about any topic upon which people may choose to comment

Registration link for the Zoom meeting.
If you are unable to attend the meeting on November 18th, you can also submit a comment online. Online comments will open on November 6, 2026, and close on November 20, 2026. To submit a comment please email spedcouncil@dpi.wi.gov. For additional information, please contact Lisa Wery.

RESEARCH

Evidence for Social and Emotional Learning in Schools
Greenberg, M. T. (2023). Evidence for social and emotional learning in schools. Learning Policy Institute. https://doi.org/10.54300/928.269 Greenberg, M. T. (2023). Evidence for social and emotional learning in schools. Learning Policy Institute. https://doi.org/10.54300/928.269

Read Full Article

Educating the "whole child" means helping children grow in many ways, not just academically. Schools work to help students build healthy relationships, treat others with kindness and respect, solve problems, think creatively, prepare for college or careers, and become responsible members of their communities. To help students develop these skills, schools need to provide safe, caring, and supportive learning environments where every child can succeed while being challenged to learn and grow.

An important part of this approach is social and emotional learning (SEL). SEL teaches students how to understand and manage their emotions, build positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and work well with others. A group of leading researchers reviewed many years of research on SEL and found that social and emotional skills are equally as important as academic skills. These skills help students succeed in school, prepare for future careers, and build successful lives.

Research from hundreds of studies has shown that high-quality SEL programs improve students' behavior, emotional well-being, and academic achievement. SEL also benefits teachers and school staff by creating a more positive, supportive, and respectful school environment. Researchers continue to study how SEL programs can best support students from preschool through high school.

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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