



The WSPA Sentinel

Spring 2024, Volume 23, Number 3

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Annual membership dues are \$70 for full membership, \$40 for leave, \$50 for intern membership, \$55 for associate, and \$30 for student membership, \$10 for retired member.

The opinions and products, including advertising, class/workshop notices, and job announcements, appearing in this newsletter do not necessarily indicate official sanction, promotion, or endorsement on the part of the newsletter or the Wisconsin School Psychologists Association, Inc. Articles, announcements, and letters should be submitted to the Editor, Jennifer Kamke Black, N4212 Town Line Rd., Shawano, WI 54166, 715-524-4180 (home), 715-526-2175 x1106 (work), e-mail: jkamkeblack@shawanoschools.org.

REMINDER: Regional chapters may receive a stipend of \$25/year for submitting an article about their region to the newsletter.

Deadlines for receipt of material by the editor:

#1--November 15 #2--January 15
#3--April 15 #4--August 15

Wisconsin School Psychologists Association Editorial Policy

1. This editorial policy shall apply to all WSPA publications regardless of originating committee, and to all written editorial material distributed as official WSPA activity. This includes (but is not limited to) the newsletter, monographs, conference newsletters, and committee bulletins. Committee reports, minutes of meetings, conference announcements and details, and similar material documenting organizational activities are not included. This policy shall be published annually in the Fall issue of the WSPA newsletter.
2. Articles and reports of factual information may be edited to conform to space limitations, format specification, or to improve clarity, without permission of the original writer as long as the article has not been previously published.
3. Expressions of opinion as in editorials, reviews, and letters may be edited only with the original writer's consent, unless in excess of one page of newsletter text. Writers may request approval of such modification prior to publication. No editorial commentary will be published without citing the source.
4. All original sources will be credited; material used with permission from other sources will identify and credit that source, and note any approved modifications from original.
5. All items submitted to the appropriate editors/chairs for inclusion in a publication are subject to acceptance or rejection at the editor's discretion. Long articles may be returned to the writer for revision or condensing. Every effort will be made to insure the content of any WSPA publication provides a balanced viewpoint and that space is allotted for member response.
6. Material that appears in WSPA publications may not always represent official organization policy. Statements of policy of Executive Board positions will be so identified.
7. Editorial statements and subjective reviews should reflect ethical and professional standards. Comments that might be offensive, personal, or reckless will not be published or will be returned to the writer for appropriate revision.
8. All editorial material distributed by WSPA will be reviewed by the chair of publications or designee to assure adherence to this policy and to provide consultation regarding publication.

**Advertising Rates:**

The newsletter of the Wisconsin School Psychologists Association, Inc., is published four times per year. We are the premier association for the more than 1000 certified school psychologists in the state. Thus, advertisers reach a majority of practicing school psychologists and university trainers in the state of Wisconsin, making advertising in the newsletter of the Wisconsin School Psychologists Association, Inc., the best means of reaching this potential market. Rates established are as follows:

1/4 page - \$25 1/2 page - \$50 3/4 page - \$75 1 page - \$100

For additional information, please write or call Jennifer Kamke Black (editorial board) 715-524-4180 (home), 715-526-2175 x1106 (office), N4212 Town Line Rd., Shawano, WI 54166, or email jkamkeblack@shawanoschools.org.



President's Message The Convention Dance

by Katie Johnson



Being part of the WSPA Convention Committee is like participating in a dance. A little prep work is done, but not much happens until you all come together. Then things move fast and furiously. Ideas flow and get built upon. But very often it's two steps forward, two steps back (if you are of a certain age, you most certainly just sang that last line along with me). We develop ideas and create a plan, and then we all go out in the world and try to make it happen. I say try because not all the ideas come to fruition. Some ideas get changed and modified. Some get thrown out due to schedules or finances. Sometimes new ideas appear, as if out of nowhere. It takes months for a convention to come together and even days before registration goes live we are often not sure we are going to pull it off.



But we always pull it off. And it always turns out sort of magical in the end. We get fantastic presenters who are leaders in their field. We get content tailored right to the needs of school psychologists and school psychology students. We get great locations with fun nightlife. And best of all, we get to be together – to laugh, and share ideas and just spend time with other people who “get it.”

As always, we have a fantastic convention planned for you. We have workshops on AI, Section 504, Dyslexia, and OT and PT services among others on Thursday. But our Friday lineup is going to be really fun. You gave us feedback in fall that you want shorter more practical sessions, and we delivered. We are going to start the day with our “Spotlight Speaker” Peter Isquith speaking on self-regulation, then we will have brunch (and who doesn't love brunch!), and in the afternoon, multiple shorter sessions. We are hoping over time to attract more of you to come speak in shorter sessions – our members want real practical strategies, and they want to hear from their colleagues around the state.

We've also changed the Thursday evening of the convention. We are hosting a happy hour right after the last session. It's a place to come relax, discuss session content, hang out with other school psychologists and make dinner and evening plans. We are excited to try out this new format based upon your feedback and see what you think.

Please come join us at the spring convention and check out all of our changes. We will be at the Hilton Appleton Paper Valley in Appleton, WI on March 7th and 8th.

But before that, we have the WSPA Job Fair. It's the only WI job fair by school psychologists, for school psychologists. This year our job fair is on Friday, February 9th, at the Chula Vista Resort in the Wisconsin Dells. If you are a student looking for a job in Wisconsin (or anyone looking for a job in Wisconsin), this is the place to be. We have 18 districts with many open positions. This is the one stop place to meet employers, learn about open positions, and secure a job early in the process. Come find your dream job here!

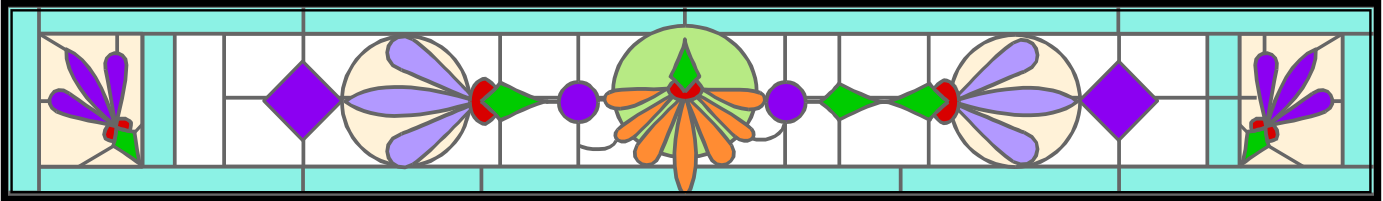
And finally, you know it wouldn't be a message from me if I didn't put a plug in for the WSPA board. We have a few open positions, and we would LOVE to have new members with new ideas. You don't need board experience or even school psych experience – we need early career board members. You just need a passion for this profession. Being on the board has been the absolute best professional development of my career and I have met some of my very best friends on this board (that is the honest truth – they are the best!). Please come join us and work alongside some of the best school psychologists in the state to support kids.

Katie Johnson, EdS, NCSP
WSPA President
WSPAPresident@gmail.com



The WSPA Sentinel would like to feature school psychologists from across Wisconsin. Please contact Jennifer Kamke Black at jkamkeblack@shawanoschools.org if you have suggestions for our next issue.

Upcoming Events



WSPA Employment Fair 2024

February 9, 2024

I need some support only a School Psychologist can Provide!
Chula Vista Resort
Wisconsin Dells

The **only** Employment Fair in Wisconsin devoted exclusively to the field of School Psychology! The fair will bring together employers and candidates/interns to get acquainted through networking and screening interviews. School districts from around the state and region are invited to meet with both experienced school psychologists seeking a new district and school psychology students seeking an internship.

- Check in for districts/employers will be between 9 and 10 am
- Short Orientation for job seekers from 9:30-10 am
- School psychology candidates are invited to circulate among the districts from 10-11:30 am
- At 11:30, job seekers will be allowed to sign up for screening interviews. They will be assigned a random number and sign-up as slots are available.
- Lunch will be available from 11:30 to 12:30 for everyone.
- From 12:30 pm to 3:00, school district representatives will have 15-minute screening interviews to meet individually with candidates.

Opportunities for Job Seekers/Students

- Meet potential employers from around the State
- Interview with several potential employers in a single day

Opportunities for School Districts

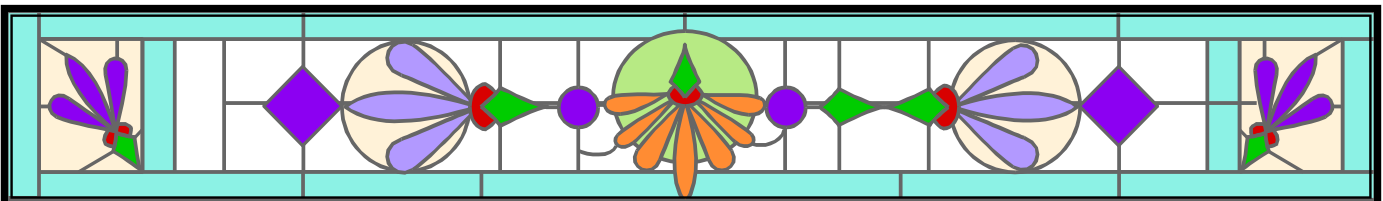
- Find and attract the most qualified candidates from a pool of applicants
- Save time and money in recruiting.
- Districts will be invited to compose a 250-word description of the position to be posted on the WSPA Website to attract candidates.

School District/CESA in Wisconsin	\$250
School District/Cooperative in Region	\$350
Job Seeker/Intern (Early Bird)	\$25
Job Seeker/Intern	\$30



Details & Registration: <https://www.wspaonline.net/>

Questions can be directed to Chris Weins: cweins@basd.k12.wi.us or (262)698-3962



Upcoming Events cont.

PAID
ASSOCIATION/STUDENT
MEMBERS CHECK YOUR
EMAIL FOR YOUR
REGISTRATION
MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS!

REGISTRATION FOR WSPA
SPRING 2024 CONVENTION IS

OPEN



[HTTPS://WWW.WSPAONLINE.NET/EVENT-
DETAILS/WSPA-SPRING-2024-CONVENTION](https://www.wspaonline.net/event-details/wspa-spring-2024-convention)

Introducing our Spotlight Speaker for WSPA's Spring 2024 Convention



Peter K. Isquith, Ph.D.

Improving Lives Through Enhanced
Self-Regulation

Friday, March 8th, 2024 8-11am

Appleton, WI



Watch the WSPA website for more details!

[wspaonline.net](https://www.wspaonline.net)

STARTING IN THE 24/25 SCHOOL YEAR,
WSPA IS LOOKING FOR A NEW

PUBLICATIONS CHAIR

This position is a voting member of the board. Responsibilities include: attending WSPA board meetings, coordinating the quarterly WSPA newsletter The Sentinel, and volunteering to help with any ad hoc committees of the board. Includes a budget to hire a layout person to create the newsletter. Please contact Ashley Long, Association Manager (wspamanager@gmail.com) or Jennifer Kamke Black, current Publications Chair, (jkamkeblack@shawanoschools.org) if you are interested!

ATTENTION!

WSPA's Long Range Planning will take place on Wednesday, June 19th and Thursday, June 20th, 2024. Board members or any member interested in attending meet from 9:00 am until 4:00 PM on June 19th for committee work and other board work followed by an opportunity to build comradery with a meal and campfire. The WSPA Summer 2024 Board Meeting will follow on Thursday, June 20th from 8:00 am to 12:00 PM. All of this occurs at Cedar Valley in West Bend, WI. If you are interested in attending Long Range Planning, please contact WSPA's Association Manager, Ashley at wspamanager@gmail.com. Past attendees find this event to be a great way to connect with other school psychs from across the state both as a WSPA member and a school psychologist. It is also a fun way to discover the behind-the-scenes workings of the board of directors.

Legislative Update

By Jack O'Meara
WSPA Lobbyist

Legislators waiting for new districts: In late December, the Wisconsin Supreme Court issued a ruling that Wisconsin's current legislative districts violate the Wisconsin Constitution. The decision was based primarily on the fact that a number of districts are not contiguous – they are not physically connected. So, come November, barring an unexpected development, there will be elections in new districts for all of Wisconsin's 99 Assembly seats and 16 of our 33 Senate seats.

The Supreme Court decision followed the election last year of Justice Janet Protasiewicz. Almost immediately after Justice Protasiewicz took office in August, a lawsuit was filed challenging the state's current legislative maps. In recent years, the public has become much more aware of "gerrymandering," where one party draws legislative districts to benefit its candidates, and many Wisconsinites are now demanding "fair maps."

The Supreme Court set January 12 as the deadline for lawyers to submit proposed new maps. The court has also hired academic experts to help them determine whether new maps meet required standards. The court is expected to release new maps by late February or early March. It is assumed that these maps will be what is in effect for the November election.

It is possible that some of the Wisconsin Supreme Court's decision could be overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court, but legal experts generally believe it is unlikely that the federal court will negate the state court's decision because the decision relates to the state constitution.

All this adds up to a lot of uncertainty at the State Capitol. Legislators don't know what their own districts will look like and the vast majority of them are up for election in November, with partisan primaries in August.

What does this mean for legislation? Legislators are rushing to pass bills they really want passed, with the assumption being that, once there are new districts, there won't be a lot getting done as legislators look to the elections. Legislators also may be avoiding initiatives that they believe could be harmful to their re-election chances.

School psychologist loan forgiveness bill awaits Assembly vote: There are literally hundreds of bills being debated at the Capitol as legislators await new districts. Of particular concern to WSPA is SB 241/AB 234, which will create a school psychologist loan program administered by the state's Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB).

WSPA requested this legislation. It is modeled after an existing state loan program for teachers.

Both bills have already had public hearings in their respective legislative houses, and both have been approved by committees. SB 241 passed the Senate in November. So that

means we are now waiting for a floor vote in the Assembly. WSPA is continuing to work with the bills' authors to advocate for a final vote.

Other bills we're monitoring: AB 589/SB 535 mirrors a proposal that Governor Evers had in his original 2023-25 state budget, and was initially proposed by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jill Underly. AB 589/SB 535 would expand an existing school mental health aid program so that all pupil service categories, including school psychologists, would be eligible for the funding. Currently, only school social workers are eligible. The bill would also dramatically increase funding for the program, from the current \$12 million per year to \$30 million annually.

Along with the Wisconsin School Social Workers Association (WSSWA), WSPA opposes AB 251/SB 253, which would create a Tier 1 license for marriage and family therapists. The bill is being promoted as a way to get more therapists into the school setting to address mental health needs. WSPA and WSSWA agree that this legislation does not do what is really needed to address mental health in schools, and the license that would be created by the bill would probably infringe on school psychologist and school social worker licenses. The two groups issued a joint statement opposing the bill. Unfortunately, the bill passed the Assembly and is may get a floor vote in the Senate soon.

School Medicaid funding update: As noted in previous newsletters, WSPA is part of the School Medicaid Coalition that is working with the state Department of Health Services (DHS) and legislators to get more Medicaid funding into schools and make it easier to bill Medicaid for services provided in school settings.

Responding to our advocacy, DHS is working to reverse the federal "Free Care Rule" in Wisconsin. This rule limits Medicaid billing to services provided to students with IEPs. The federal government allows states to choose not to follow this rule, but states must request a change in its state Medicaid plan through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

In addition, the coalition has requested legislation that would increase the percentage of Medicaid funding, from 60% to 100%, that goes to school districts and CESAs that do the billing. State law currently limits the payments to 60%, with the state getting 40%. This change would be consistent with a provision that was in Governor Evers' original state budget. We are hoping this legislation will be introduced soon.

Anyone with questions or concerns should feel free to contact me at jack@omearapublicaffairs.com.

NASP News

By Brooke Soupenne
Wisconsin NASP Delegate
naspdelegatewisconsin@gmail.com

We have made it to the third and final exploration of the 3 main goals in NASP's 5 year strategic plan. This one is near and dear to my heart and passion. We don't have enough time to dig deep into all of the social justice issues that may come up across the state. However, I have decided to include various NASP and Wisconsin resources that will help school psychologists all over the state to explore and focus on the needs in their own practice professionally and personally.

NASP's Social Justice focus is as follows: "School psychologists have the self-awareness and critical consciousness to engage in and advocate for socially just practices that protect the right of every student to receive high quality educational access, opportunities, and experiences" (NASP 2022). Social justice has been a hot button topic in the field of school psychology and across the United States. As school psychologists we have an ethical obligation to ensure that we are promoting equitable practices for all students and families that we serve.

NASP has resources abound in the area of social justice to help you navigate personal biases, engage in deeper learning, professional development opportunities, and much more (Check it out here: [NASP Social Justice](#)). As policies and practices are being made within the field of education this is our time to act and advocate for all students and families. Here's the rub, you may not fully understand or agree with the viewpoints or choices of those that you are serving. However, it is a school psychologist's role to help the client explore what is best for them, help them learn to advocate for themselves personally, and advocate for their rights to those who are struggling to understand. I also want to offer

up some great resources that we have here in Wisconsin and within NASP to help you professionally and personally to reflect on how you show up in social justice and culturally responsive practices work.

- [Equity: Wisconsin's Model to Inform Culturally Responsive Practices](#)
- [Self-Assessment Checklist for Personnel Providing Services and Supports to Children and their Families](#)
- [Toward Multiculturalism Competence: A Practical Model for Implementation in the Schools](#)

What's your action step that can begin on Monday to help move toward equity in the field of school psychology in Wisconsin? Tell me all about your amazing ideas [NASP Delegate Wisconsin](#). I will share any steps folks are taking!

Resources:

- Jones, J. M. et. al (2009). *The Psychology of Multiculturalism in the Schools: A Primer for Practice, Training, and Research*. National Association of School Psychology.
- NASP. (n.d.). National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). https://www.nasponline.org/assets/Documents/About%20School%20Psychology/NASP_2022-2027_Strategic_Plan_vision_mission_goals.pdf
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2017). *Equity: Wisconsin's Model to Inform Culturally Responsive Practices*. Wisconsin RTI Center. https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/statesupt/pdf/WI_Model_Inform_CRPs_2019.pdf

Call for Submissions from WSPA's Publications Committee

The Sentinel is looking for articles for upcoming issues. All are more than welcome to submit. Please feel free to contact Jennifer Kamke Black, *The Sentinel* editor, at jkamkeblack@shawanoschools.org with any questions.

For all Sentinel Readers: We have a special request for interesting stories or experiences you have had (and I know any given person has many!) for the new "From the Trenches" column. These stories do not have to be lengthy or relate to any specific issue; rather, we want to publish stories that give us a glimpse of what school psychologists (or other school professionals) experience in our unique profession. For example, you may like to share an interesting case, "a HA!" moments you have had, humorous stories, or other experiences that make you feel fortunate to have a career working with children and families. The door is wide open!

For Members Who are Active with Your Regional Group: We are particularly interested in receiving reports of any meetings, trainings or other activities that have taken place--or will be taking place in the near future--within your respective regions. We hope you decide to share your thoughts and expertise with us and with the members of WSPA by submitting a piece to the newsletter.

The Sentinel Would also Like to Honor School Psychologists that have served Wisconsin children during their career. If you ever receive notice or information regarding interesting updates (or the death) of a school psychologist (or retired psychologist) about whom you feel the Sentinel should include an article, please forward the information to Jennifer. A link to any newspaper article (including obituaries) is very helpful, or an article written by a school psychologist that knew the person would be greatly appreciated.

For Anyone, Especially Students or Faculty: Submissions could include reflections on attendance at regional, state or national conferences, book or article reviews, descriptions of effective interventions either outlined in the literature or observed on student practica or internships, and/or summaries of your research. *We reserve the right to publish the abstract from submitted materials and to then put the full work on the website, if deemed appropriate.*

We look forward to your submissions.

DPI Update: Ensuring Truly Informed Consent

Tim Peerenboom
School Psychology Consultant
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
608-266-1999

timothy.peerenboom@dpi.wi.gov

The word “consent” appears 75 times in the [2020 NASP Principles for Professional Ethics](#). Our ethical standards hold school psychologists to a higher standard than IDEA, the [federal regulations for implementing IDEA](#), and [state special education law](#). In general, our [professional ethics require us to](#) “ensure that parents understand their legal rights; understand what it is they are consenting, or refusing to consent, to; and understand the implications of that decision. In addition, school psychologists are ethically required to ensure that parents are afforded the opportunity to meaningfully participate in important decisions affecting their own child.” This may seem straightforward, but communities, families and schools are complex, and so is the role of the school psychologist. This DPI Update will highlight three common activities in our practice that require consent and provide resources that can assist school psychologists in making legal and ethical decisions around consent.

As response to intervention / Multi Level Systems of Support (MLSS) systems and practices have become the norm in many schools, academic, behavioral and even mental health screening have become more common. School psychologists may also provide interventions or counseling to individuals or small groups of students as part of their school’s MLSS. At this universal level, questions may arise whether “passive consent” or any consent at all is required. To answer these questions and others, school psychologists and school teams can reference DPI’s recently updated “[Consent and Notification in an Equitable Multi-level System of Support: Frequently Asked Questions & Definitions](#)” guidance document.

When it comes to consent for special education evaluation and placement, even more complex questions can arise. What if a child’s parents are divorced or live separately and do not agree with each other? Who provides consent when a student’s parents are incarcerated, or when a student is homeless or living in foster care? In such situations, school psychologists should be deliberate in their decision making, using resources such as NASP’s [Ethical Problem Solving Worksheet](#), consultation with other school psychologists and supervisors, and possibly even the school district’s attorney or legal counsel. Additional resources from DPI that can assist in sorting our challenging consent situations include:

- [Understanding Guardianships, Legal Custody, and Physical Custody for School Professionals in Wisconsin](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions Related to the Definitions, Roles, and Responsibilities of Parents](#)
- [Persons Acting as the Parent of a Child, and Surrogate Parents”](#)
- [Information Update Bulletin 21.01 Special Education Evaluation](#)
- [Information Update Bulletin 10.01 Parent Consent Requirements When Parents Who Share Legal Custody Do Not Agree](#)

One common scenario that I am regularly asked about is when parents are not married and live in separate households and both have educational decision making rights for their child. What happens when these parents do not agree with their child’s special education eligibility or placement? In Wisconsin only one parent’s consent is required to conduct an evaluation and to consent to initial special education placement. But it also only takes one parent to revoke consent. In such a circumstance the student and the rest of the IEP team could possibly end up stuck in a cycle of evaluation -placement-revocation of consent for placement. It is not difficult to recognize the potential harms this could do to the child, and the procedural and paperwork quagmire that this creates for the IEP team.

This example is one of many potential scenarios that can make obtaining parent consent complicated. School psychologists must be prepared to navigate such situations both legally and ethically. The resources linked in this article can assist school psychologists in navigating the procedural requirements. But ultimately being guided by our professional ethics is what allows us to ensure we meet our legal compliance requirements in a way that strengthens partnerships with parents and best meets the needs of our students.

Trainers’ Corner Posters! Posters! Posters!

By Christine Neddenriep, UW-Whitewater
Professional Preparation and Training Representative

At the spring convention, students will have the opportunity to share their research with you! Students and their posters will be available during lunch, allowing for more conversations to occur between students and convention participants.

I strongly encourage you to walk through the poster ses-

sion and talk with students about the research they are doing. There may be prizes for those who do...

As always, I welcome your input and feedback regarding professional preparation and training. Please feel free to contact me at neddenrc@uwv.edu with comments or questions.

Wisconsin Safe & Healthy Schools (WISH) Center News

By Tracy Herlitzke, WISH Center Director, 608-786-4838, therlitzke@cesa4.org

Enhance Your School Team's Capacity with WISH Center Direct Services

As we enter into our planning season for the next academic year, we are excited to share an opportunity that can build the capacity of your school team to create safe and healthy schools. In 2022-2023, we provided **33** in-district trainings to **16** school districts throughout the state. Almost half of the trainings are scheduled during in-service dates in August, and we invite you to plan ahead and request your school's training now.

In-district professional learning services available from the WISH Center:

- [Compassion Resilience](#) Toolkit Review and Planning
- [PREPaRE](#) - School Safety and Crisis Preparedness
- [Restorative Practices for Educators](#)
- [Facilitating Formal Conferencing](#)
- [Sources of Strength](#)
- Coaching for Implementation

Key features of WISH services:

- **Evidence-Based:** Our services are grounded in evidence-based practices, ensuring their effectiveness in real-world educational settings.
- **Experienced Trainers:** Receive guidance from experienced and certified trainers committed to fostering a positive and healthy school environment.
- **Virtual Accessibility:** WISH services are available virtually upon request, providing flexibility to accommodate your team's unique needs.
- **Post-Training Support:** Benefit from ongoing coaching and implementation support to seamlessly integrate newfound knowledge into your school's practices.

How to Request Training:

Due to increasing demand in the number of requests to provide in-district training, the WISH Center has developed a request process to better coordinate in-district trainings. If you're interested in scheduling a training session for your school team between August 1-October 31, please complete the [WISH Center Service Request form](#) by May 1. Schools will be notified by Mid-May regarding the status of their service request.

Explore WISH Center Professional Learning Services:

For more detailed information on our professional learning services, please visit the [WISH Center Professional Learning Services webpage](#) and the [Professional Learning Services](#) for training information and pricing.

In addition to our direct services, the WISH Center partners with the Wisconsin DPI to provide regional trainings statewide on topics related to safe and healthy schools. Please see our [website calendar](#) for these regional and virtual training events.

Get in Touch:

For additional information or to discuss your specific needs, feel free to reach out to your local [Regional Coordinator](#) or any [WISH Center Team Member](#).



Looking Ahead for the WSPA Newsletter

Would you like to become involved in the WSPA Board of Directors? The Publishing Committee chairperson will be retiring from the position after the 2023-2024 school year. If you are interested (particularly if you also know someone that has an interest in graphic design/newsletter layout that could be hired as well!), please contact Jennifer Kamke Black at jkamkeblack@shawanoschools.org for more information!

Equity Issues: Data - It's Not Just About the Numbers

By Milaney Levenson & Kent Smith
CORE Services at CESA 10

This is the third installment of a four part series (adapted from <https://bit.ly/3yZU1C8>) intended for anyone who has wondered why or how to address equity, how to pull the threads of multiple initiatives together, or whose district is required to address issues based on the Joint Federal Notification process: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/preliminary-joint-federal-notifications-loaded-safe>.

Data has always played a key role in the world of education despite uncertainty in how exactly to use it, and lingering questions about which data to use. For many years the most “acceptable” data sources were assessment results, progress monitoring, scaled scores, and percentages. While these data sources are critical, educational leaders must also consider the observations and perceptions of teachers, school staff, students, families, and community members.

One important way to begin this work is to closely examine systemic data. The Center on PBIS has published two documents entitled [Using Discipline Data within SWPBIS to Identify and Address Disproportionality: A Guide for School Teams](#) (McIntosh et al., 2014) and [A 5-point Intervention Approach for Enhancing Equity in School Discipline](#) (McIntosh et al., 2018) that give more in-depth support for addressing equity through data.

Whether using the aforementioned tools or another approach, we recommend beginning this work by gathering data to understand the overall context of the system. Understanding the overall context of the system will require using multiple data sources and should illustrate a story that allows us to understand what is happening with students and illuminates a path to the outcomes we are seeking. As mentioned above, data should be in both quantitative and qualitative form:

Quantitative data:

- Student outcomes such as academic achievement (e.g., grades, standardized test scores, graduation rates)
- Access to school-wide programming (e.g., participation in AP classes, athletic teams, clubs)
- Disciplinary patterns (e.g., ODRs, suspensions, expulsions)
- School climate survey results (e.g., [School Climate Survey Suite](#))

Qualitative data:

- Student, staff, and family perceptions of school climate and culture of the building and its connections to the community
- Feedback from surveys of students, staff, and families about the school behavior support systems (e.g., [Formative Input Surveys](#))
- Information from focus groups or community forums

Ideally, systems should have the ability to easily and efficiently disaggregate both types of data by race/ethnicity, special education status, and, if possible, socio-economic status. When examined together, these data sets can illustrate how well a system is functioning and the degree to which affected parties are connected to, supported by, and invested in the system.

Potential Challenges to Consider

As teams uncover disparate outcomes in their data, it can be difficult for staff to accept ownership and responsibility for those outcomes, especially when considering that most, if not all, school staff show up every day with the best intentions toward their students. This discomfort can lead to a tendency to bring up within-student or family factors that could contribute to disparate outcomes, rather than focusing on those factors over which educators have control. Leadership teams must be prepared to support staff in shifting conversations back to the factors that are under our control as educators, and to systemic inequities that lead to disparate outcomes. Shame and blame generally do not work well in guiding these conversations, so school teams should be prepared to validate the discomfort of colleagues and actively engage them in deeper, truly reflective conversations about the system as a whole.

Stay tuned for part four of this series, and feel free to visit us at <https://core.cesa10.org/> for more information and links to our upcoming events!

Facebook, Twitter (X) and WSPA

Ever read, heard, or saw something that was thought provoking, a gem of information, or humorous for school psychologists? Please feel free to connect and share with colleagues and others on the Wisconsin School Psychologist Association Facebook page or on Twitter (X) (@WSPApsych)! Contributions from many make our association stronger!

Promoting Evidence-based Practices

By Christine Peterson

Spotlight on: Policy Matters!

Website address: <https://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy>

The under-utilized Research and Policy section of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) website is so chock full of resources and information, you are guaranteed to find something useful and/or relevant to your everyday role as a school psychologist.

From the website:

“All children and youth must be ready to learn in order to achieve their best in school and graduate prepared for college or their career. This requires establishing a public education infrastructure that empowers teachers to teach and prioritizes the academic, social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs of students. Additionally, we must make systemic efforts to ensure equitable access and opportunities for all students to thrive. Such efforts necessitate sustained access to comprehensive and robust curricula, high-quality instruction, social-emotional learning, academic and behavioral supports, and mental health services within safe, respectful, supportive, and inclusive learning environments.

Laws and regulations directly impact school psychologists and their role and function within schools - which impacts how we're able to work with kids. NASP offers support or voices opposition based on our official policy platform. Positions in the platform come from our position statements and resolutions that are approved by our Board of Directors and/or the leadership assembly.”

You'll find so much information on their webpage including:

- Professional Positions
- Policy Priorities
- Advocacy Resources
- Podcast Series: Policy Matters
- Ready to Learn, Empowered to Teach (policy framework)

What'cha Reading?

Have you read any great school psych related books recently? Perhaps you're an early adopter of a brand new text or perhaps a new revision of an oldie-but-goodie? Maybe you're exploring some of the high-tech fare that has made its way into our field, such as iPad-based interventions or school psych apps? If so, *The WSPA Sentinel* would love to hear from you. This is a great way to contribute to the state school psych community without making any long-term commitments. Questions, comments, or shares can be directed to the editor, Jennifer Kamke Black, at jkamkeblack@shawanoschools.org.

Mike Lackas Remembered

Mike Lackas died peacefully on December 2, 2023, after an honorable battle with health issues. Mike served as the first Association Manager for the Wisconsin School Psychologists Association (WSPA) from February 2010 to March 2014, per Linda Servais and Betty DeBoer's article in the Summer, 2014 edition of *The Sentinel*. Mike was instantly viewed as an invaluable member based on his numerous contributions to the association. Mike assisted and prepared for Specific Learning Disabilities hearings and kept the association informed of educational legislation that was important to schools and to our profession. Mike represented WSPA at other professional organization conventions and meetings. For example, Mike attended meetings with the Wisconsin Council of Administrators of Special Services (WCASS), State Superintendent Tony Evers, and with others at the Department of Public Instruction. He wrote letters on behalf of WSPA, consulted many hours on the telephone planning meetings and conventions, and he attended all WSPA—conventions, WSPA sponsored workshops, and WSPA meetings. During this time, Mike built relationships with new and old vendors that presented their products at our WSPA conventions.

Mike continued to be WSPA's "right-hand man" through other WSPA presidencies. During Mike's final term with then-President Betty DeBoer, Mike additionally assisted WSPA Board committee chairs in completing their action plans. He also brought WSPA additional income by attracting more vendors and newsletter advertisements. When Mike retired from WSPA in March of 2014, he was honored at the Spring WSPA Convention in Baraboo for his excellent service with a Certificate of Achievement and a lifetime membership to WSPA (see photo below). We were sad to see Mike leave his position, however we understood his need to spend more time with his wife, Mary, as well as his children and grandchildren.

Prior to his term as WSPA Association Manager, Mike earned his Master's Degree in Educational Psychology from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee and began his career as a school psychologist in 1977. Mike also taught Educational Psychology for the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and Psychology of Human Relations for Moraine Park Technical College.

Linda Servais, past president of WSPA and the first WSPA president to work with Mike in his Association Manager role, shared, "I was so happy when Mike applied for the association manager position since he was the person who hired me at CESA 6. We worked well together in both positions. He is a lovely man who cares deeply about children and reminded everyone to always proceed with the child in mind, keeping all decisions child centered and you can't go wrong. Mike always tried to do the best he could while working with our association. Mike also cared about his fellow school psychologists. He kept us well informed about issues that came up in the state legislature, as well as national issues. Mike always went above what was expected of him."

Jennifer Kamke Black, Publications Chair, was also

privileged to work with Mike during his role as WSPA Association Manager. Jennifer says, "He was always responsive to WSPA needs, supportive of the members of the board, and so very positive about WSPA. He was an excellent addition to the board!"

Jennifer was able to contact Mike before his passing and asked for anything he would like included in the article about him. He humbly shared the following: "Mike began his career in School Psychology in 1977, serving in the districts of Coleman/Lena. Two years later he joined the staff of what is now CESA 6. He worked in at least 20 of the 42 districts in CESA 6 serving students and supervising CESA employed School Psychologists, Social Workers and Counselors. Mike left CESA in 2000 and became the Director of Pupil Services for Hartford Joint 1 School District. He retired in 2007 but continued part time work in a number of districts. Eventually that led Mike to become the first Association Manager of WSPA, demonstrating his leadership skills on the WSPA Board. Mike describes this role as the highlight of his career. University of Wisconsin- La Crosse Professor and WSPA Board Member, Rob Dixon, summarized Mike's career nicely by saying, 'Mike made an impact with school psychologists across the entire state.'"

Please visit the [Zacherl Funeral Home](#) website for his obituary.



Mike Lackas is recognized with a Certificate of Appreciation and a lifetime membership from WSPA President Betty DeBoer at the 2014 WSPA Spring Convention in Baraboo.