

2023-25 Biennial Report

October 15, 2025

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

[Page left blank intentionally]

2023-25 Biennial Report for the Department of Public Instruction

Compiled by

Grant Huber

Policy Initiatives Advisor – Office of Policy and Budget

Erin Fath

Director – Office of Policy and Budget



Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Jill K. Underly, PhD, State Superintendent

Madison, Wisconsin

This report is available from:

POLICY, BUDGET, AND RESEARCH TEAM

Erin Fath

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

201 West Washington Avenue

Madison, WI 53703

608-266-2804

<https://dpi.wi.gov/policy-budget/biennial-report>

OCTOBER 2025

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, creed, age, national origin, ancestry, pregnancy, marital status or parental status, sexual orientation, or ability and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface.....	3
Chapter 1: The State of Education in Wisconsin.....	4
Condition of All Schools under the State Superintendent's Supervision	4
The State Superintendent's Visits to Educational Institutions	5
School Aid Disbursements to All Schools under the State Superintendent's Jurisdiction	7
Chapter 2: The Operation and Performance of the Department of Public Instruction during the 2023-25 Biennium	9
Overview of the Department	10
Major Program Goals for the 2023-2025 Biennium	10
The Work Done by the Department in the Performance of its Duties	11
Office of the State Superintendent.....	11
Division for Academic Excellence.....	13
Division for Finance and Management.....	28
Division for Learning Support.....	30
Division for Libraries and Technology	45
Division for Student and School Success	48
Improvements Made by the Department	56
Agency Wide.....	56
Division for Finance and Management.....	57
Division for Learning Support Special Education.....	58
Division for Libraries and Technology	60
Division for Student and School Success	67
Chapter 3: Information on Specific Areas of Interest	73
Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) Programs	74
Status of Wisconsin Public School Compliance with Pupil Nondiscrimination Requirements	76
The Status of American Indian Education in the State of Wisconsin	77
Council on Library and Network Development (COLAND)	81
High School Graduation Requirements	82
Health Problems Education Program	84

[Page left blank intentionally]

Preface

Under Wis. Stat. sec. 15.04(1)(d), the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is required to submit a biennial report to the Governor and Senate and Assembly Chief Clerks for distribution to the Legislature on or before October 15, 2025. This report provides an overview of the DPI, a review of departmental activities for the 2023-25 biennium, and the goals and objectives for the 2025-2027 biennium.

Chapter 1: The State of Education in Wisconsin

As part of its biennial report, the DPI is required to provide information about the state of education in Wisconsin.

- First, under Wis. Stat. sec. 115.30 (4) (a), the State Superintendent is required to provide the condition of all schools under the State Superintendent's supervision in its biennial report.
- Second, under Wis. Stat. sec. 115.30 (4) (e), the DPI is required to include its plans for improving schools and advancing education.
- Third, under Wis. Stat. sec. 115.30 (4) (b), the State Superintendent is required to provide an abstract of the public school reports made to the State Superintendent.
- Fourth, under Wis. Stats. sec. 115.30 (4) (c), the State Superintendent is required to include the State Superintendent's visits to educational institutions.
- Last, under Wis. Stat. sec. 115.30 (4) (f), the State Superintendent is required to provide a summary of the receipts and disbursements of all schools under the State Superintendent's jurisdiction.

Condition of All Schools under the State Superintendent's Supervision

Wisconsin's public education system has been the great equalizing force in our state, laying a strong foundation for our citizens to be successful and for our communities to thrive. As a state, Wisconsin's public schools have much to be proud of, such as high graduation rates, ACT scores, and Advanced Placement participation. However, Wisconsin still has gaps in achievement, access, and opportunity existing for far too many students.

DPI's Vision – *Engaged learners creating a better Wisconsin together.*

DPI's Mission – *To advance equitable, transformative, and sustainable educational experiences that develop learners, schools, libraries, and communities in Wisconsin.*

The State Superintendent's Visits to Educational Institutions

State Superintendent Dr. Underly visited schools and libraries, conducted community and PK-16 learning sessions and Rural Advisory Council meetings, spoke to service clubs, delivered commencement addresses, and did much more in school districts, technical colleges, and public and private colleges and universities statewide and internationally. In the 2023-25 biennium, the State Superintendent visited the following educational institutions.

**Table 1. The State Superintendent's Visits to Educational Institutions
(July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025)**

School/Library/CESA/Educational Institution	School District
Amery High School	Amery
Ashland Middle School	Ashland
Banta Elementary School	Menasha
Baraboo High School	Baraboo
Baraboo Public Library	Baraboo
Belleville High School	Belleville
Blanchardville Public Library	Blanchardville
Bonduel High School	Bonduel
Burlington High School	Burlington
Cambridge Elementary	Cambridge
Clintonville Elementary	Clintonville
Cooper Elementary School	Superior
Darlington Elementary and Middle School	Darlington
De Pere High School	De Pere
Dodgeville High School	Dodgeville
Doty Elementary School	Green Bay
Eau Claire High School	Eau Claire
Eisenhower Middle/High School	New Berlin
Ezekiel Gillespie Middle School	Madison
Fennimore Elementary School	Fennimore
Fennimore High School	Fennimore
Fitchburg Public Library	Fitchburg
Franklin Middle School	Green Bay
Gateway Technical College	Burlington
Gear Up Rising Phoenix	Green Bay
Germantown High School	Germantown
Gibraltar School	Fish Creek
Glenwood Elementary School	Milwaukee
Grafton High School	Grafton
Highlands Elementary School	Appleton
Hillcrest Elementary School	Hobart
Horizon Middle School	Madison
Indian Community School	Franklin
James Madison Elementary School	Sheboygan
John Marshall Elementary	Wausau
L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library	Eau Claire
La Crosse Central High School	La Crosse

La Follette High School	Madison
Lakeland High School	Minocqua
Lakeshore Elementary School	Eau Claire
Luther Elementary School	Fort Atkinson
Madison Public Library	Madison
Marshall Middle School	Janesville
Marshfield High School	Marshfield
McFarland High School	McFarland
Milwaukee Public Schools	Milwaukee
Milwaukee Vincent High School	Milwaukee
Mishicot High School	Mishicot
Mitchelle Street Public Library	Milwaukee
Montello High School	Montello
New Richmond High School	New Richmond
Northland Pines High School	Eagle River
O'Keefe Middle School	Madison
Onalaska High School	Onalaska
Platteville High School	Platteville
Pulaski High School	Pulaski
Rock Springs Library	Rock Springs
Sauk Prairie High School	Prairie du Sac
Sevastopol School District	Sturgeon Bay
South Division High School	Milwaukee
Southwest High School	Green Bay
Southwest Tech College	Fennimore
Stettin Elementary School	Wausau
Sun Prairie East High School	Sun Prairie
Theresa Elementary	Lomira
Tremper High School	Kenosha
Unity School District	Balsam Lake
UWM Children's Center	Milwaukee
Vel Phillips Memorial High School	Madison
Vel Phillips Middle School	Oshkosh
Verona High School	Verona
Wadewitz Elementary School	Racine
Watertown High School	Watertown
Wautoma /Parkside	Wautoma
West De Pere Middle School	De Pere
Westby Area High School	Westby
Westview Elementary	Platteville
WI School for the Deaf	Delevan
Wisconsin Dells High School	Wisconsin Dells

School Aid Disbursements to All Schools under the State Superintendent's Jurisdiction

**Table 2. State Aid Disbursements
(2023-24 and 2024-25)**

Aid Program	2023-2024 Totals ¹	2024-2025 Totals ¹
General Aid: Equalization	\$5,258,224,308	\$5,517,291,107
General Aid: Integration	\$34,951,386	\$8,585,462
General Aid: Special Adjustment	\$34,220,595	\$34,633,128
Special Education and School Age Parents	\$558,036,700	\$574,777,700
Per Pupil Aid and Supplemental Per Pupil Aid	\$589,954,554	\$584,758,328
Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR)/SAGE	\$109,059,500	\$109,059,500
School Library Aid (Common School Fund)	\$65,000,000	\$70,000,000
Pupil Transportation	\$24,000,000	\$24,000,000
High Poverty*	\$0	\$0
Sparsity	\$28,614,000	\$28,614,000
Bilingual/Bicultural	\$10,089,800	\$10,089,800
State Tuition	\$6,909,208	\$7,553,618
High-Cost Transportation	\$20,374,994	\$20,705,932
State Food and Nutrition Programs	\$6,950,022	\$7,016,847
Additional (High Cost) Special Education	\$13,032,000	\$14,480,000
County Children with Disabilities Education Board	\$4,067,300	\$4,067,300
Four-Year-Old Kindergarten Start Up Grant	\$265,500	\$0
Robotics League Participation Grants	\$174,394	\$371,469
Special Education Transition Incentive Grants	\$3,600,000	\$3,599,997
Special Education Transition Readiness Grants	\$2,085,585	\$1,354,394
Supplemental (Large Area District)	\$87,325	\$89,250
Aid for school mental health programs	\$12,000,000	\$12,000,000
School based mental health services grants	\$26,524,521	\$24,919,261
Summer School Programs (MPS)	\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000
Tribal Language Revitalization Grants	\$117,274	\$139,522
Gifted and Talented Programs	\$317,682	\$290,108
Reading Readiness	\$2,088,392	\$294,699
Career & Technical Education ²	\$7,999,975	\$7,999,973
Educator Effectiveness Grant	\$6,524,508	\$4,495,378
Rural School Teacher Talent Pilot Program	\$688,497	\$2,311,503
Peer Review and Mentoring Grant	\$1,413,866	\$1,399,969
Headstart Supplement	\$903,971	\$907,093
Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Programs	\$1,239,524	\$1,271,967
Peer to Peer Suicide Prevention	\$71,782	\$62,236
Early College Credit	\$466,492	\$473,041

PARENTAL CHOICE/CHARTER SCHOOLS		
Independent Charter Schools	\$127,090,918	\$138,662,944
Milwaukee Parental Choice Program	\$291,758,997	\$316,768,737
Racine Parental Choice Program	\$40,745,930	\$43,567,100
Wisconsin Parental Choice Program	\$193,777,310	\$225,397,965
Special Needs Scholarship Program	\$38,529,802	\$44,655,779
STATE TOTAL	\$7,523,356,612	\$7,848,065,107

Sources: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sfs/statistical/basic-facts/state-aid-payments> and departmental data.

¹State aid disbursements between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2025, to school districts, CCDEBs, CESAs, Independent Charter Schools, and private schools participating in a parental choice program. Equalization aid includes prior year delayed aid paid during these fiscal years.

²Funded by Department of Workforce Development.

³Funded by the Department of Financial Institution.

Chapter 2: The Operation and Performance of the Department of Public Instruction during the 2023-25 Biennium

In addition to discussing the state of education in Wisconsin, the biennial report is also an opportunity for the DPI to share the work it has done over the biennium.

- This chapter begins with a brief summary of the DPI and provides links to further information.
- Second, this chapter includes the major program goals and objectives identified in the DPI's 2023-25 biennial budget request.
- Third, as required by Wis. Stat. sec. 115.30(4)(d), this report outlines the work done by the DPI in the performance of its duties.
- Last, the DPI has included information on improvements it has made over the past biennium. This includes developing and creating flexible-time work schedules, additional part-time positions, and other alternative work patterns.

Overview of the Department

The DPI is headed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, a nonpartisan, elected constitutional officer who is directly responsible to the people of the state for the supervision of elementary and secondary public education. Dr. Jill Underly was sworn into office on July 1, 2021, becoming the state's 28th State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Dr. Underly was subsequently reelected to a second term in April 2025.

Article X, Section 1, of the Wisconsin Constitution vests the responsibility for supervision of public instruction with the state superintendent. The duties and powers of the superintendent and the DPI are described in [Chapter 115](#) of the Wisconsin statutes. Major responsibilities of the state superintendent include supervising public elementary and secondary schools, providing for educational program review, providing for the education of children with disabilities, licensing and certifying of teachers, acceptance of federal education aid, assessing student achievement statewide, and prescribing a uniform financial accounting system for schools.

[Chapter 121](#) of the Wisconsin statutes describes state-administered aids for public schools.

[Chapter 43](#) of the Wisconsin statutes describes the DPI's role in the development of library services throughout the state.

For a more detailed overview of the DPI, please visit:

[2025-26 Wisconsin Blue Book-Department of Public Instruction](#) (pp. 220-221)

[2025-26 Wisconsin Blue Book-Public Education](#) (pp. 352-360)

Major Program Goals for the 2023-2025 Biennium

The DPI identified the goals below as part of its 2023-25 biennial budget request.

Program 1: Educational Leadership

Goal: Talented, dedicated, and well-prepared educators are in every classroom and public school.

Objective/Activity: Provide every classroom with teachers who are prepared to help students meet the district's challenging academic standards.

Goal: Make the DPI a high-performance organization by focusing on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction.

Objective/Activity: Provide timely, consistent service and dissemination of high-quality information and products to customers.

Program 3: Aids to Libraries, Individuals and Organizations

Goal: Ensure all citizens have equal access to comprehensive public library resources and services.

Objective/Activity: All libraries make effective use of technology and the Internet in order to provide access to information and knowledge resources for the state's residents.

The Work Done by the Department in the Performance of its Duties

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) provides guidance and technical assistance to, and advocates for, K-12 public education and public libraries in Wisconsin. The DPI's mission is to advance equitable, transformative, and sustainable educational experiences that develop learners, schools, libraries, and communities in Wisconsin. As the state education agency, it is the DPI's responsibility to lead and model with one another, and reflect in our work, the principles of equity needed in Wisconsin schools. During the 2023-25 biennium, the DPI promoted the initiatives detailed below to improve educational services and to advance student learning.

Office of the State Superintendent

Wisconsin Educational Opportunities Program

The [Wisconsin Educational Opportunities Program](#) (WEOP) is dedicated to preparing youth and adults to pursue higher education by providing college and career readiness programs, resources, and support. In 2023–25, WEOP delivered comprehensive college and career readiness experiences to over 6,500 students in grades 6 through 12, spanning 9 districts and 54 target schools. This includes students that are eligible for DPI's Early Identification Program (EIP), designed to serve students both before and after federal program enrollment, as well as those attending non-target schools

The Early Identification Program (EIP) [WI State Statute 115.44](#) is designed to support minority and economically disadvantaged students in grades 8–12 as they explore and pursue higher educational opportunities. EIP provides guidance to help students identify and achieve their career and educational goals, with an emphasis on those requiring additional academic support. This work is advanced in coordination with the Federal TRIO Talent Search; TRIO Upward Bound and GEAR UP programs.

Table 3. Students Served by the Early Identification Program (EIP)

	FY24 - Number	FY24 - Percent	FY 25 - Number	FY25 - Percent
Total Students Served	2,253	100%	2,860	100%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	196	8.7%	228	8%
Asian	651	28.9%	701	24.5%
Black or African American	662	29.4%	975	34.1%
Hispanic or Latino	478	21.2%	619	21.6%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	2	<0.1%	3	<0.1%
Two or more races	20	1.0%	34	1.2%
White	245	10.9%	299	10.5%
Students of Color	1,999	88.7%	2,558	89.4%
Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	1,872	83.1%	2,380	83.2%

Table 4. Graduation and College Acceptance Rates for Students Served in the EIP

	FY24 - Number	FY24 - Percent	FY 25 - Number	FY25 - Percent
Total High School Seniors	366	100%	536	100%
Total Graduated	364	99%	534	99.7%
Total College Acceptance	228	63%	400	75%

WEOP delivered a comprehensive suite of student support services designed to promote college readiness, persistence, and success. These services included individualized pre-college advising, academic tutoring, skill-building workshops, college tours, and summer enrichment opportunities that exposed students to higher education environments and strengthened their preparation for postsecondary achievement.

A key highlight was the graduation of the second and third cohorts of the GEAR UP Rising Phoenix Early College High School Program. This initiative, a collaboration among GEAR UP Target School Districts, the Department of Public Instruction's Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Program (WEOP), and UW–Green Bay, provides high school students with the opportunity to earn college credit while completing their diplomas. In 2024, 50 students graduated with an Associate of Arts and Sciences degree as high school seniors, followed by 70 students in 2025.

In addition to academic programming, WEOP provides substantial scholarships and grant support. Through the Wisconsin GEAR UP Program, 456 students received \$849,336.75 in scholarship awards in 2023–24, and 250 students received \$1,238,299.50 in 2024–25.

Table 5. Wisconsin GEAR UP Program Scholarship Awards

School Year	New Awardees	New Award Amount	Continuing Awardees	Continuing Award Amount	Total Award Amounts
2023-24	150 Students	\$167,533	456 Students	\$681,803.75	\$849,336.75
2024-25	250 Students	\$412,452	442 Students	\$825,847.50	\$1,238,299.50

The Precollege Scholarship Program, which supports students eligible for free or reduced-price meals to participate in campus-based precollege experiences, awarded scholarships to 1,578 students totaling approximately \$1.5 million in 2023–24. In 2024–25, more than 1,500 students benefited, with total awards again approaching \$1.5 million (final figures pending). Finally, through the Talent Incentive Program (TIP) Grant, administered by the Higher Education Aids Board (HEAB) under the Wisconsin State Legislature, WEOP continues to support the state's most financially and educationally disadvantaged students. In 2023–24, WEOP nominated 184 students who received \$305,204 in awards. In 2024–25, 201 students were nominated, totaling \$330,135 in grants.

The Office of the State Superintendent also housed the following functions:

- Education Information Services – provides assistance to the OSS in all matters relating to public information and media relations.

- Human Resources – recruitment, job classification, compensation, employment relations, affirmative action, employee assistance programs, payroll, benefits, and training.
- Office of Legal Services (internal legal counsel)
- Policy, Budget, and Research – responsible for developing the DPI's education policy agenda and budget initiatives, coordinating the DPI's policy development, analyzing, and monitoring key legislation, coordinating administrative rule development, and providing technical assistance in management planning and resource development.
- The Superintendent's Family Advisory Council for Engagement (FACE), a stakeholder group of parents from across Wisconsin that provides family perspectives and input to inform DPI initiatives.

Division for Academic Excellence

Career and Technical Education Team

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Team provides teachers and administrators with support to develop students who are prepared for postsecondary education and career success. Specifically, the team is responsible for setting standards for CTE and providing professional development for implementation of those standards, Academic Career Plans (ACP), and career pathway development and implementation. The team also advises the students and teachers involved with the six career and technical student organizations (CTSO).

The vision for the CTE Team is to expand career pathways with an equity focus including:

- Expanding the number of students in programs of study or career pathways.
- Ensuring that every student has access to quality programs.
- Expanding the number of students of color and other special populations who are participating and concentrating in CTE.

The CTE Team develops, implements, and sustains the state system processes that bridge career development from K-12 to colleges, workforce, apprenticeship, and military (e.g., enhances and coordinates a regional ACP approach to address high-skill, high-demand industry sectors).

The team provides resources to support school districts in implementing the Wisconsin Academic Standards for CTE. Each set of 2024 updated comprehensive standards includes K-12 content, vetted by education and industry, organized by learning progression that highlights skills, knowledge, and behaviors students need to become college and career ready. Additionally, the team collaboratively updated career readiness standards, WI Career Readiness Standards formerly titled, "Wisconsin Common Career Technical Standards" which help districts with Academic and Career Planning implementation efforts. Each set of standards is updated in WISELearn for use by educators.

The CTE team provides administrative leadership to school chapters of the six Career and Technical Student Organizations (FFA, Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, HOSA-Future Health Professionals, DECA, SkillsUSA, and Future Business Leaders of America) and supports professional development for CTE teachers and faculty advisors. The team works with CTSOs to design and implement regional and state competitive events that enable students to apply their knowledge and skills.

The CTE Team collects enrollment information from the secondary districts receiving Carl Perkins Act (CPA) funds. The collected enrollment information is used to:

- Respond to the Federal Performance Report.
- Assist districts in measuring progress on the Core Indicators of Performance.
- Provide data that informs the Office of Civil Rights process.

The DPI continues to partner with the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to administer the Career and Technical Education Incentive Grants. This funding incentivizes school districts to support CTE programming, which results in an industry-recognized certification designed to mitigate workforce shortages in industries or occupations identified in consultation with the DWD and the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS). For more information, see: <https://dpi.wi.gov/cte/technical-incentive>

The CTE Team works with business, industry and labor representatives, and educators on the integration of school-based and work-based learning and appropriate career development experiences. The team:

- Sets benchmarks for student mastery of skills and competencies in a given career field.
- Manages and provides technical assistance for state cooperative programs in occupational areas, employability skills, and leadership skills.
- Provides work-based learning leadership support to local educational agencies (LEAs) for child labor laws and all work-based learning options, both local and state, including DWD's youth apprenticeship (YA), though YA is managed by DWD.
- Partners with DWD on redefining quality work-based learning in the state including all types including YA. DWD embarked on the revalidation of YA programs offered statewide.

Unlocking Pathways Wisconsin Grant Project

In January 2024, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction was awarded a multiyear grant from the U.S. Department of Education as part of its Career Pathways initiative, Unlocking Career Success. Wisconsin's grant project, titled Unlocking Pathways Wisconsin, is intended to build capacity among secondary education, postsecondary education, and workforce development systems. The project will expand access to career-connected high school programs with the goal of increasing the proportion of students who graduate with these four keys that will unlock their career success:

Key 1: Career Advising Navigation

Key 2: Dual Enrollment

Key 3: Work-Based Learning

Key 4: Workforce Credentials

Part of the grant involved creating a capacity-building model for 18 pilot high schools that enables them to “unlock” the state’s existing programs, resources, and partnerships connected to the Academic and Career Planning (ACP) program and the Regional Career Pathways (RCP) approach. Pilot high schools were matched with a mentor high school that has demonstrated success in most or all of the four keys.

Unlocking Pathways Wisconsin is about making sure that students in schools that are rural or have a high percentage of socioeconomically disadvantaged students (or both) can still receive an education that prepares them to move into a career of their choice—whether that career takes them through college, the military, or directly into the workforce.

ACP is a student-driven, adult-supported process in which students create and cultivate their own unique and information-based visions for post-secondary success, obtained through self-exploration, career exploration, and the development of career management and planning skills.

Under Wis. Stat. sec. [115.28 \(59\)](#), the DPI is required to:

- Ensure that, beginning in 2017-18, every school board provides academic and career planning services to students enrolled in grades 6 to 12 in the school district.
- Procure, install, and maintain information technology, including computer software, to be used statewide by school districts to provide academic and career planning services to students in grades 6 to 12.
- Provide guidance, training, and technical assistance to school districts and school district staff, including teachers and counselors, on how to implement model academic and career plans, including training and technical assistance that is necessary to implement the information technology provided for this purpose.

During the 2023-25 biennium, the DPI, in partnership with the state’s 12 Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs), provided technical assistance and training for the ACP software and promising practices for implementation. Numerous professional development opportunities were provided for teachers, counselors, and administrators to implement and improve ACP service delivery.

[General Educational Development \(GED\) Certificate / High School Equivalency Diploma \(HSED\)](#)

DPI administers robust programs for adult students across the state. Between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2025, 1,589 students received a GED certificate, and 4,735 students received an HSED. During this timeframe, there were 9,323 GED test-takers; over one-third (3,724) of those GED test-takers were high school students in the [GED Option #2 program](#). Wisconsin’s GED Option #2

program is a nationally recognized credit recovery program that helped 688 high school students earn their regular high school diplomas by taking GED test(s) in the areas they are credit deficient, enabling them to reach their post-secondary goals.

Information Technology (IT) Education Grant

The Information Technology Education (ITE) Grant was awarded to Meucci & Company for the 2024–2025 cycle. Working in partnership with DPI, Meucci focused on expanding access to digital skills training and certification through three program pillars: public libraries, grades 6–12 schools, and technical colleges.

This year, testing sites were established in 33 counties, where students and community members completed 2,609 exams and earned 1,269 industry-recognized certifications. The program also grew its reach by adding 3 new technical college partnerships and 7 public library districts. Libraries were prepared to serve as Certiport testing centers with trained proctors and new scheduling tools, making it easier for patrons to access free Microsoft certification exams. In schools, Meucci partnered with DPI liaisons to launch an AP-aligned certification pilot, which produced near-perfect pass rates and demonstrated the strong connection between AP Computer Science learning and industry-recognized IT credentials. Business and technology educators were also supported through professional development and student career-connected workshops, including events where Microsoft engineers met directly with students to share real-world career paths in IT.

Teaching and Learning Team

The Teaching and Learning (TAL) Team partners with educators, schools, families, community members, internal and external governmental agencies, and professional organizations to provide leadership, professional learning, and resources to promote equity and advance innovative learning for all students to graduate community, college, and career ready. It does so by setting and supporting rigorous and relevant learning for students; promoting equitable student-centered learning environments; bringing professional learning to the field; supporting impactful practices and systems change in Wisconsin public schools; and celebrating student, educator, school, and district excellence.

Arts & Creativity

The arts play a vital role in a “well-rounded” education as defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Now in its third year, the [Wisconsin Arts Celebration Project](#) (WACP) continues to demonstrate the interconnectedness of the arts and the unique capacity it has to teach essential human capacities. The 2025 WACP centers on the theme of “Connection”. As researcher and author, Brene Brown stated, “Connection is why we're here. We are hardwired to connect with others, it's what gives purpose and meaning to our lives, and without it there is suffering.” Wisconsin Poet Laureate, Nicholas Gulig, has crafted a poem entitled, “Yellow Birds of Morning” relates how words and music connect us to each other and the world. This deeply rich poem serves as a “touchpoint” for all of the other artistic creations including the following commissioned works.

The DPI hosted the third annual [Wisconsin Creativity Summit](#) online in 2025. The event set out to inspire educators, administrators, policy makers, business leaders, and community members to consider the role of creativity in our schools. Dr. Peter Gamwell, author of "The Wonder Wall" started the event off with a chat about creativity and the urgent need for us to cultivate it in our children. The event will also include time for discussion and dialogue by participants.

[Civics Education](#)

In August 2021, State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly announced civics education as a priority in her administration. The goals for the Wisconsin Civics Project are: (1) all students learn to become engaged citizens, critical consumers of information, actively involved in the civil discourse of their communities, state, nation, and world, understand and actively participate in the processes of government (including voting), and are empowered to see themselves as essential members of their communities with opportunities to actively participate in civic learning and problem solving; (2) all schools and educators are equipped with the resources and support they need to foster excellence in civic literacy and civic engagement, and (3) all partners and stakeholders are empowered to support the civic mission of schools and collaborate to support civic literacy and provide civic engagement opportunities to students of all ages.

With a vision of fostering excellence in civic literacy and civic engagement for all learners, DPI convened a group of educators from across the state to build a K-12 civics and social studies suggested scope and sequence aligned to our Wisconsin Standards for Social Studies, the [Six Proven Practices of Civics Education](#) from the Center for Civics Education, and the [Roadmap from Educating for American Democracy \(EAD\)](#), a project of the U.S. Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and iCivics. This non-partisan project is a culmination of over two years of collaboration between the DPI, teachers, administrators, CESAs, and multiple state and community organizations. It incorporates multiple viewpoints and place-based learning and is intended to guide educators in effectively teaching civics and social studies. The civics and social studies suggested scope and sequence was released in October 2023. DPI partnered with every CESA in the state to present professional learning for teachers on the use of the scope and sequence. The agency was also a partner in a grant that CESA 1 received from the federal government to strengthen K-5 civics and U.S. history instruction.

[Digital Learning](#)

Digital Learning continues to be a statewide priority as Wisconsin schools integrate technology to personalize learning, expand access, and prepare students for a digitally interconnected world. Alongside ongoing progress in instructional technology, the rapid rise of artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping what it means to be ready for college, career, and civic life. Wisconsin educators and districts are increasingly focused on equipping students with the skills to use technology responsibly, harness AI tools for learning, and innovate in ways that support equity and excellence.

During the 2023–25 biennium, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) advanced digital learning by:

- Leading the statewide revision and public engagement process for Wisconsin's Information and Technology Literacy (ITL) Standards, aligning them with current research, national frameworks, and emerging areas such as AI literacy.
- Continuing collaboration with the Wisconsin Education Technology Leaders (WETL) to promote the Consortium of School Networking (CoSN) Certified Educational Technology Leader (CETL) credential as a high-quality professional development pathway for administrators.
- Implementing a newly revised edition of the annual Digital Learning Survey to measure progress on the Wisconsin Digital Learning Plan's state and local goals. Results, released each year on Digital Learning Day, provide actionable insights for policy, practice, and funding.
- Developing statewide AI Guidance for K–12 & Libraries, including policy exemplars, academic support faculty hubs, and resources for families and communities. This work emphasizes ethical AI integration, equity, and instructional innovation.
- Partnering with DPI's Computer Science Consultant to redesign Keeping Kids Safe Online Month into a statewide initiative that blends digital citizenship with cybersecurity education. New resources include grade-banded activities, family engagement tools, and practical strategies for schools to foster safe, ethical, and responsible technology use.
- Supporting the Wisconsin Digital Learning Collaborative (WDLC) to expand school and district access to high-quality online and blended learning opportunities through Wisconsin Virtual School and partner programs. This work ensures students across the state — including those in rural and underserved districts — have equitable access to advanced coursework, dual credit, and specialized learning options.
- Expanding the Digital Learning Group within Wisconsin's OER repository to include standards-based, technology-integrated lesson plans, turnkey AI-focused professional development presentations for staff, and capstone projects from the Wisconsin cohort of educators who completed the ISTE + ASCD AI Explorations course. This collection provides districts with ready-to-use, Wisconsin-contextualized resources to accelerate classroom integration and staff learning.

Environmental Education

Environmental and conservation education has a long history in Wisconsin, and the state continues to be a leader in this area. As schools adopt and implement the Wisconsin Standards for Environmental Literacy & Sustainability (2018) they are helping students connect, explore, and engage in their place—the school grounds, a garden, the greater community—to support learning for the whole child, realizing the breadth of academic, social, and health benefits of environmental education. The DPI continues to provide professional learning for the field through the development of resources and toolkits, virtual and in-person workshops, and online learning modules for educators. During the 2023-25 biennium, this included activities such as:

- Hosting annual environmental education conferences and providing regular professional learning opportunities to the field, including afterschool virtual sessions like our “Schoolyard Explorations” monthly webinar series
- Hosting annual nature-based early childhood workshops and establishing a statewide coalition to support this work long-term
- Identifying barriers to environmental education and aligning state work to address these barriers
- Providing needed education resources to support curriculum and instruction

[Green & Healthy Schools Wisconsin](#) believes every school can be a green and healthy school. Led by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the DPI, with support from other state agencies and non-governmental organizations, the Green & Healthy Schools Wisconsin movement connects, catalyzes, and celebrates the schools across the state. During the 2023-25 biennium, we strengthened [the program by](#) relaunching the online Cool Choices game, [establishing](#) annual Madison-area Green & Healthy Schools Summits, hosting a monthly webinar series, and [creating](#) a Green & Healthy Schools leader fellowship with regional events. A federal grant award allowed us to design a program to work with schools to increase urban tree canopies on schoolyards to increase outdoor learning. In addition, Green & Healthy Schools redesigned the program to allow for classroom and district scale participation, moved to a badge-based system to reduce barriers for entry, and established an interagency team to be more efficient with state resources.

Green & Healthy Schools recognizes schools at four levels—Sprout, Seedling, Sapling, or Sugar Maple—based on a comprehensive approach to reducing environmental impacts and costs, improving health and wellness, and increasing environmental literacy. Schools that achieve the “Sugar Maple” level have been eligible for nomination to [U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools](#). As of 2024, 47 Wisconsin schools, districts, and early learning centers [received this national award](#), including the following honorees between 2023-24:

- 2023 Honorees: Unified School District of De Pere; Tamarack Waldorf School, Milwaukee; Forest Edge Elementary School, Fitchburg; Eagleville Elementary Charter School, Eagle; Browning Elementary School, Milwaukee
- 2024 Honorees: Northland Pines School District; Hawthorne Elementary School, Milwaukee; Parkside School for the Arts, Milwaukee; Creative Learning Preschool and Childcare Center, Madison

The U.S. Department of Education did not open the award in 2025. Instead, Wisconsin recognized Kenosha Middle School and West De Pere High School with the Green & Healthy Schools Stewardship and Sustainability Award.

[Gifted and Talented](#)

Wisconsin state statute and administrative code outline school district requirements for serving students with identified gifts and/or talents. Students can be identified in one or more of five areas

of giftedness: general intellectual, specific academic, leadership, creativity, and the visual and performing arts.

During the 2023-25 biennium, outreach to rural, suburban, and urban districts across the state occurred. The outreach was used primarily to provide technical assistance regarding gifted identification and programming. The goal of the technical assistance was to provide consultation on ways to improve the learning experiences for any advanced learners within each respective school district. This work extended to promoting rigorous course offerings in Wisconsin through the International Baccalaureate programs and Advanced Placement programs and attempts to address the disproportionality that often exists within these programs.

The DPI also provided professional development opportunities for a variety of district and community partners. The goal was to support best practices in the identification of, and programming for, students with gifts and talents; and providing targeted presentations for individual districts and gifted education groups in the state related to gifted and talented program procedures, assessment, curriculum, instruction, and program evaluation.

Finally, the DPI awarded state grants under Wis. Stat. sec. 118.35(4) to LEAs, Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs), University of Wisconsin System institutions, and eligible not-for-profit organizations each year, with the express purpose of “...providing to gifted and talented pupils those services and activities not ordinarily provided in a regular school program that allow such pupils to fully develop their capabilities.” The allocation for 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years was \$474,400 per year.

Global Education / World Language

Globally competent students make meaning from ideas and issues with awareness of an interdependent world. They investigate and value diverse perspectives and worldviews within our local and global communities and cultures. Globally competent students are prepared to communicate across languages and cultures and take action, with others, to improve conditions and contribute to our collective well-being. Global education prepares learners to be workforce-, life-, and world-ready.

Instructional Materials & Professional Learning Continuous Improvement Strategy

The instructional materials and professional learning (IMPL) continuous improvement strategy is a research-based strategy focused on ensuring that all students have equitable access to the education necessary to achieve their full potential. A key aspect is that all students receive strong, standards-aligned instruction—the opportunity to learn increases when students receive instruction based on instructional materials aligned to state standards. Furthermore, when high-quality materials are combined with professional development, students make gains in learning. This continuous improvement strategy connects academic standards, instructional materials, and professional learning for equitable outcomes.

Teachers deserve high-quality instructional materials and ongoing support to implement those materials. Mounting evidence suggests that providing teachers with access to high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials and curriculum-based professional learning can improve student outcomes, making this a research-based continuous improvement strategy.

The DPI aims to improve support for all teachers by ensuring that districts have the information they need to select high-quality instructional materials and to provide professional learning that supports effective implementation of those materials in ELA and math. Much statewide work is being done to support and advance this strategy in school districts, CESAs, and educator preparation programs at higher education institutions. The Literacy and Math team continues to seek out internal and external resources to support this work.

Math Resource Development

Standards-based resources for mathematics learning and teaching are available free and online for all Wisconsin educators and administrators to access and utilize, to further their expertise in supporting all students as knowers and doers of mathematics. These resources, found on the DPI math webpage or as part of the WISELearn Mathematics Hub, are about a range of topics such as instructional practices to advance equity, the shifts of the standards, early mathematics, fluency, Standards for Mathematical Practice, and the mathematics community. Resources are continuously added to and revised to reflect educational research. Mathematics consultant staff on the Literacy and Mathematics Team maintain and build connections to partners such as practicing educators, CESA staff, and university professionals, to inform their work and respond to needs across the PK-20 education field.

Multilingual Learners

The DPI continues to provide support to LEAs/LEA-led consortia and Title III CESA networks and consortia in serving multilingual learners and their families by fostering asset-based approaches that encourage bilingualism and the inclusive systems-level development of academic language for all learners. For 2023-25, DPI would like to highlight the following activities:

- Continued to promote local adoption and implementation of the state English Language Development (ELD) standards through the creation of technical assistance resources, such as a ELD standards professional development webpage, a Standards 101 module, an ELD standards brief, and a professional knowledge continuum graphic.
- Provided professional development opportunities for educators related to the ELD standards. This included the Title III/BLBC statewide meeting held in October of 2024, and hybrid and virtual workshops led by WIDA (the organization that published the ELD standards).
- Continued representing DPI on WIDA's SEA subcommittees. This gave DPI the opportunity to provide input on the creation of resources related to the WIDA ELD standards and WIDA's professional learning offerings.
- Supported LEAs in understanding and meeting their obligations to multilingual learners (MLs) through ongoing revisions and updates to the DPI EL Policy Handbook.
- Communicated with stakeholders, CESA networks and consortia in a variety of ways, including presenting at CESA EL network and consortium meetings and holding virtual meetings for EL stakeholders and CESA leaders.

- Supported an ongoing partnership between WI-FACETS and DPI's Special Education team by co-leading a training to prepare interpreters to support access to special education services for ML parents and language programming access for Multilingual students with disabilities.
- Participated in the ESEA monitoring process with the other Title programs and provided feedback and technical support specifically with respect to how well districts were meeting their obligations to EL students under Title III.
- Aligned the Immigrant Children and Youth Grant under Title III to the state standardized grant procedures.
- Approved nine additional districts for participation in the Bilingual-Bicultural (BLBC) state aids program (Wisconsin State Statute 115.95), bringing the total up to 63. Continued to streamline reporting process for BLBC districts, including adding the claiming process to the online BLBC application, making it easier for districts to submit claims for reimbursement.
- Updated the Seal of Biliteracy approval process to make it easier for districts to participate and to increase access to this credential for students across the state. Released technical assistance materials designed to support districts in registering for and implementing the Seal of Biliteracy program, including an informational webinar, a promotional video, and onboarding modules. Continued to build awareness of the program through live and recorded webinars and conference sessions about the Seal.
- Provided professional development in collaboration with the Special Education team related to identifying and supporting MLs who may have a learning disability. This included a workshop for WI FACETS and breakout sessions at the annual conference for the Wisconsin Association of Bilingual Education in spring of 2024 and DPI's 2025 Disproportionality Summit.
- Supported the implementation of Wisconsin Act 20 with MLs, including developing guidance documents in partnership with district ML coordinators and facilitating breakout sessions in collaboration with DPI literacy consultants.

Online and Blended Learning: Wisconsin Digital Learning Collaborative (WDLC)

The statewide web academy provider, known as the Wisconsin Digital Learning Collaborative (WDLC), was established under Wis. Stat. sec. 115.28 (53) to expand equitable access to high-quality online education. The WDLC provides online learning to school districts, CESAs, charter schools, and private schools across Wisconsin. Funding to support online learning and the WDLC is provided by the Public Service Commission's Universal Service Fund program.

The WDLC is a partnership between two collaborating organizations--the Wisconsin Virtual School and the Wisconsin eSchool Network--that work jointly with DPI to offer a single point of access to high-quality online courses, professional learning, research, and administrative planning resources.

In collaboration with the WDLC, DPI has advanced online and blended learning in Wisconsin by:

- Maintaining and expanding the statewide course catalog, ensuring students have access to a wide range of personalized learning options, including virtual summer school opportunities.
- Providing professional learning for educators, focused on blended learning models, best practices for digital instruction, instructional design principles, and integration of emerging technologies such as AI.
- Participating in national and state-level research, examining program design, effective online instructional practices, supports for students with disabilities in digital environments, and rural equity issues in access and outcomes.
- Collaborating with state and agency partners to address rural equity challenges and align efforts with the Future Ready Schools goals.
- Supporting districts through WDLC-led initiatives, including subsidized digital content, expanded access to high-quality digital instructional materials, and technology supports that enable equitable and sustainable online learning opportunities statewide.

Online Safety and Digital Citizenship

In alignment with Future Ready Schools and the Wisconsin Information and Technology Literacy (ITL) Standards, DPI continues to prioritize student online safety, digital citizenship, and cybersecurity awareness. Previously led in partnership with the Department of Justice, the initiative has evolved into a DPI-led campaign that emphasizes responsible technology use across grade levels, with resources anchored in both national best practices and Wisconsin-specific needs. DPI maintains the **Keeping Kids Safe Online Month** webpage (dpi.wi.gov/internet-safety/keeping-kids-safe-online-month-october), which curates resources, tools, and activities for students, educators, families, and administrators. This annual observance highlights the shift from “acceptable” to “responsible” use of digital resources, promoting safe, ethical, and balanced practices in and out of the classroom.

To support Keeping Kids Safe Online, the DPI has completed the following:

- Updated and expanded the online safety resource hub, ensuring educators and families can access current, practical tools for digital citizenship and cybersecurity education.
- Launched grade-banded “Conversation Starter” boards (K–2, 3–5, 6–8, 9–12) that provide interactive prompts and classroom activities to guide discussions about privacy, digital balance, cyber scams, AI, and ethical online behavior.
- Promoted October as Keeping Kids Safe Online Month, featuring ready-to-use activities, family resources, and professional learning materials to encourage statewide participation.
- Integrated online safety into professional learning offerings, connecting digital citizenship and cybersecurity topics with broader ITL standards implementation and AI literacy guidance.

Through these efforts, DPI ensures that Wisconsin schools, students, and families are equipped with the knowledge, strategies, and supports necessary to navigate an increasingly digital world safely and responsibly.

Preschool Development Grant for Young Learners Tribal Language Revitalization

In 2020, the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) was awarded a one-year Preschool Development / Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Planning Grant to complete a needs assessment and a strategic plan to improve Wisconsin's early childhood state system. Based upon the work of this grant, DCF applied for and was awarded a three-year PDG Renewal (PDG-R) grant to continue the activities identified in the strategic plan for the years of 2021 through 2023. Part of the strategic plan included collaborating with the DPI to create the PDG Young Learners Tribal Language Revitalization Grant (formerly referred to as the 2020 PDG for American Indian Language Revitalization).

While the DPI first began distributing grant monies for this grant in the summer of 2020, the work of these grants carried over into 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and continued through December 2024 when the grant ended. The ongoing focus of the grants was to improve the transition to elementary school and academic outcomes, and support reducing achievement gaps while addressing the linguistic and cultural needs of students from American Indian Nations and tribal communities of Wisconsin. The funds were used to support startup and collaboration costs (e.g., materials, curriculum development, educator training, or professional development). For more information, see: <https://dpi.wi.gov/amind/language-culture-education/yltlr-pdg-federal-grant>

Robotics League Participation Grants

The DPI administered \$750,000 each year of the biennium budget to robotics teams across the state. Eligible teams participated in a competition that required teams to design and operate robots. The competitions needed to be sponsored by a nonprofit corporation as described under s. 501 (c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Service. Furthermore, one of the organizational purposes of the nonprofit needs to be encouraging young people to develop an interest in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). A total of 240 teams received grant awards in the 2023–2024 school year. These grants were awarded to teams of students in grades 6 through 12 from school districts or charter schools established under Wis. Stat. sec. 118.40(2r) and (2x), private schools and home-based private education programs. More information can be found in the 2023-24 Robotics Grant Report: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/steam/PDFs/2023-24-Robotics-League-Grant-Report.pdf>

Standards and Achievement

Wisconsin's public schools have historically prepared children to succeed after high school, either in higher education or in the workforce. High expectations for all children ensure that students will be prepared to survive and thrive in the future. Wisconsin State Academic Standards specify what students should know and be able to do. They serve as goals for teaching and learning. Clear statements about what students must know and be able to do are essential in making sure our schools offer opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills necessary for success beyond the

classroom. Setting high standards enables students, parents, educators, and citizens to know what students have learned at a given point in time.

In Wisconsin, the State Superintendent authorizes development and adopts state academic standards in many subject areas. All state standards serve as a model. Locally elected school boards adopt academic standards in each subject area to best serve their local community. To raise the bar for all children, the DPI has:

- Adopted a transparent, and comprehensive process for reviewing and revising academic standards.
- Continued our work with the State Superintendent's Academic Standards Review Council, a group of legislators, educators and education leaders, parents, and business leaders which provide input through public hearings and review periods.
- Revised or developed academic standards in 10 content areas using this transparent and comprehensive process in 2023-2025.
- Worked with CESAs and other professional organizations to create shared leadership to continue implementation of Wisconsin academic standards.
- Expanded professional development opportunities for educators.
- Coordinated needed alignment with other areas/programs such as Early Learning, English Learners and, WESPDHH, WCBVI state schools.
- A timeline for review of academic standards has been approved through 2031, by the State Superintendent on the recommendation of the State Superintendent's Standards Review Council.

Licensing, Educator Advancement and Development

The Licensing Educator Advancement and Development (LEAD) Team oversaw the preparation, licensing, and development of teachers. Based on a five-year average, the LEAD team processes over 45,000 licenses per year and handles more than 5,300 additional incomplete applications. The team also handles, based on a three-year average, nearly 55,700 inquiries per year.

In addition to application processing, the team works with certification officers and those uploading complete data into department licensing systems at educator preparation programs, is responsible for the annual audit of licensed staff working in public schools, background checks, and work with other state licensing agencies in Wisconsin and other states.

In 2025, the LEAD team completed the [educator preparation program and workforce analysis report](#) that demonstrated a key problem with the workforce shortage is retention of educators. Data analysis calls for a comprehensive approach across each point of the development of future and current educators. The ability of schools to recruit and retain quality educators has a strong connection to student achievement.

The department focuses on the following strategies:

- Grow a new generation & support career changers ([Attract](#))
- Strengthen preparation ([Prepare](#))
- Advance licensing options ([License](#))
- Support growth of the workforce across the state and in high-need areas ([Recruit](#))
- Build effectiveness ([Develop](#))
- Retain the workforce ([Retain](#))

Literacy and Mathematics

During the 2023-25 biennium, the department restructured the Literacy and Mathematics team by renaming it to the Office of Literacy and moving functions related to mathematics instruction to the Teaching and Learning Team.

Office of Literacy

Literacy skills are foundational to academic achievement, post-secondary success, and civic engagement. In recognition of literacy needs in Wisconsin as evidenced by state summative assessment data, the DPI has done the following:

- Implemented a [statewide early literacy screener](#) (aimswebPlus) for 4K – 3rd grade including procurement, contract negotiation, teacher training, and required student screening beginning with midyear of the 2024 – 2025 school year
- Established a system for vendor submissions and provided a DPI-approved list of [diagnostic assessments](#) that meet statutory requirements
- Facilitated reimbursement process for the [cost of purchasing diagnostic assessments](#) for districts and independent charter schools
- With legislative partners, convened the [Early Literacy Curriculum Council](#) who produced annual curriculum lists of materials for universal instruction in 5K – 3rd grade that include explicit and systematic instruction in the nine areas of science-based early literacy without using three-cueing
- On behalf of the Early Literacy Curriculum Council, [communicated with vendors](#) to answer questions about Wisconsin’s review process and ensure correct submissions of materials.
- Provided a [model promotion policy for 3rd to 4th grade](#) that includes a requirement for literacy supports for any student promoted to 4th grade without meeting reading expectations
- Collaborated with educators to create templates for [personal reading plans](#), [family history survey](#), and [parent/caregiver communications](#) to support schools and districts in implementing 2023 Wisconsin Act 20

- Reviewed detailed submissions from educator preparation programs, reviewing evidence that guarantees the program includes explicit and systematic instruction in the nine areas of science-based early literacy included in statute without using three-cueing
- For 2023 – 2024 and 2024 – 2025, collected data about 5K – 3rd grade educator and administrator completion of the [professional development training requirement](#) included in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20
- Submitted the [2023 – 2024 required annual report about the early literacy coaching program](#) to the legislature
- Created a [webpage for the public to report concerns](#) about 5K – 3rd grade early literacy curriculum and parents/caregivers to report concerns about their child’s experiences with screening, diagnostic assessment, and/or a personal reading plan
- Collected data about [reporting requirements](#) for 2024 – 2025 school year to be included in a November 30 report to the legislature
- Worked across the department to ensure that guidance about 2023 Wisconsin Act 20 reflects the unique strengths and needs of learners in [4K or 4K community approach \(4KCA\)](#), [English learners](#), and/or [students with Individualized Education Plans \(IEPs\)](#)
- Worked across the department to ensure that guidance related to 2023 Wisconsin Act 20 reflected the needs of districts, independent charter schools, and private schools
- Collaborated with CESAs to support their creation of materials related to implementation of 2023 Wisconsin Act 20, including support for diagnostic assessment
- Continued the [State Superintendent’s Reading Advisory Council](#), which provides a group of varied partners who provide input on the department’s literacy work
- Collaborated with department partners and educators from throughout Wisconsin on creating and continually improving the reading and English language arts portions of the Wisconsin Forward, administered in 3rd – 8th grades
- Collaborated with Wisconsin educators to create [“Writing Rich Classrooms”](#), online resources to support writing in response to reading, which is included in the statewide summative assessment (the Wisconsin Forward) in 3rd – 8th grades
- Reviewed portfolios for educators using the district-sponsored pathway to licensure for 4 – 12 English language arts and K – 12 reading

Note: Wisconsin 2023 Act 20, signed into law in July 2023, represents a comprehensive approach to impacting early literacy development in Wisconsin. The DPI started the work of implementing Act 20 provisions with the start of the 2023-25 biennium. Find up-to-date information about implementation of Act 20 at: <https://dpi.wi.gov/wi-reads>

Division for Finance and Management

Business Services Team

The Business Services team supports the DPI by providing centralized accounting, contracting, procurement, accounts payable and accounts receivable processing, as well as providing centralized building services, including reception, fleet, mailroom and building support for the DPI main office and several outlying offices.

Community Nutrition Team

The DPI administers the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) [Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)](#) which reimburses participating childcare centers, family childcare homes, and adult care programs for serving nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults. CACFP supports the health, growth, and development of young children and adults across Wisconsin. Eligible participants include non-residential childcare institutions, such as group or family childcare, Head Start programs, adult day care centers, outside school hours care centers, afterschool programs, and emergency shelters. For-profit childcare centers may also participate if at least 25 percent of the children come from low-income households.

Participating agencies enter into an annually renewed agreement with DPI. Program staff conduct on-site reviews every two to three years and provide training and technical assistance to support compliance and improve program integrity. DPI offers resources for healthy meal planning, including recipe ideas and resources to improve program operations. The USDA conducts CACFP Management Evaluations to ensure DPI's compliance with federal requirements and to identify areas of improvement. In addition, the Legislative Audit Bureau reviews DPI's administration of the CACFP.

The [Summer Food Service Program](#) provides free meals and snacks to children and teens (18 and under) throughout the summer months when school is not in session. These summer meals are critical in the lives of Wisconsin youth, whose risk for food insecurity increases during the summer months when they no longer have access to the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. The DPI reimburses program operators for serving nutritious meals. DPI has expanded the rural non-congregate meal service in areas with no congregate meal service. The USDA conducts SFSP Management Evaluations to ensure DPI's compliance with federal requirements and to identify areas of improvement. In addition, the Legislative Audit Bureau reviews DPI's administration of the SFSP. In 2024, USDA's Turnip the Beet initiative recognized five outstanding Wisconsin Summer Meal Program sponsors for their dedication to providing high quality, appealing, and nutritious meals.

Parental Education Options Team

The Parental Education Options (PEO) Team provides technical assistance to school districts, schools, families, and the general public related to educational options in the State of Wisconsin. Options available for families to enroll their children in school include: local public school; public school open enrollment; school district charter school (including virtual charter school); independent charter school; voucher to attend a private school under one of the state's parental choice programs – Milwaukee, Racine, and Wisconsin (statewide); special needs scholarship to

attend a private school for a student with special needs; private school (private pay); and home-based private education program (home-school).

School Financial Services Team

The School Financial Services (SFS) Team is responsible for providing school districts with school financial and management services, including calculating school district revenue limits and state general aid. The SFS team also calculates eligibility for other state aids and disburses all state and federal funds to school districts and other educational entities that receive state and federal support. The team is responsible for the data collections required to conduct the work of calculating revenue limits and aid eligibility, and submits required state and federal financial reports, based on accurate data collected as required under state and federal laws. The SFS team provides technical assistance to school districts and other educational institutions in all matters related to the state's school finance system.

School Nutrition Team

The School Nutrition Team (SNT) administers the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) School Meal Programs, including the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program, Seamless Summer Option, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and Food Distribution Program, as well as a variety of USDA grants.

A major focus over the biennium was our continued efforts on farm to school, local procurement and supply chain. We received \$1,457,968 in funding from USDA that we utilized to hire a dietitian, a chef, and a farmer as a comprehensive farm to the school team. We offered comprehensive training and technical assistance in addition to fresh produce processing training, school garden training, and local supply chain technical assistance. In addition, we created or expanded upon a local food database, a nutrition education database, and a Southeast Asian Traditional Foods Toolkit.

Another focus of the biennium has been the new USDA Child Nutrition Program called Summer EBT (S-EBT). In collaboration with DHS, \$54,073,879 was issued to 450,555 students in 247,994 households for the school year 2023-2024 and \$53,210,471 was issued to 442,071 students in 244,723 households to date for school year 2024-2025. The SNT was awarded a No Kid Hungry Grant in the amount of \$300,000 to assist in implementation of this new program.

The SNT completed 255 USDA required Administrative Reviews and 61 Procurement Reviews. Unfortunately, the SNT had to terminate one public school food authority and fine one public school food authority due to repeated systemic noncompliance. At the end of the biennium, there were a total of 166 school food authorities in the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) with an average identified student percentage of 60 to 61 percent; lower percentages are not financially viable for the school food authority. The SNT ordered \$77,303,388 worth of USDA Foods through the USDA Foods in Schools Program. This included 1,167 trucks of 693,803 cases, over 22,226,855 pounds of bulk food sent to manufacturers for further processing, and \$12,641,735 spent on fresh produce delivered directly to schools. The SNT also coordinated storage and distribution worth \$29,477,135 for Wisconsin Department of Health Service's USDA Foods for the Emergency Food Assistance Program.

Over the biennium, USDA awarded SNT \$1,819,722 to distribute to SFAs with qualifying schools to increase the nutritional quality of breakfast foods served by reducing sodium, saturated and trans-fat, and added sugars while increasing whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and meat/meat alternates. USDA also awarded SNT \$943,687 in Team Nutrition Training Grant funds for projects such as MyPlate Nutrition Education, our annual Whipping Up Wellness Student Chef competitions, a wellness summit, a wellness collaborative, and the WI School Meals Rock campaign. Other grants awarded to SNT include a USDA direct certification grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 to improve the process for WI schools, \$8,988,488 in USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program funding, and \$575,830 in National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance funding.

Division for Learning Support

Special Education Team

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Compliance

The DPI continued its implementation of an effective monitoring system to ensure compliance with state and federal special education law. The DPI's monitoring is aligned with our College and Career Ready Individualized Education Program (IEP) framework and our Results Driven Accountability System. The information gathered from the monitoring system is used to support local school districts in providing education and services to children with disabilities and ensuring compliance with special education law.

Transition Incentive Grants

The Special Education Transition Incentive Grant is a categorical aid program created under 2015 Wisconsin Act 55 (the 2015-17 state biennial budget) to incentivize positive post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. The 2016-17 school year was the first year for which aid was paid under this grant program and will be available to districts each year. The state law specifies that each district is eligible to earn up to \$1,000 for each student whose response to the indicator 14 survey indicates that they met the specified postsecondary education/paid work outcome criteria.

For survey years 2023 and 2024, there were 4,006 and 3,799 eligible responses (respectively); payments were funded at \$898.65 and \$947.62 per eligible response (respectively). See the interactive map with individual school district results in DPI's January 2025 report: [Special Education Post School Outcomes – Major Outcomes of the 2024 Wisconsin Statewide Indicator 14 Survey](#).

Transition Readiness Grants

The Transition Readiness Grant (TRG) program was created under 2017 Wisconsin Act 59 (the 2017-19 biennial budget) with a base funding of \$1,500,000 annually, beginning in FY19. This program was designed to support Wisconsin's students with disabilities to successfully transition to competitive work and post-secondary education environments after high school.

In 2023-24, TRGs were awarded to 27 school districts; in 2024-25, TRGs were awarded to 28 school districts. Each award was between \$25,000 and \$100,000. The awards were based on four evidence-based strategies to improve transition outcomes for students with disabilities: transportation options, post-secondary tuition and support, Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) training programs, and staff training. Funding was based on a competitive process and prioritized for those districts that had not previously received a grant award. More information about the TRG program can be found at: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/topics/transition/transition-readiness-grants>

Federally Funded Projects

During the 2023-25 biennium, the Special Education team supported the following projects funded with the federal IDEA grant.

Transition Improvement Grant (TIG): TIG provides technical assistance and professional development to increase high school graduation rates, decrease dropout rates, improve the quality of postsecondary transition plans, and develop strong career, college, and community readiness among our students with disabilities through positive post school outcomes.

Wisconsin Statewide Parent-Educator Initiatives (WSPEI): WSPEI is a service for families and educators to build and strengthen positive working relationships that lead to shared decision making to support students with disabilities. WSPEI develops resources, provides professional development, and offers direct support to assist families and educators in navigating the IEP team process, resolving disputes, and strengthening family engagement.

Supporting Neurodiverse Students (SNS): The SNS provides professional learning, coaching and technical assistance to support educators and families in supporting students with behavioral needs, with a focus on self-regulation, social communication, flexibility, resilience, sensory processing, and executive functioning.

Assistive Technology Forward: The AT Forward Project supports educators, practitioners, caregivers, and families to increase student autonomy in utilizing Assistive Technology tools to support access, engagement, and progress in learning. It provides a statewide, virtual Community of Practice (CoP) to support AT, and by joining this CoP, members will have the opportunity to learn from experts in the field and network with colleagues through statewide meetings, participate in free AT micro-credentialing opportunities, and receive monthly AT email updates. The AT Forward began as a CARES Act funded project to supplement existing DPI AT funded projects and has now grown into a coordinated set of AT services that include the AT Forward Community of Practice, the Assistive Technology Lending Center (ATLC), the Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) Center, which are able to serve each and every school district in Wisconsin.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Forward: The [UDL Forward Community](#) is an asynchronous and universally designed environment in which educators engage in sense-making and resource sharing for UDL implementation. Committing to UDL means creating expert learners, designing environments and experiences with the UDL Guidelines and expert learners. This project was initially developed using CARES Act funding but has continued through IDEA discretionary grant

funding due to its popularity and interest of school districts wanting to engage in learning more about UDL implementation.

Early Childhood Technical Assistance and Implementation (EC-TAI): The Early Learning Technical Assistance and Implementation (EL-TAI) grant provides technical assistance at no cost to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and community partners to support positive outcomes for preschoolers with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) in Wisconsin. The grant provides training and technical assistance to support preschoolers with IEPs. Review the [EL-TAI Menu of Services](#) (range of support from virtual professional learning to on-site district level coaching and support) for all the services that are offered. To request any of these services please complete the [Early Learning Technical Assistance Request](#).

Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (WESPDHH)

2001 Wisconsin Act 10 created the Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The purpose of the center is to provide statewide education resources to benefit all Wisconsin children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families. The WESPDHH consists of two programs, the Wisconsin School for the Deaf and the Outreach Program.

The Wisconsin School for the Deaf (WSD), located in Delavan, Wisconsin, provides an educational and residential program for school-age children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Preschool children (3-5) are served on a day pupil basis only. The average number of students served yearly is 70 in grades prekindergarten to 12. The school also offers the Student Transition and Employability Program (STEP) for students aged 18 and older. WSD students may choose WSD curriculum offerings specifically adapted to meet their individualized education program requirements or may seek enrollment in appropriate courses within the Delavan-Darien School District, subject to availability.

Exposure to both hearing and deaf programs is facilitated through an after-school activity program. The Wisconsin School for the Deaf is committed to educational excellence within a rich bilingual environment that embraces both American Sign Language (ASL) and English. WSD prepares students to achieve their maximum potential and become successful citizens. Through ASL, students reduce communication barriers and foster natural acquisition of language. WSD provides an environment that nurtures strong social and emotional development in deaf and hard of hearing children.

Outreach Services

The Outreach Program provides statewide services through individualized consultation, a Deaf Mentor Program, a Parent Mentor Program, role model programming, student groups, and transition support for life after high school. These services include offering information, support, and training to school districts, families, and other programs that serve children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind. All services and supports are tailored to meet the unique needs of each child.

The Outreach Team includes specialists in a variety of areas, such as Educational Technology, Deafblind services, Behavioral Health, Transition planning, Diagnostics and Education, Mentorship, and Family Engagement. Team members include an Educational Technology

Consultant, Deafblind Consultant, Behavioral Health Consultant, Transition Coordinator, Diagnostic/Educational Consultant, Educational Interpreter Consultant, Outreach Mentor Program Consultant, and Outreach Engagement Consultant.

With support from a federal grant, Wisconsin Deafblind Technology Assistant Project (WDBTAP) maintains Wisconsin's deafblind child count and delivers high-quality training, coaching, and technical assistance to interveners, educators, and service providers. The project partners with Birth to 3 programs, schools, and various agencies to enhance educational, community, and home-based support for individuals who are deafblind, with a strong focus on transition planning for life after high school. WDBTAP also promotes meaningful family engagement by organizing opportunities for children who are deafblind to connect with peers, learn from one another, and foster a sense of belonging within the community.

Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI)

1999 Wisconsin Act 9 created the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI). The purpose of the Center is to serve as a statewide educational resource to benefit Wisconsin children who are blind or visually impaired, their families, and professionals. The WCBVI headquarters campus is in Janesville, Wisconsin. WCBVI houses the Wisconsin School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WSBVI) and the statewide WCBVI Outreach program.

WSBVI offers complete educational programming and specialized disability training in academic areas and the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) for students who are blind or visually impaired. This curriculum focuses on nine areas that include: orientation and mobility, independent living skills, career education, assistive technology, compensatory and functional academic skills (including Braille), social interaction skills, self-determination/transition skills, sensory-efficiency skills, and recreation and leisure. Students receive services developed and implemented through an individualized education program (IEP). Students also have access to various therapies based on IEP needs.

WSBVI provides an educational and residential academic program for school-age children (3-21) who are blind or visually impaired, with or without additional disabilities. Students under age 8 are generally served on a day pupil basis only. WSBVI houses the Little P.E.A.N.U.T.S. Center, focusing on teaching the necessary skills to the younger population of students (3-6).

WSBVI serves students throughout Wisconsin from 4K through the age of 21. Beyond the core and expanded core curriculum, students have the opportunity to participate in many co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, including competitive athletics, which they may not have access to in their home school district. Additional educational opportunities include the following:

- Students are also able to participate in a cooperative program with the Janesville School District in order to attend classes not offered at WSBVI, enabling them to interact with their sighted peers.
- Students who reside in the WCBVI dormitory during the week participate in many activities and experiences in the community which are designed to support their IEPs and provide expanded core curriculum experiences through community activities.

- The College and Career Readiness (CCR) Program Serves Students 18 to 21 who have met their academic requirements but need additional instruction in the expanded core curriculum in order to successfully transition to life after high school. This individualized program enables students to develop life skills, including enrolling in a college course and/or participating in a community job experience.
- The Learning Independence From Experience (LIFEhouse) Program provides students with hands-on supervised independent living experiences designed to enable students to practice the skills they require to optimize their independent living upon graduation.

Outreach Services

The WCBVI Outreach and Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) program provides services for students who are blind and visually impaired, their families, LEAs, CESAs, CCDEBs, school districts and other community partners throughout Wisconsin. The Outreach and AEM Center staff provide yearly consultation and professional development, as well as direct student programming and low vision clinics. WCBVI Outreach and AEM Center programs work together to provide a wide continuity of support and services for all students who are blind or visually impaired in the state of Wisconsin:

- The AEM Center staff provides accessible textbook research with vendor referrals to assist LEAs with their FAPE obligations under IDEA.
- The AEM Center administers a comprehensive assistive technology loan program, providing LEAs with short term equipment loans to determine optimal use prior to expending district resources.
- The Outreach short course program offers short-term in-person and virtual instruction, allowing students to focus on learning transferable Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) skills.
- Comprehensive summer programs are offered each year, teaching age-appropriate life and ECC skills while participating in a wide array of recreational activities.
- The WCBVI AEM Center administers the statewide American Printing House (APH) Federal Quota program. During the 2024-2025 school year approximately \$380,000 was administered to 1,260 formally registered blind and visually impaired students in Wisconsin funds to obtain educational materials and assistive technology.
- The Outreach professional Mentor Program pairs new teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs) and Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Specialists with experienced teachers in the field to enhance success with a 92% retention rate since its inception in 2016.
- Statewide low vision clinics are provided to ensure students, families, caregivers, and professionals receive pertinent evaluative medical and educational information needed to assist with exploring the disability related needs of students with low vision.

Student Services/Prevention and Wellness Team

Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse

See information on [AODA Programs](#) under Chapter 3, Information on Specific Areas of Interest.

Tobacco Prevention

DPI is continuing to research and educate schools on the importance of evidenced-based and best practices for school policy, alternatives to suspension, youth tobacco cessation, and other available resources.

Health Education

In 2023–25, DPI and a statewide team of educators updated the Wisconsin Health Education Standards, with final approval anticipated in October 2025. Leveraging the Health Education Cadre and national consultants, DPI curated skills-based resources on health equity, brain health, suicide prevention, and mental health. DPI also led a wide range of efforts to strengthen school health education across topics such as using skills-based instruction in brain health, tobacco prevention and cessation, anti-human trafficking, mental health literacy, human growth and development, nutrition, physical activity, health equity, and violence prevention. In addition, DPI staff and members of the Health Education Cadre planned and oversaw The Best Practices in Health and Physical Education summer conference attended by 160 educators.

School Health Services

The school nursing and health services consultant has the responsibility for providing leadership in the areas of school nursing practice, school health policy, and school health programs. Webpages were redesigned to provide general communicable disease and infection prevention and control measures and provide [tools](#) for outbreaks, epidemics, and pandemics based on pathogen method of transmission. Resources for districts supporting students with [Long-COVID](#) were added. The Bloodborne Pathogen training module was updated in 2023. Resources to support schools dealing with the increasing risk of student opioid overdose and exposure to fentanyl were provided.

As student health needs become more complex, districts are hiring registered nurses. These nurses have no experience in the specialty of school nursing. Topics addressed in DPI's School Nurse Summer Institutes include Youth Mental Health First Aid, documentation and record keeping, and mental health support for school nurses recovering from the pandemic. The DPI consultant has worked closely with the Department of Health Service to implement the Public Health Workforce grant supporting school health services.

Mental Health

Wisconsin School Mental Health Framework

Wisconsin launched the Wisconsin School Mental Health Framework in 2015. Since that time, the SSPW Team has provided resources to support this framework including guidance on conducting a School Mental Health Needs Assessment, a Mental Health system Planning Template, universal

screening, and developing mental health Referral Pathways. This framework helps districts partner with students, families, and communities to build a comprehensive school mental health system that provides a continuum of services and supports to promote students' and staff's mental health and wellbeing. This framework completed in 2015 was revised in Fall of 2021 to reflect updated best practices and to align to national models.

The updated framework provides guidance on building and improving comprehensive school mental health systems using six components: teaming, continuum of supports, data, mental health referral pathways, needs assessment and resource mapping, and sustainability. The framework leverages existing Wisconsin Multi-Level Systems of Support (MLSS) structures as they relate to behavior and academics, to integrate mental health services and supports into one delivery system. It also focuses on the strong universal implementation of mental health promotion activities such as social and emotional learning, mental health literacy education for students and staff, school climate efforts, and staff wellness programming. The framework is presented through the lens of the guiding principles of trauma sensitive schools, including choice, collaboration, trustworthiness, cultural competence, empowerment, and safety.

Comprehensive School Mental Health Academy

In 2023-2024 school year, DPI, in partnership with the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators (AWSA) and the Wisconsin Council of Administrators of Special Services, (WCASS) hosted a Comprehensive School Mental Health Academy to guide district-level teams from across the state in using the Roadmap for School Mental Health Improvement to strengthen their mental health services and supports. Using an action-oriented design, the Academy included monthly active participation by teams, shared learning with peers doing the work, and supportive coaching.

Teams received ongoing professional development, coaching, and technical assistance provided by state-level consultants and peers participating in the academy. Academy teams developed data-driven strategies to improve access to, and quality of, mental health prevention, promotion, and intervention services and supports in their local schools and districts. Participating teams received training and peer support in collecting, sharing, and using data for improvement, and using data tracking systems to document the impact of school mental health services and supports.

Roadmap for School Mental Health Improvement

In December 2023, DPI released the Roadmap for School Mental Health Improvement, a companion document to the Wisconsin School Mental Health Framework. Regardless of a school's current school mental health infrastructure, leaders can utilize the [Roadmap for School Mental Health Improvement](#) to strengthen their mental health supports. The Roadmap outlines five steps, based on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Community Change Process, including: commitment, assessment, planning, implementation, and reflection. The Roadmap provides a menu of corresponding best practices in each step of the improvement journey and is meant to guide ongoing improvement work, focusing on the small steps that lead to big impacts. Various improvement tools, including the Fishbone Tool, Driver Diagram, Empathy Interview Tool,

Measurement Planning Tool, were also developed to accompany the Roadmap and guide schools in navigating the school mental health improvement process.

Mental Health Literacy

In 2025, DPI released a framework for mental health literacy. This framework outlines the four components of mental health literacy that help students and adults live healthy lives. Additionally, DPI developed and released many tools and resources to help the field assess and improve staff and student mental health literacy. Mental health literacy is a key mental health promotion strategy that leads to better mental health outcomes, greater health equity, and enhances the planning and implementation of comprehensive school mental health systems.

Mental and Behavioral Health Screening

SSPW had been providing guidance and technical assistance to schools and districts in the screening of the mental and behavioral health of students. DPI participated in an interdisciplinary workgroup led by the Office of Children’s Mental Health to explore the use of universal screeners in Wisconsin Schools. The group gathered data on current universal screening practices in Wisconsin schools, heard from school district staff about barriers and successes related to implementing universal screening, and explored best practices in universal screening. The group compiled recommendations on next steps for moving universal screening forward in Wisconsin schools.

School Climate

The School Climate Transformation Grant provided funding for districts to receive training and technical assistance in implementing Screening Brief Intervention Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) to schools, an evidence-based program used as an early intervention strategy to address AODA concerns and other emerging issues. It also provided funding to increase training and technical assistance provided by the RtI center to high schools looking to increase the fidelity of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) implementation at tiers 1 and 2.

The project also adopted a focus on educator wellness by providing training and technical assistance on implementing DPI and Rogers Behavioral Health’s Compassion Resilience Toolkit for Schools. This toolkit focuses on building individual resilience skills while identifying and eliminating system-level barriers to staff wellness.

Social and Emotional Learning

The SSPW team continues to support schools and districts in the systemic implementation of SEL. In addition to the Wisconsin Social and Emotional Learning Competencies PK-Adult, the resources include training, alignment, and connection of social and emotional learning to existing initiatives and learning environments, promoting SEL for students and adults, aligning SEL to workforce development, and building SEL assessment literacy.

SSPW has partnered with numerous individuals and organizations to create and disseminate the work listed above. The Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools (WISH) Center hosts and supports the SEL Team Implementation Training and the SEL Training of Trainers training on their Canvas

platform. These trainings build local capacity to develop and sustain comprehensive SEL in the school and district. The SSPW team has also collaborated with the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) in the development of resources. Wisconsin is a member of CASEL's Collaborating States Initiative, which provides access to SEL expertise and peer support to promote SEL.

Compassion Resilience

The SSPW team continues to support schools and districts in educator wellness efforts through the implementation of the Compassion Resilience Toolkit. SSPW has partnered with the Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools (WISH) Center and Rogers Behavioral Health to provide training of facilitators, implementation coaching, and leadership videos. Rogers Behavioral Health hosts and supports the Compassion Resilience Toolkit on their WISE: Initiative for Stigma Elimination webpage as a free resource available to schools, health and human services, and parents/caregivers.

Trauma Sensitive Schools (TSS)

SSPW continues to provide online training in Trauma Sensitive Schools with an easily accessible online PD system, consisting of 28 TSS modules. Also provided are supports in aligning TSS to WI's equitable MLSS, and evaluation resources. Updated [Trauma Sensitive Schools webpages](#) with newly added resources also provide information about program evaluation, state and national resources that align with Wisconsin's vision for trauma sensitive schools, training and technical assistance, and applying a trauma sensitive lens to academic, behavioral, and mental health multi-level systems of support.

SSPW also supports the development of Trauma Sensitive Schools in Wisconsin through a partnership with CESAs. Each CESA has a designated TSS Lead who DPI SSPW supports with training and technical assistance, a professional learning community, tools, and resources to enable them to better support schools and districts in their regions. In 2022-2023, TSS Leads participated in the Comprehensive School Mental Health Academy (facilitated by SSPW in partnership with AWSA and WCASS), to increase their knowledge of comprehensive school mental health systems (CSMHS) to better support schools in integrating trauma sensitive practices into their CSMHS.

TSS Leads supports the development of trauma sensitive schools in their regions by leading workshops, book studies, professional learning communities, and other TSS trainings. DPI and CESA TSS Leads engage in ongoing collaboration with colleagues and partners to ensure that TSS professional development is aligned with related projects including Project AWARE / Comprehensive School Mental Health (CSMH), Wisconsin Multi-level Systems of Support (WiMLSS), and the Neurosequential Model in Education (NME).

Youth Suicide Prevention

SSPW continues to support resources and presentations to address youth suicide prevention. A series of modules are available to support the training of school and district staff. These modules include Gatekeeper Training, Overview and Connections, Postvention, Prevention, and Suicide Prevention in Health Education Overview. Modules are free and accessible online. The updated

Youth Suicide Prevention webpage includes the current annual model notice, suicide prevention fact sheet, and additional resources on student programs, prevention strategies, and screening resources.

SSPW partnered with Mental Health America of Wisconsin, providing a grant coordinator, administrator, and suicide prevention deliverables for the Garrett Lee Smith Federal Suicide Prevention Grant. The state legislature appropriated funding to support the Peer-to-Peer Suicide Prevention grant. This competitive grant provides funding to schools to implement student-driven suicide prevention programs. Seventy-one grant projects were funded in the most recent grant cycle. Grantees represented all 12 CESA regions. Ninety-eight percent showed P2P programs equipped them to have a greater impact on traditionally underserved students. Eighty-nine percent indicated P2P Suicide Prevention Training was very to extremely effective in providing staff with information and resources needed to support student groups and in providing students with tools and resources to support their peers.

Driver Education

The DPI approves all Driver Education programs in public and private schools. In the 2023-24 school year, there were 108 approved Driver Education programs, including 37 overseen by Cooperative Education Service Area (CESA) 2. For the 2024-2025 school year, there were 119 approved Driver Education programs, including 37 overseen by CESA 2. To see the complete list of DPI approved School districts with Driver Education programs, see: [Approved DE School Districts and Private Schools, 2025-26](#).

The DPI approves all Driver Education programs in public and private schools. For the 2024-2025 school year, there were 119 approved Driver Education programs including 37 overseen by Cooperative Education Service Area 2. In the 2023-24 school year there were 108 approvable Driver Education programs including 37 overseen by Cooperative Education Service Area 2. To see the complete list of DPI approved School districts with Driver Education programs, see: [Approved DE School Districts and Private Schools, 2022-23](#).

Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)

The 21st CCLC team provided a wide range of professional development supports for grantees via a peer mentor program, regular technical support, and professional learning communities conducted in collaboration with the Wisconsin Out of School-Time Alliance (WOSTA). In addition, DPI and WOSTA partner to host the annual statewide out-of-school time conference. This partnership has also DPI to host regional communities of practice throughout the state focused training subgrantees on developing skills to sustain and advocate for their programs beyond the lifecycle of the grant. In the spring of 2025, DPI hosted regional training events focused on the integration of arts in 21st CCLC learning environments.

Competitive funding awarded to local entities to support out-of-school time programming:

- The 2023-24 21st CCLC grant competition received applications from 75 sites throughout the state, who requested \$8,785,000 in funding. The DPI ultimately awarded \$4,095,000 in funds to 40 sites across 23 individual applicants, bringing the total statewide number of granted sites to 152 for projects beginning on July 1, 2023.

- The 2024-24 21st CCLC grant competition received applications from 91 sites throughout the state, who requested \$10,255,000 in funding. The DPI ultimately recommended awarding \$5,645,000 in funds to 52 sites across 31 individual applicants, bringing the total number of granted sites to 165 funded sites in 2025-26.
- The 2024-25 grant competition launched an innovative process for the first time by which middle and high school students from throughout the state were invited to participate as grant application reviewers. Students were invited to submit applications to participate as a reviewer and 45 students were selected from among more than 700 applicants to serve in this capacity. Youth reviewed specific video responses that were submitted as part of the 21st CCLC competitive application. Their participation played a critical and important role in determining where the funds were awarded and demonstrated that DPI values youth voice in the very programs that serve them.

In 2024, DPI utilized funds available from lapsed awards, captured carryover, and excess aids to offer optional supplementary funding to active 21st CCLC grantees. These funds were announced as the “LightBULB Fund” (Building Unity through Learning and Belonging). Grantees were invited to submit non-competitive proposals to address one of five areas for improvement: targeted literacy and math support, transportation barriers, creating a greater sense of belonging for students, student empowerment and leadership, and adult family collaboration and engagement. DPI received and ultimately approved 100 proposals totaling \$718,000.

- DPI engaged two partners in the state and federal evaluation processes of the 21st CCLC program:
- DPI contracted with the Consortium of Applied Research (CAR) at the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay (UWGB) to facilitate the federal evaluation components of the 21st CCLC grant. UWGB designed a data collection and management system that synthesizes with the federal reporting portal. The required data is reported directly from the data management system to the federal reporting portal annually.
- DPI also contracted with the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative in the Wisconsin Center for Education Research to develop the [2022-2023 21st CCLC Statewide Evaluation report](#). The report, which is created annually, provides an overview of the scope and outcomes of 21st CCLC programming in Wisconsin.

Pupil Services

Education consultants for pupil services are responsible for the provision of expert leadership, consultation, and technical assistance activities to local school districts, state and local agencies, parents, and interest groups, including understanding, implementing best practices, and providing guidance on a range of topics that impact students across the state. Consultants are liaisons to professional associations through regular attendance and participation at board meetings, and participation in conferences. Education consultants provided orientation sessions for professionals new to the fields of school counseling, school social work, and school nursing. Support to the field through school counseling, school social work, school psychology, and school

nursing listservs provides ongoing and timely information, resources, updates, and sharing of best practices.

Safe Schools

Anti-Human Trafficking Lessons for Youth and Facilitator Training

SSPW in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families (DCF), created youth lessons for grades 7-12 in anti-human trafficking and provide free training to school staff and community partners in the facilitation of these lessons. Additional resources have been linked to in a webpage titled, [Reducing and Responding to Sexual Violence in Schools](#).

An Online Module for Using the Indicator and Response Guide for the Mandated Reporting of Child Exploitation was created to assist staff with understanding their reporting requirement and risk signs to look for.

Additional training offerings occur throughout each school year, in partnership with the DCF, on specific topics under the anti-human trafficking umbrella. These trainings have been free to participants and offered virtually by experts in the field. Training topics have included supporting survivors in finding their strengths, harm reduction, online trafficking and exploitation, trafficking of boys and men, and developing a deeper understanding of how and why individuals become involved in trafficking.

Bullying Prevention

SSPW provides online resources for bullying prevention including webinars and the Awareness and Prevention of School-Based Bullying Online Training Program. DPI SSPW, in partnership with the University of Missouri Bully Prevention Lab, released the Bullying Prevention Toolkit in 2023. The Bullying Prevention Toolkit serves as a resource for schools to implement and strengthen their comprehensive approach to bullying prevention and response. The toolkit provides guidance and resources for bullying prevention practices including educating students, staff, and caregivers about bullying, establishing a bullying prevention task force, and creating a bullying prevention action plan that can be integrated into existing multilevel systems of support. The toolkit also provides guidance and resources for bullying response protocols including reporting, investigation, and decision-making procedures.

In 2024, DPI formed a Cyberbullying Workgroup to better support Wisconsin school districts with preventing and responding to cyberbullying. This cross-agency workgroup presented a policy brief to the DPI cabinet, conducted an environmental scan of bullying policies in Wisconsin schools, and conducted listening sessions to gather feedback from families, school staff, and community members. The workgroup is currently partnering with the Cyberbullying Research Center to create a cyberbullying prevention and response guidance document for schools, scheduled for release in 2026.

Children's Wisconsin was the recipient of the 23-25 state Bullying Prevention Grant. Children's Wisconsin used grant funding to continue to update online platforms and resources that provide bullying prevention education to students, educators, and caregivers. Another key grant activity was launching a bullying prevention campaign aimed at providing training to educators.

Federal Grant Programs to Support Student Mental Health

Wisconsin receives funding through federal and state grants to support comprehensive school mental health. The Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education (AWARE) grant, School Climate Transformation Grant, and the Federal School-Based Mental Health Professionals Grant program all provide funding to the state and local school districts to implement comprehensive school mental health programs, expand and support multi-level systems of support and improve school climate, and increase the school-based mental health professional workforce in Wisconsin with an emphasis on increasing diversity, reducing the student to pupil services staff ratios as well as increasing access to school-based mental health professionals in underserved, rural communities. The federal School-Based Mental Health Professionals Grant resulted in an increase in pupil service staff: since the 2021-22 school year, there were increase of 348 school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers hired in partnering districts. It also resulted in 487 new students enrolling in the nine partnering UW graduate pupil services certification programs.

Project AWARE: In 2023, the Student Services/Prevention and Wellness Team was awarded another five-year, \$9 million grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) to continue work in Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education). Through targeted efforts with two LEA sites (Crandon & Wabeno) and 12 regional partners (CESAs), the primary objectives of the project include: increasing LEA capacity to connect children and youth to appropriate school and community mental health services; increasing mental health literacy for students, staff, and the community; focusing on partnerships and collaboration between state, regional, and local systems to promote the healthy development of school-aged youth; building regional (CESA) capacity to support Comprehensive School Mental Health System Implementation. The project is also prioritizing the alignment of statewide initiatives related to student wellness, including WiMLSS, TSS, and other related efforts from state partner organizations.

STOP School Violence Grant: In 2022, DPI was awarded the STOP (Students, Teachers Officers Preventing) School Violence Grant, funded by the US Department of Justice for \$2 million over three years, which supports the Trauma Research Awareness for Isolated and New Educators in Rural Wisconsin (TRAIN-WI) Project. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is partnering with CESA 10 to implement this project across southern Wisconsin, building on CESA 10's successful implementation in the northern part of the state. The [TRAIN-WI Project](#) provides educators with a comprehensive understanding of trauma through training in the Neurosequential Model in Education (NME), developed by Bruce Perry and the Neurosequential Network.

To date, over 1,000 educators in southern Wisconsin have completed the Introduction to NME training or NME Trainer training. The STOP School Violence Grant also funds implementation supports such as communities of practice and reflective consultation for training participants. The [TRAIN-WI Project website](#) also offers additional information and resources on trauma-sensitive schools.

Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Stronger Connections Grant: The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) was signed into law by President Biden on June 25, 2022. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WDPI) was allocated \$12,509,470 to administer a BSCA Stronger Connections competitive grant to high-need Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to support safe and healthy students under section 4108 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Eligible Applicants are high-needs LEAs as determined by the WI Department of Public Instruction. [The following 302 LEAs met the criteria below and were eligible to apply.](#)

High needs LEAs for the Stronger Connections grant are defined as: 1) LEAs with 500 or more students who are economically disadvantaged or 40 or greater percent of students who are economically disadvantaged; and 2) one of the following criteria: 10% or greater chronic absenteeism, or 250:1 or higher student to SBMH professional ratio, or 1 or greater per capita shortage of SBMH professionals, or 2 or more exclusionary discipline incidents per 100 students/year, or 2 or more students with IEPs subject to seclusion or restraints.

The Stronger Connections Grant was opened for applications on September 25, 2023. LEAs had until November 15, 2023, to complete their applications and submit via the DPI portal. [A technical assistance and information page was created and placed on the DPI website.](#) DPI received a total of 121 applications out of 302 eligible LEAs (40% of eligible applicants). The 121 applications were made up of 117 public school districts and four independent charter schools requesting a total of \$34,749,672. Following the external and internal review, 40 LEAs were selected as recipients of the grant. [The list of LEAs can be found here.](#) LEAs have until 9/30/2026 to utilize the funding.

DPI has continued to provide technical assistance for the grant through individualized supports, a monthly office hours, and a community of practice series that includes a partnership with the Office of School Safety.

Get Kids Ahead: From 2022-2025, the Get Kids Ahead (GKA) Initiative provided funding to Wisconsin school districts, independent charter schools, and tribal schools (“Grantee Schools”) to help build Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems (CSMHS). A CSMHS provides a continuum of services and supports to promote student and staff mental health and wellbeing. A CSMHS is not limited to treating mental illness or substance use disorders. Rather, it includes services and supports that promote social and emotional wellbeing, foster positive mental health, and school culture, and eliminate systemic barriers to wellbeing and success for all students.

Each Grantee School received an initial per-pupil allocation in 2022 (round one) and a second per-pupil allocation in 2023 (round two). Approximately \$15 million was allocated to schools each round, for a total allocation of approximately \$30 million. These allocations range from the minimum award of \$10,000 to much higher awards for districts with large student populations. DPI provided consultation and technical assistance, tools and resources, and professional learning opportunities to assist grantee schools in spending GKA funds sustainably. By the spending deadline of June 30, 2025, all 450 grantee schools fully spent the GKA funding they were awarded.

State Funding to Support Mental Health

School-Based Mental Health Service Grant: From 2019-2023, the School-Based Mental Health Services (SBMHS) Grant Program was a competitive mental health grant program funded by the State of Wisconsin and authorized under Wis. Stat. §115.367, with funds awarded to school districts and independent charter schools (ICS) to be used for the purpose of providing mental health services to pupils in collaboration with community mental health providers. In the 2023-2025 State Budget, Act 19 changed how funds are distributed under the SBMHS Grant program, from a competition to a per pupil allocation to all school districts and ICSs.

Allocation amounts are calculated using current year revenue limit membership for school districts and current year enrollment for ICSs. Under Act 19, funding for SBMHS allocations was \$25,000,000 Fiscal Year 2024 and 2025, a \$15,000,000 increase from Fiscal Year 2023 base funding. In fiscal year 2026, the SBMHS allocation is \$40,000,000. In fiscal year 2027, the SBMHS allocation is \$10,000,000. A competitive grant program to support school districts and independent charter schools (LEAs) to implement comprehensive school mental health systems in collaboration with local community mental health providers.

The grant program provides 10 million dollars to 161 LEAs across Wisconsin. Funds are used for a variety of systems-focused activities, such as hiring mental health navigators, purchasing mental health screening tools and resources to improve referral pathways, making improvements to spaces for school-based therapy staff time for planning school mental health efforts, and consultation with community providers. Grantees also reported using funding for a variety of mental health promotion activities, or universal activities that proactively promote student and staff well-being, such as social emotional learning curricula, mental health literacy training, trauma sensitive schools training, suicide prevention and school climate initiatives.

Aid for School Mental Health Programs: A categorical aid for eligible public schools, charters, and some private schools for partial reimbursement of increases in expenditures on social workers (salary and fringe) from one year to the next. In 2023-24, 123 entities received reimbursement, and in 2024-25, 129 entities received reimbursement.

Statewide training: In 2023-2024, state funding supported 34 YMHFA Training sessions for 576 participants, along with two YMHFA Training of Trainers sessions, adding 24 new trainers in the state. In 2024-2025, state funding supported 33 YMHFA Training sessions for 633 participants and one YMHFA Training of Trainers sessions, adding 15 new trainers in the state.

In 2023-2024, state funding supported Initial SBIRT training for 63 practitioners and Booster SBIRT training for 20 practitioners. In 2024-2025, state funding supported Initial SBIRT training for 54 practitioners, and Booster SBIRT training for 28 participants, along with communities of practice serving a total of 158 participants.

Access to all online DPI hosted mental health training for Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems, Trauma Sensitive Schools, Social and Emotional Learning, and School Wellness and Safety has been organized into one easy-to-use Mental Health E-Learning webpage: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health/e-learning>

Division for Libraries and Technology

Information Technology

The Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) IT division provides a comprehensive suite of technology services that support DPI staff, programs, Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), and libraries. This includes managing secure networks, desktops, cloud systems, content, and infrastructure, as well as developing and maintaining critical applications and tools. DPI IT also delivers direct support and training to LEAs, facilitates data collection and reporting through statewide systems like WISEdata and WISEdash, and provides dashboards and analytics to inform policy and program decisions.

Together, these functions ensure that DPI's technology infrastructure and services are reliable, secure, and user-focused, enabling staff, educators, and partners to effectively carry out the department's mission to promote educational excellence and improve student outcomes statewide.

The Instructional Technology Services (ITS) team oversees the acquisition, deployment, and management of all software and hardware for the Department of Public Instruction. ITS manages enterprise-wide applications, including M365 (Outlook, Teams, Teams Telephony, Office, etc.) and G-Suite, and is responsible for hosting and maintaining applications and services that are core to DPI operations, ensuring they remain secure, reliable, and accessible to staff and partners.

In addition to procurement and hosting, ITS establishes and enforces technology standards, security policies, and procedures, safeguarding DPI systems and data while ensuring compliance with state and federal requirements. The team evaluates emerging technologies, manages system integrations, and provides guidance to staff on best practices for secure and effective use of technology.

By maintaining a robust, secure, and well-governed technology infrastructure, including hosting DPI's critical applications and services, ITS supports the mission of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, enabling services, staff, and partners to focus on delivering high-quality educational programs, facilitating data-driven decision-making, and advancing innovative teaching, learning, and administrative operations statewide through technology.

The Applications Development and Management (ADM) team, with support from Instructional Technology Services (ITS), develops and maintains the Wisconsin Information System for Education (WISE), a suite of tools that enables LEAs and partners to generate student IDs, collect data, and meet state and federal reporting requirements.

ADM also manages applications that streamline administrative functions, including grant management, teacher licensing, GED/HSED administration, internship programs, and school directories. The team ensures systems follow best practices for accessibility, security, and usability, and provide ongoing support, updates, and integration with other DPI tools.

By delivering reliable, secure, and accessible systems, ADM supports the mission of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, enabling data-driven decisions, compliance, and efficient operations that ultimately improve student outcomes.

The Customer Services team provides direct support, guidance, and training to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) on WISE applications and tools, helping educators, administrators, and staff effectively navigate and utilize DPI systems. The team assists with troubleshooting technical issues, responding to inquiries, and providing hands-on support to ensure that LEAs can meet reporting, compliance, and instructional needs efficiently. The team also provides direct support, guidance, and training to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) on WISE applications and tools, helping educators, administrators, and staff effectively navigate and utilize DPI systems. Additionally, the team assists with troubleshooting technical issues, responding to inquiries, and providing hands-on support to ensure that LEAs can meet reporting, compliance, and instructional needs efficiently.

In addition to direct support, Partner Support serves as a liaison between LEAs and other DPI program staff, facilitating communication and coordination to address program-specific questions, resolve challenges, and share updates on system changes or enhancements. The team also develops and delivers professional learning materials, training sessions, an annual conference, and user resources, empowering LEAs to maximize the value of DPI applications and adopt best practices for data management and instructional tools.

Through these efforts, Partner Support ensures that LEAs have reliable support and access to resources, enabling smooth operations, timely reporting, and effective use of technology to support teaching, learning, and administrative functions across Wisconsin schools.

Data Warehouse and Decision Support

The [Data Warehouse and Decision Support \(DWDS\)](#) team manages Wisconsin's statewide data warehouse and decision support tools, including WISEdash, the state's primary platform for data reporting and analysis. WISEdash provides educators, administrators, and policymakers with secure access to student-level and aggregate data, supporting informed decision-making at local, regional, and state levels.

DWDS integrates data from multiple sources, including student enrollment, assessments, program participation, and operational metrics, ensuring accuracy, reliability, and security. The team develops and maintains dashboards, reports, and analytics tools within WISEdash to help identify trends, monitor outcomes, and evaluate program effectiveness.

In addition, DWDS coordinates federal reporting via EDFacts, ensuring compliance with reporting requirements. By maintaining high-quality data systems and providing actionable insights, DWDS supports policy development, program evaluation, resource allocation, and strategic planning across Wisconsin's education system.

Library Services Team

The Library Services team empowers Wisconsin libraries to best serve their communities through leadership, collaboration, inclusion, and innovation. The team works in support of public libraries, school libraries, academia, and special libraries throughout Wisconsin.

Library Services manages several statewide programs aimed at ensuring Wisconsin residents have easy access to information and tools to make learning, exploration, and discovery possible.

BadgerLink, Wisconsin's online library, provides licensed, trustworthy resources from a variety of content providers to create a foundational collection serving all Wisconsin residents, augmenting resources already available from local libraries and educational institutions. WISCAT provides leadership and a platform for Interlibrary Loan, a cooperative mechanism for connecting people with physical resources that are not available through local libraries or consortia. The Wisconsin Document Depository Program makes state documents available in depository libraries throughout the state and online at the Wisconsin Digital Archive.

In addition to statewide programs, Library Services staff provide statewide leadership on a variety of topics to public and school libraries and the organizations that support them. Public library consultants support library administration, youth services, inclusive services, workforce development, games, and learning and more. A data analyst collects annual public library data and provides leadership to public libraries in using this data in making decisions. The school library consultant works to support Common School Fund spending, library planning, school librarian licensure and more. Collaboratively, the Library Services Team provides leadership on technology, intellectual freedom, and other universal library topics.

Library Services also manages several funding sources to augment local library funding. The Library Services and Technology Act Grants to States program provides funds for many of the staff and platforms provided by the team. It additionally provides grant opportunities for public library systems and libraries throughout the state. Library Services distributes public library system state aid funding to allow regional systems to provide high-level services to local libraries throughout the state. Additionally, Library Services contracts with various organizations to provide statewide services giving Wisconsin residents access to collections and services that would otherwise be out of reach.

[WISELearn](#)

Since 2013, the Division for Libraries and Technology has developed WISELearn, a centralized portal providing Wisconsin students, parents, teachers, administrators, and librarians with access to high-quality, standards-aligned educational resources and professional learning. WISELearn serves as a single point of access for instructional materials, digital tools, and professional development across all grade levels and content areas.

At its core is the WISELearn Resources Library, a collaborative repository that aggregates content from DPI teams and educators statewide. All resources are reviewed for alignment with academic standards, classroom relevance, and accessibility for diverse learners. WISELearn also supports professional learning through training modules, instructional guides, and curated collections that help educators integrate technology effectively. The portal fosters collaboration and engagement,

enabling educators to share resources, provide feedback, and develop a statewide community of practice. Through WISELearn, the Division for Libraries and Technology helps make resources more discoverable, professional learning more accessible, and digital instructional content more impactful for schools and libraries across Wisconsin.

Division for Student and School Success

Office of Educational Accountability

Accountability

The [Office of Educational Accountability](#) (OEA) continued to provide high-quality data analyses of student outcomes to facilitate continuous school improvement, including implementing the school and district report cards. For both years of the biennium, OEA produced thousands of report cards for public and choice schools and districts. These report cards include data on multiple indicators for multiple years across four Priority Areas (Achievement, Growth, Target Group Outcomes, and On-track to Graduation). In addition, the report cards provide course and program participation information for grades 9-12 for public schools and districts. A school or district's overall accountability score places the school/district into one of five overall accountability ratings. OEA continued this work as part of a larger federal accountability landscape known as Joint Federal Notifications. This cross-team project involves close collaboration with Title I and Special Education teams.

Aside from implementing state and federal accountability systems, OEA continued to engage in other activities to support the agency and our stakeholders across the state. OEA led the implementation of the USDE Blue Ribbon Schools awards program by working with the Cabinet to nominate up to eight schools for these national awards and providing technical assistance to nominated schools throughout their application process. OEA regularly produced resources and communications to the field through avenues such as the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) Digest and the Office of Educational Accountability (OEA) Newsletter. OEA also continued to support other teams across DPI by fulfilling various data requests and performing quality assurance protocols.

Assessments

The Office of Educational Accountability works with various assessment vendors to ensure process improvement, to develop and make available professional development resources, to offer trainings, and to disseminate communications to ensure smooth and valid test administration.

The Forward Exam is administered online to approximately 500,000 students annually in grades 3 through 8 in ELA and math, grades 4 and 8 in science, and grades 4, 8, and 10 in social studies. In the summer of 2023 and 2024, Wisconsin educators reviewed the test questions to ensure appropriate rigor, quality, language load, cognitive complexity, and content alignment. Additionally, they ensured that questions are free of bias and sensitivity.

The [PreACT Secure](#) assessment was administered to grade 9 and 10 students in 2024-25, assessing approximately 120,000 students. It is an online assessment that measures student readiness in English, math, reading, and science. PreACT Secure scores predict how students will perform on the ACT when they reach 11th grade and their readiness for college-level coursework.

The [ACT with writing test](#) is administered in grade 11 and measures English, reading, math, science, and writing performance. Districts have the option to administer the ACT on paper, online, or a combination of paper and online, thus expanding the test window significantly. In the 2023-24 and the 2024-25 school years, approximately 60,000 students took the ACT statewide exam. The ACT statewide exam provides all grade 11 students with the opportunity to participate in a college and career readiness assessment at no cost, thus addressing the need to close Wisconsin's achievement gap and address equity issues.

The [Dynamic Learning Maps \(DLM\)](#) assessment is Wisconsin's alternate assessment, taken by students with significant cognitive disabilities. DLM is administered annually to approximately 4,700 students statewide in grades 3 through 8 in ELA and math; grades 4, 8, and 11 in science; and grades 4, 8, and 10 in social studies. During this period, OEA and special education team staff continued to provide professional development on and encouraged the use by districts of the new DLM online Instruction and Assessment Planner designed to support the teaching and learning of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

[ACCESS for ELLs](#) is administered annually to English language learner students in grades K-12 to assess their progress in learning the English language. In 2024-25, the ACCESS for ELLs test was administered to approximately 61,000 students, and the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs was administered to approximately 600 students.

Another assessment administered during the biennial period is the [National Assessment of Educational Progress \(NAEP\) assessment](#). In 2023-25, the grade 4 and 8 Reading and Mathematics NAEP assessments were administered to approximately 5000 Wisconsin students. In 2024, the national Long Term Trend assessments were administered in grades 4, 8, and 12 in reading and mathematics and in grade 8 science to a sample of Wisconsin students. A small number of schools also participated in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA).

Title I and School Support Team

The Title I and School Support (TISS) Team provides statewide leadership and technical assistance for several grant programs authorized by the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This includes administering grants and providing support to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) implementing programs funded by Title I, part A in order to close achievement gaps. The TISS Team also coordinates and implements Wisconsin's prevention and intervention programs for children and youth who are neglected, delinquent, or at risk (Title I, Part D); Wisconsin's Migrant Education Program (Title I, Part C); educational stability provisions for children in out-of-home care (foster care); and the requirements in the McKinney-Vento Act regarding education for homeless children and youth (Title IX). Additionally, the TISS Team is responsible for administering the federal stimulus funds to prepare for, prevent, or respond to COVID-19.

Beyond specific federal programs, the team collaborates within and beyond the DPI to advance educational equity, foster family and community engagement, and promote continuous improvement in schools and the educational system supporting them. The team also collaborates to help streamline federal grant processes for schools and districts, supporting consolidated monitoring for all ESEA titles, coordinating Title I efforts with similar efforts under other federal laws, and contributing to the development of the electronic WISEgrants management system.

Federal Funding

Title I, Part A

Title I, Part A is a federal funding program designed to close achievement gaps and ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education. Title I, Part A allocates funding to districts and other LEAs according to a formula based on numbers/percentages of children from low-income families. LEAs distribute much of the funding directly to individual public schools and use the rest to support other efforts within the LEA that benefit students needing additional academic support.

Title I, Part C

The purpose of the Title I, Part C Migrant Education Program (MEP) is to identify migratory children ages three through twenty-one and offer them supplemental educational programming and services. MEP programming and services help migratory children overcome educational disruption, cultural and language barriers, social isolation, health-related problems, and other factors that can interfere with academic achievement and successful transition to postsecondary education or employment.

Wisconsin restructured the MEP into a regional summer model in July 2018. Subgrantees for the regional summer program are determined through a grant application process. Services for children include readiness for preschool, literacy and mathematics for K-8 students, and credit accrual and leadership opportunities for high school students and out-of-school youth (OSY). Services are focused on the individual needs of the students in the programs.

Title I, Part D

The Title I, Part D program (also called the Neglected and Delinquent program) is a federally funded program that enables neglected, delinquent, and at-risk students to have the same opportunities as other Title I programs.

The goals of Title I, Part D, are to:

- Improve educational services for these children so they have the opportunity to meet challenging state academic content and achievement standards.
- Provide services to transition students between facility and districts successfully.
- Prevent youth who are at risk from dropping out of school.

- Provide students who have dropped out and children and youth returning from correctional facilities with a support system to ensure their continued education.

McKinney-Vento (Education for Homeless Children and Youth)

The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of December 2015. The Wisconsin EHCY program addresses the needs of students experiencing homelessness in LEAs throughout the state by supporting homeless liaisons and distributing funds from the U.S. Department of Education. DPI designates two statewide EHCY Coordinators to provide training and technical assistance, review and create policies and procedures, and monitor LEAs for program compliance to ensure that children and youth experiencing homelessness are able to attend and fully participate in school. Funding is distributed to LEAs through a competitive grant process.

The mission of the DPI EHCY program is to ensure educational equity and success for students experiencing homelessness by providing support for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Our vision is that all students experiencing homelessness are provided with the opportunity and support to achieve their goals and own their future.

Students in Out-of-Home Care (Foster Care)

ESSA requires that LEAs and Child Welfare Agencies (CWAs) collaborate to ensure educational stability for students placed in out-of-home care (WI term) or foster care (federal term). This preserves their opportunities for improved well-being and success in school. Educational stability means ensuring academic continuity (and a student's right to remain in their school of origin), supporting meaningful relationships developed at school, and fostering a sense of belonging for students who often experience disruptions both at school and at home that can impact their academic experiences and outcomes. DPI consultants collaborate with other state and local child welfare agencies to provide training and technical assistance, review and create policies and procedures, and support students in out-of-home care.

WISEgrants

WISEgrants is DPI's federal grant portal, allowing streamlined applications and approval of federal grants to LEAs. This includes ESSA, IDEA, and Carl Perkins funding. The Title I and School Support team coordinates maintenance and improvements to this system, which requires cross-agency collaboration. The system includes reporting and communication features that support successful grant application, review, and approval. WISEgrants is part of the WISE (Wisconsin Information System for Education) suite of products supporting the use of data to improve education.

Title I Continuous Improvement Team

The Title I Continuous Improvement Team provides statewide leadership and technical assistance for district and school-level improvement to achieve educational equity. The team:

- Collaborates across the agency and in the field to build capacity around evidence-based school improvement strategies grounded in equity and family engagement,

- Administers the Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) program, a state-funded program that provides funding directly to schools, based on low-income data, so they can implement specific evidence-based improvement strategies, and
- Operationalizes the improvement portions of the accountability system mandated by Title I, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which identifies and supports schools with persistent gaps, low graduation rates, and low overall performance.

Under the ESSA Accountability System, the team provides guidance and technical assistance for schools and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) around continuous improvement for schools identified for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI), and Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI). The team directly supports and monitors schools identified for CSI, administers identification-related grants, and collaborates across the agency and the field on the development of a statewide system of support for continuous improvement.

The team supports evidence-based continuous improvement that includes the development of a vision and mission, completing a comprehensive needs analysis that identifies a root cause, and developing and monitoring action plans for improvement in both adult practice and student outcomes. Throughout the process, administrators, teachers, students, families, and community members work in collaboration to choose the most impactful strategies to serve students.

School Improvement Supports for Identified Schools under ESSA

Under Title I, Part A the DPI makes CSI identifications every three years. There are two ways in which schools can meet the identification criteria to be considered for CSI. Schools must have a graduation rate of 67% or less or an overall school performance in the bottom 5% of schools receiving Title I-A funding. Schools must meet the threshold for either or both groups for two consecutive years to be identified for CSI. Multiple Identifications (IDs) are allowed if a school meets both identification criteria and qualifies for TSI or ATSI. CSI supersedes all other identifications. LEAs receive ESSA Accountability Reports via Secure Access File Exchange (SAFE), and reports are publicly available on the ESSA Accountability Reports webpage. There is a district summary and a report for each individual school.

Once schools are identified for CSI, they are required to carry out school-based activities in support of their continuous improvement journey. Schools are required to conduct a school-level needs assessment, review resource allocation for inequity, and to develop and implement a school improvement plan to address issues underlying the CSI identification(s) with valued stakeholders.

DPI provides information, resources, and substantial annual grant funding to support continuous improvement efforts of CSI schools. DPI consultants provide professional learning for newly identified schools and partners with them throughout the improvement process through coordination with LEA. SIPs and plan implementation are approved and monitored by the DPI throughout the CSI process.

CSI schools must meet 3 tiers of exit criteria (Criterion 1, 2, and 3) to be considered for exiting CSI status. CSI schools' systems and structures to support high-quality continuous improvement are

assessed by DPI. DPI evaluates and calculates when schools identified for CSI no longer meet the ID criteria, which is when CSI schools have shown improvement over multiple years consecutively.

Schools identified for CSI present across a vast continuum regarding need and readiness for fully engaging in the improvement process. In response to that continuum of needs, in 2024-25 the TICI team implemented a cohort model of support to maximize the opportunity to support unique and individual needs of schools in their local context. In the 2025-26 SY, the TICI team has refined the description and/or definition of each cohort as well as the supports and services provided in each.

This cohort model is applied to CSI and CSI MRI identified schools. The following is a summary of the revised language.

- **Readiness Support Cohort:** Schools within this cohort are in the process of building structures and systems to make sure improvement efforts are successful and sustainable.
- **Direct Support Cohort:** Schools in this cohort have the foundations for improvement in place and can focus on implementation of the EBIS to change adult practice and improve student outcomes.
- **Indirect Support Cohort:** Schools in the indirect cohort have structure and systems in place to support continuous improvement efforts and are deeply engaged in implementation activities. These schools are directly monitored by the LEA and receive monitoring and support through the DPI.
- **Non-traditional Support Cohort:** A non-traditional school may include virtual schools, a topic-focused charter schools, or schools that serve specific student populations. Schools in this cohort are supported through two levels of service; Non-Traditional Readiness Supports and Non-traditional Direct Supports.

CSI – More Rigorous Intervention

Schools identified for CSI that fail to meet exit criteria, after four years (adjusted as needed for the COVID-19 pandemic) require a more focused approach to improvement. Changes to both district and school systems and practices are needed. To provide a clearer focus for improvement efforts and monitoring the Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement will be used as a framework. This framework allows districts and schools to continue practices that show promise and provide guidance for more focused and intense continuous improvement efforts. Schools that are CSI-MRI have a limited scope of options for their EBIS.

Pre-Approved EBIS for CSI-MRIs

Schools identified for CSI that do not exit that identification within four years are eligible for MRI. These schools must select an EBIS from the following pre-approved list: Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), Science-based early literacy, Career and Technical Education (CTE), Community Schools, Restorative Practices, Mentoring, or Preventing Dropouts. Another evidence-based strategy based upon a thorough data analysis that meets ESSA requirements may be used with the approval of the Office of Continuous Improvement Team Director.

Urban School Transformation Initiative

The Urban Schools Transformation (UST) Initiative, launched in 2023, has supported urban districts through professional development, leadership coaching, and systemic improvement protocols. In partnership with Milwaukee Public Schools and Racine Unified School District, the initiative has contributed to measurable gains in leadership capacity, instructional quality, and equity-centered systems.

Following the conclusion of its CESA #1 partnership in June 2025, UST is now situated fully within the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. From this position, the initiative strengthens equity-driven, data-informed school improvement efforts in Wisconsin's urban districts.

Building on demonstrated outcomes, UST continues to prioritize leadership coaching as a core strategy for developing both district and school-level capacity. Through collaboration with district leaders, the initiative extends and sustains school-based coaching, ensuring the development of durable leadership practices and culturally responsive instructional systems. These efforts are designed to advance educational equity and foster long-term improvement across Wisconsin's urban schools.

Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute

In Fall 2018, Wisconsin's five largest school districts began working with the Urban League of Greater Madison and the DPI to develop strategies for promoting equitable education opportunities for students of color. Their efforts resulted in the Wisconsin Urban Leadership Institute (WULI). The Institute is designed to empower principal leaders as change-agents to address the educational opportunity gaps between students of color and white students. This initiative focuses on developing the knowledge, skills, and tools of school leaders in the Green Bay Public Schools, Kenosha Unified School District, Milwaukee Public Schools, Madison Metropolitan School District, and Racine Unified School District to lead for equity within their schools and districts. In 2024, the initiative expanded to include the West Allis- West Milwaukee School District. The Wauwatosa School District will be a part of the 2025-26 Cohort. To date, 150 school leaders across the state have completed the program, with priority given to principals from federally identified schools.

Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) Program

The Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) Program is a state-funded program established in the 2015-16 school year and fully replaced the Student Achievement Guarantee in Education program (SAGE) at the end of the 2017-18 school year. In 2022-2023, the most recent year of data, 400 schools implemented the AGR program, serving over 70,714 students in kindergarten through third grades.

The most recent AGR Evaluation Report (November 2024) for data through the 2022-2023 school year can be found here:

https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sage/WEC_AGR_Report2024_FINAL_11.12.2024.pdf

The AGR program allows a participating school to meet the obligations of its five-year contract by implementing one of three strategies or a combination of these strategies in every kindergarten through grade three classroom:

- One-to-one tutoring provided by a licensed teacher.
- Instructional coaching for teachers provided by a licensed teacher.
- Maintaining 18:1 or 30:2 classroom ratios and providing professional development on small group instruction.

The AGR program requires a participating school to create performance objectives, including reducing the achievement gap between low-income students in that school and students in the same grade and subject statewide. The AGR program requires school board review of implementation and progress towards achieving performance objectives in each participating school at the end of every semester.

Improvements Made by the Department

The DPI has made several improvements in multiple program areas over the 2023-25 biennium, as described below.

Agency Wide

Alternative Work Patterns

In the 2023-2025 biennium, DPI has continued to offer alternative work patterns. Alternative work patterns must be aimed at maximizing the efficiency of agency operations through increased employee productivity, reduced absenteeism, and improved employee morale while at the same time improving services to the public. Up until May 23rd, 2025, employees were required to submit a formal Alternative Work Pattern form for any work schedule outside of the State's operational hours of 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. On May 23rd, 2025, DPI received updated guidance from DOA and subsequently submitted a new Alternative Work Plan.

On April 9th, 2025, DPI submitted a new Alternative Work Plan to the Department of Administration. The submission resulted in the following changes:

- Employees are expected to keep supervisors informed of the hours they typically work each day, so supervisors know when to expect them.
- Supervisors are expected to check in with staff annually, typically during the performance evaluation period, to confirm that work hours continue to meet both operational needs and the employee's preferences.
- Employees who work outside of DPI's core hours from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., or who follow a compressed schedule such as four 10-hour days, are required to complete an Alternative Work Pattern form.

Federal Funding Conference (Cross Agency)

The DPI continued and improved the annual Federal Funding Conference (a partnership between teams within the DPI (Special Education, Title I, and School Financial Services teams), and external partners including the Wisconsin Association of School Business Officials and the Wisconsin Council for Administrators of Special Services, to provide funding technical assistance to LEA teams at one time and in one location. It has resulted in a consistent message from the DPI on federal funding, with an emphasis on collaboration with district departments. Information about the 2025 Federal Funding Conference (held virtually) can be found at this link:

<https://dpi.wi.gov/wisegrants/federal-funding-conference>

Onboarding Process

The DPI continued to improve upon the agency wide onboarding process (first developed in the 2017-19 biennium), a streamlined system of employee orientation for human resources, facilities, technology support, and new employees. All new employees begin once every two weeks on a Monday with an in-person orientation at the GEF 3 Madison Office (later at the Tommy G. Thompson office building, after DPI moved in July 2024). Once the in-person meeting is completed, new employees go through applicable web modules to ensure all new staff have access to uniform information when beginning their new position.

Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

While the public health emergency status and the order for statewide school closure have been lifted, impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have continued. Local education agencies have continued to experience high absence rates of learners periodically due to outbreaks of COVID-19 and RSV. Under an MOU with the Department of Administration utilizing a portion of the Governor's ARP ESSER funds, the DPI extended a contract with Graduation Alliance to provide individual coaching, academic, and behavioral supports to chronically absent or at-risk learners and their families. Between April 2023 and August 2025, Graduation Alliance served 15,026 Wisconsin learners in 26 districts, with the greatest number of learners served coming from Milwaukee Public Schools. The period for ARP ESSER eligible activities and expenses ended on September 30, 2024. Since that date, the DPI has engaged in final grant closeout and monitoring activities to meet federal requirements and ensure that all funds were spent appropriately.

Strategic Planning Process

The DPI has recently begun a strategic planning process that is rooted in equity to ensure that the strategies and measurements of progress align with DPI's vision and mission and with the current needs of local education agencies and public libraries. The DPI is committed to transparency and inclusivity during this process, actively involving and seeking feedback from both DPI staff members and external stakeholders from around the state in a collaborative process.

The strategic planning process began with a revision of the agency vision and mission statements and is being conducted in three phases. During the 2023-25 biennium, DPI finished phase 1 (started in spring 2023) and conducted phases 2 and 3 of the strategic planning process. This work culminated in the department's publishing of the DPI's [2024-2029 Strategic Plan](#) in July 2024.

Towards the end of the 2023-25 biennium, the department completed work on one of the identified strategic goals: Modernize and Improve the DPI. This work resulting in the department adopting a new, [redesigned organizational structure](#) to better serve students, educators, and communities statewide, reflecting a commitment to being more responsive, effective, and aligned across the agency. The implementation of the new structure began at the outset of the 2025-27 biennium, in late July 2025 .

Find the details of [DPI's strategic planning process](#) at: <https://dpi.wi.gov/strategic-plan/build-strategic-planning>.

Division for Finance and Management

Business Services

The Business Services team continues to increase transparency and outreach to employees across the agency. This includes updating and revising forms and templates to follow procedures and policies, so information is more easily accessible. The team is actively working on training opportunities and service hours to answer questions that DPI employees have. The team

continues working on quarterly projections to help managers across the agency to understand their respective budgets.

WISEdata Finance (WDF) and the Wisconsin School Finance Portal

The DPI implemented the budget modules in WISEdata Finance (WDF) and the Wisconsin School Finance Portal (WiSFIP). This new system uses an open API and data format by the Ed-Fi Alliance to collect budget and year-to-date actual information directly from districts' financial software, at a greater level of detail than ever before. Data collection with WISEdata Finance began in the 2021-22 school year. The DPI is developing supplemental applications and modifying existing ones to take advantage of WISEdata Finance's capabilities and revamp other school finance data collections and reporting. A Pupil Count Module was piloted during the 2023-2024 school year with an expansion in 2024-2025. The Wisconsin School Finance Public Reports (WiSFPR) application launched in June 2025 contains public views of finance data.

Division for Learning Support Special Education

College and Career Ready Individualized Education Programs (CCR IEPs) and Comprehensive Special Education Evaluation

Throughout the 2023-25 biennium, the DPI continued to support the field in revising and providing high-quality training for Individualized Education Program (IEP) development. Wisconsin's College and Career Ready (CCR) IEP training to improve outcomes for students aged 3 through 21, includes a focus on the linkages to a student's present levels of academic and functional performance in relation to grade-level peers with the student's disability-related needs, annual goals, and services to support access, engagement, and progress in general education curriculum and environments. The comprehensive special education evaluation framework includes resources related to assessment of English Learners, medical versus clinical evaluation processes, need versus label-based assessment procedures, incorporating RIOT and ICEL assessment frameworks into special education evaluations, and resources to support decision making for students who have experienced trauma.

The DPI developed updated and developed new resources during the 2023-25 biennium, including updated IEP process at a glance self-check resources, examples five step process charts that demonstrate examples of linking current levels of performance, disability-related needs, goals, and services across broad areas of academic and functional skill areas, a new resource on literacy assessments for students with low incidence disabilities and complex communication needs, and updated resources to support IEP teams in conducting effective functional behavioral assessments and develop and implement positive behavioral supports, interventions, and strategies.

In addition, two professional learning series were provided to support educators. A virtual boot camp was provided for new occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech-language pathologists focused on how IEP teams can take collective responsibility for creating collaborative IEP goals to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of special education services provided to students with disabilities. A virtual and in-person pathways to success learning series was also

provided to educators working with students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that focused on using formative assessment data from the alternate state assessment, Dynamic Learning Maps, to support instructional planning.

Wisconsin Multi Level Systems of Supports (WiMLSS)

This project helps Wisconsin schools and districts focus on systems centered on each and every student based on their responsiveness to effective instruction across a continuum of supports, grounded in Wisconsin's Framework for Multi-Level Systems of Supports. The WiMLSS Project offers Framework Trainings as the cornerstone of its support, along with training in Behavior Systems, Academic Systems, and Addressing Disproportionality Through Systems Change—delivered alongside coaching and technical assistance.

Coherence and Alignment of Federal Policy Purposes Served under IDEA and ESSA

Under two pieces of federal legislation – the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – the DPI has the authority and obligation to analyze data annually and subsequently notify schools and districts when they are required to improve based on state-determined metrics. Recognizing that the foundation of both federal laws is a commitment to educational equity and that in Wisconsin, the basis for identification under ESSA - race and ability status - was the same as the basis for identification under IDEA, a joint notification process began during the 2018-19 school year and continued through the 2023-25 biennium.

The annual joint notification is sent to all Wisconsin districts, released preliminarily in December with a final release in March or April, and is accessed by districts through the Secure Access File Exchange (SAFE). The joint notification packets include a link to schedule a call with DPI staff. During these calls, DPI staff work with district/school teams to understand the data, connect them with free and low-cost supports available for improvement through our Statewide System of Supports (SSOS), and identify the next steps required under federal law.

There are levels of support provided to districts and schools, based on the severity and number of federal identifications under ESSA and IDEA. All levels of support are guided by the infrastructure co-created and resourced by Special Education and Title I. This linked team system ensures aligned decision-making through data analysis and clearly defined communication protocols. The DPI funded, CESA-based Technical Assistance Network provides a necessary structure to ensure that services delivered to schools and districts are effective and efficient in impacting all learners while accelerating learning for students whose identities inform school and district federal identifications.

Mental Health E-Learning

Access to all online DPI hosted mental health training for Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems, Trauma Sensitive Schools, Social and Emotional Learning, and School Wellness and Safety has been organized into one easy-to-use Mental Health E-Learning webpage: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health/e-learning>

Division for Libraries and Technology

Data Privacy and Cyber Security

Data privacy and cybersecurity remain fundamental to the work of Instructional Technology Services as the team supports both internal DPI infrastructure and external stakeholders in schools and libraries. Work during the 2023–25 biennium included:

- Adoption and implementation of additional State Security Standards.
- Continued support for schools and libraries with cybersecurity resources, training, and guidance.
- Growth in participation in the Student Data Privacy Consortium, expanding library system membership in the Wisconsin Alliance.
- Ongoing efforts to strengthen the DPI’s overall cybersecurity posture, including improved monitoring and incident response capabilities.
- Notably, local education agencies experienced a rise in attempted cybersecurity attacks during the biennium, with more than 30 reported incidents by the end of 2025. Reporting is voluntary, so actual impacts may be higher.

Data Snapshots

The DPI continues to collect data from LEAs and Choice schools by taking data snapshots of their data on specific dates. The Division for Libraries and Technology collaborates with teams across the entire department to coordinate data quality efforts for every data snapshot. Notable improvements during 2023-25 include:

- Streamlining the creation of the data quality alerts from three teams at DPI. This was accomplished by creating alert file specifications and examples as well as introducing variables for school years and date generated.
- Introduction of a snapshot focused validation filter in the WISEdata Portal. LEAs can use this filter to focus on the validations that are most impactful for the next upcoming snapshot.
- Data snapshot now includes coursework information down to grade 6.
- Overlapping enrollment resolution functionality added in WISEdata Portal so the DPI Customer Services team could resolve overlaps in favor of one district or another in the case one district is unresponsive.

Digital Excellence

Ensuring that every Wisconsin student and resident has access to reliable and affordable broadband continues to be a priority. DPI partnered with state agencies, libraries, and schools to advance broadband access and digital learning opportunities:

- Worked with the Public Service Commission to develop Wisconsin's first Digital Equity (now **Digital Opportunity**) Plan, supporting federal initiatives and funding.
- Funded and supported the Internet Discount Finder to help families access affordable internet.
- Updated the Digital Opportunity survey and integrated improvements in WISEdash for Districts and WISEdash Public dashboards to better display statewide and district-level data.
- Supported schools and libraries through the Digital Learning Bridge in partnership with CESA Purchasing, offering discounted technology and broadband services for students.
- Coordinated with COLAND to inform libraries and communities about digital opportunity initiatives.

WISEdash for Districts

WISEdash for Districts continues to be used for three main purposes: enhanced school improvement planning, early warning of student outcomes, and data snapshot review. Notable improvements over the 2023-25 biennium include:

- Addition of IDEA [Indicator 11 – Timely Initial Evaluations snapshot dashboards](#). Data began to be collected in 2022-23 in a pilot fashion, and snapshot dashboards were added for the 2023-24 school year, allowing districts to verify their data submission prior to the annual data snapshot.
- Multiple updates to statewide assessments, including the addition of the statewide assessment [PreACT Secure](#) to WISEdash for grades 9 and 10. This replaced the prior assessment ACT Aspire. A WISEdash Public Portal dashboard was also created. New Forward statewide assessment and updated cut scores for all statewide assessments. Multiple enhancements were added to WISEdash for Districts and WISEdash Public to accommodate the change in the Forward test and resulting cut scores, including updates to the Student Growth Percentiles metric and logic and Forward/Trends estimates file created to allow users to apply new cut scores to prior years.
- [Public Dynamic Cohorts](#) allows users to view data on almost any dashboard in WISEdash for Districts by those students in the cohort and those who are not in the cohort. Public Dynamic Cohorts are prebuilt by DPI each night. Cohorts added include CTE Participants, CTE Graduates, CTE Concentrators, Parent in Military, Mobile Students, and Immigrant Status.
- [Digital Equity \(now Digital Opportunity\)](#) survey updates were made during the 2023-24 school year. At this time, enhancements were also back to the back end driving the data display in WISEdash for Districts to be able to handle future survey changes more seamlessly. The WISEdash Public Portal dashboard was also updated.
- Summer EBT data exchange – During the Pandemic EBT and first few years of the permanent Summer EBT efforts, the Data Warehouse and Decision Support team

supported the School Nutrition team and the Department of Health Services in providing a portion of the eligibility data for the benefit and also providing a means to verify enrollment for manual applications. This made it more seamless for families to receive the benefit.

WISEdash Public Portal

The WISEdash Public Portal is DPI's one-stop shop for required, certified public reporting. Data is refreshed twice a year, once in the fall when the assessment results are published and once in the spring after the data snapshot. Improvements made during the 2023-25 biennium include:

- PreACT Secure and Forward dashboards and cut scores as mentioned in WISEdash for Districts section.
- Digital Equity (now Digital Opportunity) upgrades as mentioned in the WISEdash for Districts section.
- DPI is embarking on a project to modernize the WISEdash Public Portal. The dashboards have been serving the general public and Wisconsin schools and districts for over 10 years. DPI is ensuring our platform is reliable, forward-looking, accessible, and cost effective as that is vital to the sustainability of WISEdash in the long term.

Open GIS Portal

DPI maintains and adds to its GIS offerings on a regular basis via the Open GIS Portal. Notable additions in the 2023-25 biennium include:

- Federal Funding Maps for [School Districts](#) and [Libraries](#)
 - Federal funding is crucial to supporting the education and well-being of every student in Wisconsin. These resources help provide essential services for students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged families, youth mental health programs, and English language learners. They also support vital initiatives such as access to school meals, career and technical education, academic enrichment, and much more.
 - The map shows local school district US Department of Education (USDE) allocations (FY25), US Department of Agriculture (USDA) expenditures reimbursements (FY24), the total of those funds as a percentage of local revenue caps (FY25), and an estimate of how many educators and professional licensed staff could be funded using the USDE funding (based on average WI statewide total salary and benefits cost for educators and professional licensed staff) (FY 24).
- [ESSA Identified Schools and Home Owners' Loan Corporation \(HOLC\) Maps of Wisconsin Cities](#)
 - This map shows an overlay of the schools identified under ESEA for needing improvement with an overlay of the historical maps of redlining. This is intended to show community inequities that are still having pervasive impacts on our students. The purpose of Title I-A is to close educational achievement gaps and DPI intends to

share with the five biggest LEAs so they may be informed to build support within their resources and connections in their local communities.

- Special Education Educator Induction Program Maps
 - At the request of the Special Education team, two GIS focused apps or dashboards were created to show the cross section between Cohort 1 of the Special Education Induction program and 1) Joint Federal Notifications (ESSA and IDEA Determinations) and 2) percent of students with disabilities enrolled and percent of students who are economically disadvantaged. This will assist the Special Education team in trying to focus their effort on future cohorts.
 - [ESSA/IDEA determination cross panel](#)
 - [Percent of Disabilities / Economic Disadvantaged enrollment](#)

WISEdata

[WISEdata](#) is a multi-vendor, open data collection system that allows school districts, charter schools, and private schools participating in a parental Choice program to submit data to the DPI from the student information system (SIS) vendor of their choice. WISEdata serves as the foundation for multiple DPI systems, enabling accurate and timely collection of student, staff, and program data that inform policy, reporting, and program support across the state.

During the 2023–25 biennium, WISEdata saw significant enhancements to improve efficiency, data quality, and usability for both schools and the Department. Key accomplishments included:

- **Enhanced Data Collections:** The system continued efforts to reduce duplicative data reporting, including updates to the PI-1563 collection. To ensure accuracy and support a smooth transition, LEAs participated in a pilot and completed a dual reporting year, allowing districts to familiarize themselves with the updated processes while verifying the correctness of submitted data. Schools, independent charter schools, and private schools can now update information directly through the School Directory Management Portal, which feeds real-time data to the School Directory Public Portal. This eliminated the need for an annually published school contact book, providing timely, online access for both internal and public stakeholders.
- **Integration and Support for SIS Vendors:** WISEdata now includes vendor-specific help and FAQ guides, linked to individual error or reference codes. This integration allows school staff to access targeted guidance directly from the portal, reducing the need to search multiple resources and helping schools resolve data issues more efficiently.
- **Cybersecurity Enhancements:** In recognition of growing cybersecurity threats, WISEdata implemented a Cyber Alert feature to notify districts of significant threats or other security information. Alerts require acknowledgement, ensuring districts review and act on critical notifications in a timely manner.
- **Student Identity Integration:** The WISEid application continues to assign unique identifiers for students, supporting the accurate tracking of students across systems and ensuring

interoperability across DPI data collections. Integration with SIS vendors has been streamlined, allowing for more seamless updates and verification of student identities.

- **Expanded Functionality and Collaboration:** The WISEdata Collections scrum team partnered with multiple DPI teams—including the Office of Educational Accountability, Instructional Technology Services, Teaching and Learning, Career and Technical Education, and Title I and School Support—to enhance system functionality. Improvements included overlapping enrollment resolution capabilities, allowing the Customer Services team to resolve conflicts when multiple districts submit data for the same student, ensuring data integrity.
- **Support for Indicator and Program Data:** WISEdata facilitated new collections such as Indicator 11 (Timely Initial Evaluations) and continued support for digital equity (Digital Opportunity) survey data, Summer EBT eligibility data exchange, and 2023 Act 20 EarlyRead/aimswebPlus rostering. These integrations provide districts and the DPI with actionable insights for program compliance, student support, and state reporting requirements.
- **Ongoing System Reliability and Upgrades:** In addition to functional improvements, WISEdata benefited from infrastructure upgrades, including Ed-Fi API enhancements, which allow for more robust and standardized data exchanges with local SIS systems, further improving the accuracy and timeliness of statewide data collection efforts.
- **GED Public Search / Digitization:** WISEdata continued to support public access to GED information through digitization efforts and updates to the GED Public Search, improving transparency and accessibility of program data.
- **NAM (Network Authentication Manager)** successfully upgraded to significantly improve system stability, reliability, and performance for user authentication across DPI applications and services.

Overall, these improvements have strengthened WISEdata as a cornerstone of Wisconsin's K–12 data ecosystem, enabling districts to submit high-quality data efficiently, providing the DPI with actionable insights, and supporting better educational outcomes for all students.

WISEExplore

The DPI continued funding and support to advance the capacity of local school district staff to use data and data tools to make continuous improvements in teaching and learning. A key enhancement during the 2023–25 biennium was the ability to share Data Inquiry Journals between users, fostering collaboration and best-practice sharing across districts and within school teams.

WISEExplore works in tandem with WISEdata and WISEdash to provide a comprehensive, integrated data ecosystem for LEAs:

- WISEdata supplies high-quality, validated data from multiple SIS vendors, giving educators confidence that the information they are analyzing is accurate and timely.

- WISEdash for Districts and the WISEdash Public Portal present data in user-friendly dashboards for school improvement planning, early-warning monitoring, and reporting to the public.
- WISEExplore leverages these sources by enabling deeper inquiry, trend analysis, and collaborative reflection via Data Inquiry Journals. This allows school teams to identify patterns, monitor progress toward goals, and make data-informed decisions that improve student outcomes.

The Data Warehouse and Decision Support (DWDS) team partners with the Office of Educational Accountability to provide training, technical assistance, and guidance for using the Data Inquiry Journal. Together, these tools empower LEAs to move from data collection to actionable insights in support of student learning.

WISELearn

WISELearn serves as Wisconsin's centralized repository for instructional resources, supporting educators, school libraries, and students in implementing the state's academic standards. During the 2023–25 biennium, DPI enhanced the platform to improve access, usability, and alignment with current educational priorities. Existing library hubs were expanded, and new subject-specific hubs were introduced, including computer science and interactive educational media, allowing educators and students to quickly locate high-quality, standards-aligned resources. The collection development policy was updated to guide curation decisions and ensure relevance and quality across the repository. Additionally, the WISELearn website was redesigned to improve navigation, search functionality, and overall user experience. New resources addressing digital opportunity were curated, helping educators support student learning in a variety of contexts.

DPI also continued to support District Library Plans, providing guidance, templates, and technical assistance to ensure local library programs are strategically aligned with district goals and statewide standards. These efforts, combined with the WISELearn enhancements, strengthen teaching and learning statewide, making it easier for educators and library staff to discover, share, and implement effective instructional materials and services.

WISEstaff

WISEstaff facilitates the collection of agency staff demographic, assignment, and contract data for all public school staff as of the third Friday in September, capturing assignments for the full regular school year as known at that time. During the 2023–25 biennium, DPI implemented several improvements to enhance data accuracy, usability, and reporting efficiency:

- Improved data validations for assignment positions and areas, increasing the consistency and reliability of collected information.
- Automated system notifications alerting districts when preliminary or final certification is incomplete, helping ensure timely completion of required staff data.
- Person Change History tab added to Change Requests, enabling easier investigation of duplicate WISEids or incorrect staff changes.

- Enhanced DQ Dashboard performance, allowing districts to review and address data quality issues more efficiently.
- Info links for missing Entity IDs were added to assist staff in locating necessary identifiers.
- User interface updates improved navigation and accessibility across the WISEstaff system.

These enhancements support DPI and local districts in managing accurate staff data, streamline reporting processes, and ensure the integrity of statewide staff information.

Library Services Team

During the 2023-2025 biennium, the Library Services Team (LST) - Now Bureau of Libraries focused efforts on bolstering collaboration, seeking stakeholder feedback, and utilizing data to empower libraries across the state to provide better services to their communities. These activities and improvements include:

- Providing Intellectual Freedom support to libraries through workshops, conference presentation, collaborations, and individualized consultations with affected librarians.
- Commissioned studies around Library Worker Compensation and a Public Library System Merger Guide To improve public library system operations and address library worker shortages.
- Routinely met with Library staff during virtual and in-person meetings and library visits to hear library needs directly from the field to better address issues of statewide concern related to libraries.
- Developed a Teen Internship pilot program to match local teens with public libraries during the summer month to build interest in public libraries as a profession and develop a pipeline for Wisconsin teens to become the state's next library workers.
- Provided federal funding to improve the efficiency of physical item delivery service in Wisconsin.
- Planned and hosted a now annual "Foundations of Wisconsin Librarianship" workshop designed to improve library services to youth and bolster collaboration between public and school libraries.
- Distributed state grants to the Wisconsin Adult Literacy Project to address adult literacy needs throughout the state and Recollection WI to preserve Wisconsin's cultural heritage online with unfettered access.
- Revised the Librarian Certification Manual, last updated in 2017, to be a shorter and easier to understand guide for those seeking Wisconsin librarian certification.
- Piloted a data dashboard project in response to a previous data use study. This dashboard served as a model for conversation around data driven decision making to improve library operations statewide.

- Celebrated 10 years of collaboration with Field Day at UW-Madison around Games and Learning and case an ambitious vision for developing a large collection of learning games for learners of all types throughout the state to engage them with better understanding of existing research and complex systems.
- Improved communication between the Bureau of Libraries and the tribal library community within the Wisconsin state borders.
- Updated and released the Public Library Space Needs: Planning Outline, 4th edition to enable library directors and library boards to determine whether their library facilities meet the needs of their communities now and in the future.

Division for Student and School Success

During the 2022-23 year, the Division of School and School Success was reorganized by separating Title I and School Support into Title I and School Support Team and Title I Continuous Improvement Team. This separation has enhanced laser-focus on universal school supports and continuous improvement work of the division. , The DSSS had three teams, namely Office of Educational Accountability (OEA), Title I and School Support (TISS), and Title I Continuous Improvement (TICI), with four priority areas: assessment, accountability, continuous improvement, and universal school supports.

Accountability Reports

OEA updated the Target Group Preview Dashboards annually with new enrollment data to help schools identify their lowest performers and thus who may be most in need of support. School personnel can use this tool to help close within-school “gaps” between these students and the rest of the student body by implementing policies and procedures to help reduce disparities and improve outcomes for all students.

OEA also worked to incorporate statutorily mandated provisions from 2023 Act 12 (crime reporting) and 2023 Act 20 (reading proficiency) into the school and district report cards. In addition, due to an accumulation of changes over time to the report cards including assessments first administered in spring 2024, OEA planned extensively for a report card standard setting to update cut scores for the five rating categories. This involved coordination with a vendor to conduct the standard setting sessions and recruitment of a representative group of more than two dozen Wisconsin education leaders to serve on the report card standard setting panel during the summer of 2025. This panel was tasked to provide recommendations on updated cut scores for school and report card ratings for consideration by the State Superintendent. The first session to establish performance level descriptors for each rating category was held virtually in June 2025 and was open to the public. The in-person session was to be held after the conclusion of the biennium. Approved report card cut scores and 2023 Act 12 and 2023 Act 20 data updates are scheduled to take effect starting with the 2024-25 report cards, to be released in fall 2025.

OEA also led the work to update the statewide long-term goals identified in Wisconsin’s ESSA State Plan, as required by the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The goals include cutting the achievement gap in half for each student group, cutting the 4-year and 7-year

graduation gaps in half, and achieving an 18% increase in students on track to English Language proficiency. The target date for achieving these goals is June 2030. The updated goals were approved by the U.S. Department of Education in spring 2025 and incorporated into Wisconsin's updated ESSA State Plan (May 2025 revision).

OEA conducted extensive training and communications with stakeholders and published many new resources to facilitate understanding of these materials. OEA also collaborated with the WISEdash team to continue to update the e Assessment Analysis Dashboards with the recent data to facilitate continuous improvement efforts in schools and districts.

Assessment

The Forward Exam was updated in 2024 to measure student knowledge of the revised academic standards in ELA (revised in 2020) and mathematics (revised in 2021), and to implement additional planned improvements to the test design. As a consequence, these subject areas were also placed on new scales, and a new standard setting was held with educators from around Wisconsin to recommend cut scores based on the revised standards and new scales for Wisconsin's four performance levels. In coordination with these changes, the terminology for the performance levels was also updated. Wisconsin educators also participated in a standard setting for the ACT, and to enhance vertical alignment the cut scores were statistically reset for the PreACT Secure (grades 9 and 10).

In addition to the standard settings, Wisconsin educators also participated in reviewing new items for field testing on the Forward Exam, and in range finding to guide scoring of the Forward Exam writing items. A new, more family-friendly version of the Forward Exam Individual Student Report was developed, and the reporting timeline was sped up to provide online reports in the vendor portal to districts by the end of May, prior to the end of the regular school year.

The DPI worked with Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), the Forward Exam vendor, to implement a new remote test administration option for the 2025-26 school year. This option will allow students at virtual schools to take the Forward Exam at home, under the supervision of an online proctor from their school, rather than taking the test in-person at a test site. This change is being implemented to support higher test participation for virtual school students and reduce demands on virtual school educators related to test administration.

A newly developed and improved WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs was first administered during the biennium. Alternate ACCESS tests the English language proficiency of English learners with significant cognitive disabilities in grades K-12. Cut scores for the test were determined through a standard-setting facilitated by the WIDA Consortium, of which Wisconsin is a member. The DPI set new criteria for students taking this test to exit English learner status.

During the biennium, OEA staff worked with the Data Warehouse team and selected vendors to promote implementing the national Ed-Fi data interoperability standards for statewide assessments. Implementation of these standards and the associated DPI application programming interface (API) will result in time savings for schools, districts, vendors, and the state, as well as higher quality data.

Professional Learning, Resources and Tools

The DPI continued developing Strategic Assessment Systems (SAS) tools, resources, and professional learning opportunities to improve assessment and data literacy among educators. In 2023, OEA worked with CESA 7 to create the Assessment Professional Learning and Coaching series which served over 100 districts in the biennium. Each CESA offered professional learning sessions around a variety of classroom assessment practices and provided at least five coaching sessions for each participating district. OEA also worked with the Greater Madison Writing Project from UW-Madison and Wisconsin educators to develop instructional resources to support authentic classroom writing opportunities similar to the Wisconsin Forward Exam Short Write prompts. These resources were created as tools educators can use to strengthen student writing and improve student outcomes.

The OEA staff worked with the WISExplore group to provide resources supporting data-informed decision-making for school and district leaders. CESA Data Specialists provided professional learning resources to support data leadership, data literacy, and the inquiry process for educators statewide. Data Specialists lead districts through the WISExplore data inquiry process, which actively engages educators with WISEdash portals and other sources to build capacity for data inquiry. The goal of this work is to help educators to effectively use multiple data points to improve student learning and achievement.

The DPI provided professional development to special education teachers, special education directors, and curriculum directors on using DLM instructional and assessment planning resources for improving teaching and ongoing assessment of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY)

The Title I and School Support Team collaborated with the Wisconsin Child Abuse Prevention Board. TISS provided them approximately \$1 million in American Rescue Plan Act - Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) funding to hire resource navigators to support homeless liaisons in LEAs across the state. The resource navigators provided in-depth level of resources the district's homeless liaisons did not have the time or capacity to deliver; this was identified as the greatest need through feedback sessions with district homeless liaisons at the time.

The team awarded approximately \$1.27M to 40 LEAs who successfully completed a grant competition for either a McKinney Vento Innovation grant or a McKinney-Vento Compliance grant. Projects started on July 1, 2023, with Compliance subgrantees ending their efforts on June 30, 2025, and Innovation subgrantees ending on June 30, 2026.

Elementary & Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Consolidated Monitoring

In 2023-24 DPI did not conduct the comprehensive level of ESEA monitoring so that DPI staff could focus on the following activities.

- Supporting LEAs to close out the 2021-22 and 2022-23 corrective actions.
- Continuing with the Universal and Targeted monitoring as usual.

- Reviewing the monitoring responsibilities of a state agency across all ESEA titles to identify gaps and places where our work overlaps.
- Determining the root causes of the most common monitoring findings.
- Developing a work plan to improve and implement the ESEA consolidated monitoring process for 2024-25. The plan will include steps to improve guidance, tools, and communication about ESEA requirements. Additionally, it will increase understanding and compliance and reduce the burden of monitoring and corrective action for DPI and LEAs.

There was a significant decrease in the number of corrective action items in the final monitoring reports over the past few years, particularly with Title I and Title III requirements (see Table below).

Table 6. Comprehensive ESEA Title I and Title III Monitoring – Corrective Actions

Monitoring Year	2021-22	2022-23	2024-25*
Number of LEAs Monitored	9	10	9
Total Number of Corrective Action Items	108	91	38
Number of LEAs with more than 20 corrective action items	1	1	0
Number of LEAs with 11-20 corrective action items.	4	3	1
Number of LEAs with 6-10 corrective action items.	3	2	0
Number of corrective action items for requirements moved to Targeted or Universal Monitoring	38	14	N/A

* In 2023-24 DPI did not conduct the comprehensive level of ESEA monitoring so that DPI staff could focus on other activities.

There was a significant increase in the level of engagement between the LEAs and their DPI consultants, prior to the initial document submission deadline, and between the visit and when the reports were sent out. There was a notable correlation in 2024-25 between an LEA's level of engagement with DPI staff and the number of corrective action items they had. Those LEAs that were actively engaged in the monitoring process with DPI staff from the start had much greater success with the initial document submission, and if there were findings at the visit, working with their consultants to resolve those findings before they became corrective action items.

The exception was for the Title I Paraprofessional Qualifications Requirement which states that *LEAs shall have all instructional paraprofessionals in schools implementing a Title I schoolwide program (regardless of funding source) and all instructional Title I paraprofessionals funded by Title I in targeted assistance schools be certified by meeting the hiring requirements.* The majority of LEAs still struggle to ensure that all newly hired paraprofessionals meet the ESEA requirements prior to employment, and in order to meet the requirement, LEA may be dictated by scheduled certification dates.

ESEA, Title I, Part C (Migratory Education)

Wisconsin participated in a multi-state consortium focused on identifying and recruiting eligible migratory students. This consortium grant has enabled DPI to both improve and expand recruitment efforts around the state, ensuring eligible students receive the supports and services they need.

Statewide System of Supports for Identified Schools and Districts

The Title I department continues collaborating with the Special Education team and other teams across the agency to articulate and implement an integrated system of supports for schools and districts identified for improvement and support under ESSA and IDEA. Three levels of support have been articulated. The supports function together to support continuous improvement efforts. Universal (level I) supports include existing systems and resources available to all schools. Cross-agency teams collaborating with regional partners to implement levels II and III. Currently, the Title I department, Special Education team, and Division for Academic Excellence are working to reconceptualize our statewide supports for continuous improvement and are engaged in assessing current practices and engaging with stakeholders to inform systems improvement.

COVID-19 Federal Stimulus Funds – Public Schools

The Title I & School Support Team was assigned the responsibility to administer most of the federal funds designed explicitly to address the impact of COVID-19. The Parental Education Options Team was assigned the task of administering the federal funds designed to address the impact of COVID-19 in private schools. The work of disbursing funds under the three federal stimulus funds that began in March 2020 continued through the 2023-25 biennium:

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER I) Grant Program

(CARES Act, March 2020) The ESSER I grant program provided funds to help LEAs with their COVID-19 crisis response. The DPI awarded more than \$158 million in ESSER I funds directly to LEAs through formula-based grants. These funds were all allocated, obligated, and claimed by the federal deadline. This funding was available to LEAs from March 13, 2020 – September 30, 2022.

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER II) Grant Program

(CRRSA Act, December 2020) The ESSER II grant program provided funds to help LEAs to help bring students back into the classroom safely due to COVID-19 pandemic. The DPI awarded more than \$685 million in ESSER II funds directly to LEAs through formula-based grants. These funds have all been allocated and obligated by the federal deadline. This funding was available to LEAs from March 13, 2020 – September 30, 2023.

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) Grant Program

(ARP Act, March 2021) The ESSER III grant program provided funds to help LEAs address learning loss due to COVID-19. It specifically required LEAs to use a minimum of 20% of their funding to address learning loss due to the pandemic, focusing on student groups who were disproportionately impacted. The DPI awarded approximately \$1.54 billion in federal funds to LEAs. LEAs must obligate and claim these funds by the federal deadline of September 30, 2024. This funding was available to LEAs from March 13, 2020 – September 30, 2024.

ESSER III Funds - Additional Projects

In accordance with action taken by the Legislative Joint Committee on Finance (JCF Motion 57) and Wisconsin's approved plan for use of certain ARP funds, a portion of the state's ARP ESSER

funds were approved for reading initiatives. The DPI provided \$3.1 million to LEAs and CESAs for professional development related to:

- Expanding services focused on training in evidence-based practices in literacy instruction.
- Building capacity in CESAs to assist schools in conducting evidence-aligned early literacy audits.
- Provide evidence-aligned training and coaching in explicit, systematic structured literacy.

A provision included in JCF Motion (and approved as part of Wisconsin's plan for use of ARP funds) also provided \$600,000 for a vendor to conduct a landscape analysis of reading instruction in UW system educator preparation programs, along with \$1.3 million for subsequent grants to participating UW systems to act on the findings of the vendor's recommendations.

The UW system has communicated that they will not participate in the complete process the selected vendor uses to evaluate programs. DPI worked to reallocate these funds to LEAs and CESAs in accordance with Wisconsin Motion 57 (Item 8g). The DPI awarded \$5 million to Graduation Alliance to identify and re-engage chronically absent students. This support program was available through June 1, 2024. For more information, please visit:

<https://engagewi.graduationalliance.com/>

ARP authorized DPI to provide \$15.4 million in grants to LEAs and community-based organizations for comprehensive out-of-school time (OST) programs. Comprehensive OST programs will use evidence-based improvement strategies (EBIS) designed to address learning loss and the social, emotional, and academic needs of students most impacted by COVID-19. Program implementation began during the 2021-23 biennium and ended September 30, 2024.

ARP also authorized DPI to provide \$15.4 million for evidence-based summer enrichment programs. Evidence-based summer enrichment programs will use evidence-based improvement strategies (EBIS) designed to address unfinished learning and the social, emotional, and academic needs of students most impacted by COVID-19. These programs occurred in the summer session of 2023 and 2024.

DPI also awarded \$10 million to LEAs specifically dedicated to supporting the identification, enrollment, and school participation of children and youth experiencing homelessness, including through wrap-around services. Program implementation began during the 2021-23 biennium and ended September 30, 2024.

Emergency Assistance for Non-Public Schools (EANS) Program

(CRRSA Act, December 2020; ARP Act, March 2021). The PEO team within the Division for Finance and Management) was assigned responsibility for administering the EANS program authorized under the CRRSA and ARP Acts. This program provided services or assistance to around 450 eligible non-public schools to address educational disruptions caused by COVID-19. The DPI administered \$77.5 million under the CRSSA EANS program (ended September 2023) and \$73.9 million under the ARP EANS program (ended September 2024).

Chapter 3: Information on Specific Areas of Interest

The DPI is required to report on specific areas of interests in education, found in this chapter of the report:

- First, under Wis. Stat. sec. 115.36 (3) (a) 4, the DPI is required to report on program progress and project evaluation for assistance provided to schools for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Programs.
- Second, under Wis. Stat. sec. 118.13 (3) (a)3., the DPI is required to include information on the status of school district compliance with prohibiting pupil discrimination and school district progress toward providing reasonable equality of educational opportunity for all students in Wisconsin.
- Third, under Wis. Stat. sec. 115.74 (4), the State Superintendent must include the most recent assessments of needs and evaluation of American Indian language and culture education programs; the evaluation of resources directed toward meeting the educational needs of American Indian students; and recommendations for legislation in the area of American Indian language and culture education.
- Fourth, under Wis. Stat. sec. 43.07 (5), the State Superintendent must include a report on the condition and progress of library services in Wisconsin and recommendations on how library services may be improved.
- Fifth, under Wis. Stat. sec. 118.33 (5), the DPI must also include information on the status of statewide high school graduation standards.
- Finally, under Wis. Stat. sec. 115.35 (5), the State Superintendent must include information as to the scope and nature of health problems education programs, the degree and nature of cooperation being maintained with other state and local agencies, and recommendations to improve such programs and cooperation.

Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) Programs

The DPI's programs for addressing AODA combine service delivery systems and state grant programs that are made available to LEAs for the development of coordinated school health programs. The role of DPI is to help LEAs develop comprehensive AODA programs by providing access to a wide range of AODA related resources, including grants, training, technical assistance, and information. Maximizing the use of these school-based resources is the most effective way to prevent and/or mitigate AODA problems that youth experience. DPI is advised by the State Superintendent's Advisory Council on AODA Programs, whose role is to help support the grant award process and provide feedback on training and technical assistance.

Grant Administration

DPI monitors and administers activities related to grant applications, grant awards, disbursement of funds, project implementation, and project evaluation of AODA grant programs. The original grant program, referred to as Assistance for AODA Programs, was created under Chapter 331, Laws of 1979, under Wis. Stat. sec. 115.36, to promote the development of comprehensive AODA programs. The special program revenue appropriation for this grant program continues after 44 years and is generated by penalty assessments on court-imposed fines or forfeitures under Wis. Stat. sec. 165.587 (1) (c). In addition to funding grants, a portion of this appropriation provides professional development opportunities for public and private school staff in two required areas: training and teacher fellowships. DPI plans and conducts training events and provides fellowship awards to assist staff in obtaining advanced training and education.

Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools (WISH) Center

This program was established within CESAs to assist the DPI in meeting its requirement to provide training and technical assistance to Wisconsin schools and communities. The WISH Center was established during the 2012-13 school year using the available funds under Wis. Stat. sec. 115.36. (See chart below for administrative expenditures. The training services under this center include online and in-person professional development and include specific content in AODA prevention, mental health, school safety/violence prevention, bullying prevention, and restorative practices.

AODA Prevention Grants

This program provides grants for the development and continuation of comprehensive K-12 prevention and intervention programs designed to address AODA issues among minors.

Student Mini Grants

This program funds projects up to \$1,000 each designed by students that include AODA prevention or early intervention activities. The State Superintendent's AODA Advisory Council assists the DPI in reviewing and recommending grant proposals to be funded.

For information on [AODA resources](https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/aoda), see this webpage <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/aoda>.

The following table summarizes separate grant and program appropriations, including the number of grants awarded under each appropriation.

Table 7. AODA Program and Grant Appropriations

	2023-2024		2024-2025	
Programs	Approp.	Awards	Approp.	Awards
Assistance for AODA Program Youth AODA Program Grants				
Wis. Stat. sec. 115.36 Wis. Stat. sec. 20.255 (2) (kd)	\$1,284,700	\$907,978 58 projects representing 66 school districts, (including consortium grants) \$57,424 representing 58 student mini grants	\$1,284,700	\$907,978 58 projects representing 66 school districts (including consortium grants) \$43,000 representing 43 student mini grants
Wis. Stat. sec. 115.36 Wis. Stat. sec. 20.255 (1) (kd)	\$628,500	\$1,750 (14 fellowships) (Administration, training, and technical assistance)	\$628,500	\$1,750 (14 fellowships) (Administration, training, and technical assistance)
Alcohol/Driver and Traffic Safety Education				
Wis. Stat. sec. 346.655 Wis. Stat. sec. 20.255 (1) (hm)	\$178,607	\$178,607 (administration)	\$178,607	\$178,607 (administration)
Federal Student Support and Academic Enrichment*				
Administration/Technic al Assistance	\$738,935	\$147,787 (administration) \$591,148 (Technical Assistance)	\$799,401	\$159,880 (administration) \$639,521 (Technical Assistance)
Entitlements	\$14,039,770	\$14,039,770 (434 grants)	\$15,188,618	\$15,188,618 (433 grants)

* Title IV, Part A was enacted in 2017-2018 and is known as the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) Grant. Title IV, Part A is a flexible block grant that authorizes activities in three broad areas: well-rounded education; improving school conditions for learning to ensure safe and healthy students, and the effective use of technology to improve academic achievement and digital literacy.

Program staff provide consultation and technical assistance concerning the development, expansion, and evaluation of school-based AODA programs and services. Assistance to LEAs, CESAs, universities, and other local or regional organizations includes presentations, training, workshops, and liaison activities. Specialized resources are developed or adapted to meet identified needs of school staff in areas where appropriate resources do not exist. Staff collaborate with other state and national agencies and organizations in providing these services. Program staff also perform a number of functions related to evaluation and assessment. Baseline data was collected to create a statewide prevalence study of student AODA behavior and attitudes. The results were detailed in the [Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Executive Report](#).

Status of Wisconsin Public School Compliance with Pupil Nondiscrimination Requirements

Wisconsin's pupil nondiscrimination law, Wis. Stat. sec. 118.13, provides that no person may be denied admission to any public school or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreational, or any other program or activity on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability. Under Wis. Stat. sec. 118.13 (3) (a) 3., the State Superintendent is required to report information on the status of school district compliance with this law and the progress toward providing reasonable equality of educational opportunity for all students in the state.

Each school district annually submits a brief report that includes the name and address of the employee designated to receive discrimination complaints and the number of discrimination complaints, both verbal and written, received in the reporting year. Based on these annual reports, the total number of discrimination and/or harassment complaints at the school district level has slightly increased from biennium to biennium.

There were 7,206 complaints reported for the 2022-24 biennium (compared to 4,640 complaints reported for the 2021-23 biennium). Of the specified complaints, the number of complaints based on race continues to be the highest and outnumbers the totals for sexual discrimination or harassment complaints. The complaints overall have almost doubled from the previous biennium report, which is important to note. The state superintendent received ten appeals during this biennial period, a decrease from the fifteen received during the previous biennial period.

Table 8. Number of Discrimination Complaints Received by School Districts

Protected Class / Basis of Complaint	2022-23 School Year*	2023-24 School Year*
Ancestry	24	28
Disability	378	443
Pregnancy, Marital, or Parental Status	18	10
National Origin	85	83
Race	1,320	1,567
Religion/Creed	75	66
Sex	1,166	924
Sexual Orientation	581	441
TOTAL	3,644	3,562

*Complaint data is collected in the following school year. Therefore, 2024-25 school year data is not yet available.

The [Pupil Nondiscrimination Program](#) responds to hundreds of telephone inquiries each year regarding concerns and requests for technical assistance. This program works towards ensuring that all children receive an equal educational opportunity.

The Status of American Indian Education in the State of Wisconsin

American Indian or Alaska Native Students Enrolled in Public School Districts

During the 2023-25 biennium, American Indian or Alaska Native students comprised approximately 1.0 percent of students enrolled in public school in the state of Wisconsin. In 2023-24 the number of American Indian or Alaska Native student enrollment was 8,245, and in 2024-25, the number of American Indian or Alaska Native student enrollment was 7,992.

A significant portion of this population of students, approximately 60 percent for both years, is concentrated in 25 public school districts that represent the largest populations in terms of numbers or percentage of American Indian or Alaska Native students enrolled. In general, these public school districts serve Tribal Nations and communities located on or near reservations and trust lands or near mid-size cities. There is also a substantial population of American Indian or Alaska Native students in Wisconsin’s urban school districts, such as Green Bay Area Public School District and Milwaukee Public Schools. For other school districts, serving small populations of American Indian or Alaska Native students presents challenges. Understanding these challenges as well as determining the impact of various factors on the achievement and progress of these students can be difficult when small numbers of students prevent a clear picture of what is going on, especially due to student privacy concerns.

Student Achievement

The following table represents the percentage of American Indian or Alaska Native students scoring proficient or advanced compared to all students on the Wisconsin state assessment (Forward Exam).

Table 9. 2023-2024 Student Achievement
(Meeting and Advanced)

		2023-2024			
		English/ Language Arts (Forward)		Mathematics (Forward)	
Grade	# AI/AN	AI/AN	All Students*	AI/AN	All Students*
3	542	31.4%	50.9%	31.2%	55.7%
4	549	30.1%	52.1%	27.9%	54.0%
5	576	30.9%	52.6%	27.1%	53.4%
6	573	31.4%	52.7%	27.2%	52.5%
7	602	29.9%	50.1%	27.4%	52.1%
8	599	25.2%	48.4%	24.5%	51.4%
10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

*The “All Students” category includes AI/AN students.

**Table 10. 2024-2025 Student Achievement
(Meeting and Advanced)**

		2024-2025			
		English/ Language Arts (Forward)		Mathematics (Forward)	
Grade	# AI/AN	AI/AN	All Students*	AI/AN	All Students*
3	562	25.8%	51.2%	26.7%	54.2%
4	539	32.1%	51.2%	29.9%	53.1%
5	565	29.6%	50.2%	25.8%	51.8%
6	565	26.5%	52.5%	26.4%	52.0%
7	576	31.3%	54.2%	30.4%	54.2%
8	590	31.4%	52.1%	29.2%	51.4%
10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

*The “All Students” category includes AI/AN students.

Special Education

For 2024-2025, there were 2,094 American Indian or Alaska Native students identified for special education services, which represents approximately 25.6 percent of the American Indian or Alaska Native population, compared to a rate of 15.9 percent for all students statewide. The percentage of American Indian students identified for special education increased slightly when comparing the rates in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years (24.6 percent and 25.6 percent, respectively). Since the special education identification rate for all students statewide remained the same during the same time period, at 15.9 percent, the gap between American Indian students and all students statewide has increased between 2023 and 2025.

For 2023-24 a total of six public school districts were identified as having racial disproportionality of American Indian or Alaska Native students in special education identification, discipline, and/or placement. In the 2024-25 school year, a total of five public school districts were identified. As a result, these school districts were required to review their policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that racial disproportionality was not a result of inappropriate identification. Further, these school districts were required to participate in improvement activities offered through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction - American Indian Studies Program.

High School Graduation and Dropout Rates

In the 2024-2025 academic year, American Indian or Alaska Native students in Wisconsin had a higher dropout rate (3.5 percent) compared to the student population as a whole (1.5 percent). This is an improvement from the previous year, when American Indian or Alaska Native students had a 4.7 percent dropout rate in 2023-2024. Similarly, in the 2024-2025 academic year, the completion rates for American Indian students receiving a high school diploma were lower — 84.1

percent of American Indian students earned a regular high school diploma in four years or less, compared to a 90.1 percent high school completion rate for all students.

Postsecondary Planning and Preparation

For the 2023-24 academic year, postsecondary enrollment by level for American Indian or Alaska Native students is the following: 28.9 percent (50) American Indian or Alaska Native students enrolled in two-year institutions in comparison to 26.8 percent (8,546) of all students. 70.5 percent (122) American Indian or Alaska Native students enrolled in four-year institutions in comparison to 72.9 percent (23,220) of all students. 0.6 percent (1) American Indian or Alaska Native students enrolled in multiple levels in comparison to 0.2 percent (78) of all students. Note, data for 2024-25 was not available at the time of this report.

In 2023-24, 512 American Indian or Alaska Native students participated (73.6%) in the ACT compared to 57,577 of all students participated (88.6%). American Indian students or Alaska Native scored an average composite score of 15.8 compared to 19.3 for all students. Note, data for 2024-25 was not available at the time of this report.

In 2023-24, 111 American Indian or Alaska Native students, or 4.1 percent of those tested, took one or more AP exams as compared to 17.9 percent participation rate (46,704) for all Wisconsin students. In addition, 56.3 percent (99) of American Indian or Alaska Native students scored a 3 or above on AP exams in comparison to over 78.1 percent (57,035) of all students. Note, data for 2024-25 was not available at the time of this report.

American Indian Students Enrolled in Non-Public Schools

The majority of American Indian or Alaska Native students enrolled in non-public schools attend either the Indian Community School or one of three Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) tribal schools located in Wisconsin. The Indian Community School is a private 4K-8 school located in Franklin, Wisconsin. The school had 361 American Indian or Alaska Native students enrolled in 2023-24 and 360 in 2024-25.

The three tribally controlled schools in Wisconsin operate under grants from the BIE, which is a division of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). These three tribal controlled schools served over 900 students each year during the 2023-25 biennium. The Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe School (PK-12), located near Hayward, Wisconsin, served 398 students in 2024-25. The Menominee Tribal School (K-8), located in Neopit, Wisconsin, served 137 students in 2024-25. The Oneida Nation School System (4K-12), located in Oneida, Wisconsin, served 393 students in 2024-25. The enrollment numbers shared above for the three tribally controlled schools in Wisconsin came from the Indian Education Formula Grants student count from the U.S. Department of Education – Office of Indian Education.

Licensed American Indian or Alaska Native Educators

License records show that there are few American Indian or Alaska Native educators working as administrators or licensed staff in Wisconsin public school districts. In the 2023-24 school year, there were 265.91 FTE American Indians or Alaska Native educators working as licensed staff compared to 82,074.13 of all licensed staff in Wisconsin. In the 2024-25 school year, there were

261.81 FTE American Indians or Alaska Native educators working as licensed staff compared to 82,249.25 of all licensed staff in Wisconsin.

American Indian Studies Program – Trainings and Professional Development Opportunities

The DPI's American Indian Studies Program annually provides many trainings and professional development opportunities to school districts', higher education institutions, Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs) and others on the teaching and learning of the histories, cultures, and tribal sovereignty of American Indian Nations of Wisconsin (often referred to as Wisconsin Act 31). These training programs and professional development events provide educators and others with the opportunity to increase their ability to incorporate this information and resources into lesson plans, material selections, pedagogical practices, and existing district curriculum. These training and professional development opportunities are offered both utilizing in-person and online platforms.

Council on Library and Network Development (COLAND)

COLAND advises the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to ensure that all Wisconsin residents have access to library and information services. The 19-member council, appointed by the Governor, functions as a forum through which librarians and members of the public identify, study, and collect public testimony on issues affecting Wisconsin libraries and other information services. Members serve three-year terms. Council findings are communicated as advisory recommendations to the State Superintendent, Governor, and Legislature.

Excerpts below are taken from the [2023-2025 COLAND Biennial Report](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/coland/COLAND_Biennial_Report_2023-2025.pdf):

https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/coland/COLAND_Biennial_Report_2023-2025.pdf

Noteworthy Items from the Biennial Report

- Wisconsin has 381 public libraries providing 467 facilities and bookmobile services that serve 5.94 million state residents, 2.84 million of which currently hold active library cards.
- The Wisconsin Public Library Consortium's Digital Library offers a cooperative collection of about 365,000 copies of e-books, downloadable audiobooks, and streaming video available to public library cardholders. These titles were used almost 9.5 million times in 2024 (compared to 7.6 million times in 2022).
- In 2024, the American Library Association reported a decrease in reported book challenges from 2022, but the number still far exceeds the challenge numbers prior to 2020. ALA identified the underreporting, censorship by exclusions, and legislative restrictions as contributing factors in the decrease of reported challenges.
- Statewide need for strong broadband and digital equity.

Recommendations to the State Superintendent

- Continue to advocate for state aid to libraries at a level that will maintain or increase service to communities and schools.
- Support affordable statewide broadband and digital equity.
- Monitor trends in emerging technologies such as AI and cybersecurity.
- Support adequate staffing of all libraries by maintaining or increasing current staff.
- Encourage youth to consider the field of library science.
- Protect intellectual freedom and the freedom to read.
- Reduce barriers to licensing/certification for librarians, especially those which disproportionately affect underrepresented groups.
- Ensure library facilities and buildings are well maintained, provide sufficient space, and are capable of meeting the needs of their customers.

High School Graduation Requirements

Requirements relating to high school graduation standards are specified under Wis. Stat. sec. 118.33. With some exceptions, the statutes require high school graduates to earn four credits in English, three credits in math, three credits in science, three credits in social studies, and one and one-half credits in physical education in grades 9-12, and a one-half credit in health in grades 7-12. School boards are encouraged to require students to earn an additional 8.5 credits in elective courses. A school board may allow a student who participates in sports or in another organized physical activity, as determined by the school board, to complete an additional 0.5 credits in English, social studies, math, science, or health education in lieu of 0.5 credits in physical education.

Under 2023 WI Act 60 (enacted in December 2023), beginning with students graduating from high school in 2028, one-half credit of personal financial literacy is a credit requirement for high school graduation.

Table 11. 2023-2024 State Law Credit Requirements, District Credit Requirements (Average), and Districts Exceeding Minimum Requirements (Percentage)

Credit Requirements for Required Subjects

Statewide	English	Math	Science	Social Studies	Health Education	Physical Education
State Law - Required Minimum	4	3	3	3	0.5	1.5
Credits Required by Districts - Average	4	3	3	3.1	0.5	1.5
Districts Exceeding Minimum - Percent	3.1%	4.4%	1.5%	15.4%	3.9%	6.2%

Credit Requirements for Additional Subjects

Statewide	Computer Science	Arts	World Languages	Vocational Education	Personal Finance	Misc. Required	Electives
State Law - Encouraged Minimum	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Credits Required by Districts - Average	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	1.5	7.7
Districts Exceeding Minimum - Percent	12.9%	10.8%	1.0%	19.0%	59.4%	27.0%	80.2%

Table 12. 2024-25 State Law Credit Requirements, District Credit Requirements (Average), and Districts Exceeding Minimum Requirements (Percentage)

Credit Requirements for Required Subjects

Statewide	English	Math	Science	Social Studies	Health Education	Physical Education
State Law - Required Minimum	4	3	3	3	0.5	1.5
Credits Required by Districts - Average	4.1	3.1	3	3.1	0.5	1.5
Districts Exceeding Minimum - Percent	3.3%	4.4%	2.1%	16.2%	4.1%	6.7%

Credit Requirements for Additional Subjects

Statewide	Computer Science	Arts	World Languages	Vocational Education	Personal Finance	Misc. Required	Electives
State Law - Encouraged Minimum	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Credits Required by Districts - Average	0.1	0.1	0	0.1	0.3	1.7	7.6
Districts Exceeding Minimum - Percent	13.4%	10.8%	1.0%	18.3%	63.2%	28.8%	81.2%

Health Problems Education Program

Under Wis. Stat. § 115.35, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) administers the Health Problems Education Program. In 2023–25, DPI and a statewide team of educators updated the Wisconsin Health Education Standards, with final approval anticipated in October 2025.

Leveraging the Health Education Cadre and national consultants, DPI curated skills-based resources on health equity, brain health, suicide prevention, and mental health. DPI also led a wide range of efforts to strengthen school health education across topics such as using skills-based instruction in brain health, tobacco prevention and cessation, anti-human trafficking, mental health literacy, human growth and development, nutrition, physical activity, health equity, and violence prevention. DPI staff advanced this work through the following major strategies:

- **Technical Assistance and Consultation:** Staff provided assistance and consultation to school districts, private schools, postsecondary institutions, community-based organizations, state associations, and agencies.
- **Dissemination of Guidelines and Resource Materials:** Staff developed, updated, and/or disseminated a wide range of guidelines and resource materials related to school health education.
- **Staff Development:** Staff improved educator knowledge and skills on curriculum development, classroom instruction, and student assessment through virtual and in person conferences, professional development, and resources.
- **Partnerships with Other Organizations:** Staff provided leadership through coordination and collaboration with a wide variety of organizations. These included Action For Healthy Kids; American Heart Association; American Lung Association, Centers for Disease Prevention, Division of Adolescent and School Health; Children’s Wisconsin; University of Wisconsin (various campuses and departments); Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools Center; Wisconsin Health and Physical Education Association; Wisconsin Physical Activity and Nutrition Coalition; Wisconsin Department of Children and Families; and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (various programs).
- **Program Evaluation and Monitoring:** Staff monitored and evaluated strategies to strengthen health education through a range of activities including the Wisconsin School Health Profile, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, and staff development program evaluations.

[END OF DOCUMENT]