

## News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Four hearing dates set on rules for identifying children with specific learning disabilities

MADISON — The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction will conduct four hearings across the state to take public testimony on proposed permanent rules related to the identification of children with specific learning disabilities (SLD).

Each hearing will be held from 4 to 7 p.m. Hearing dates and locations are as follows:

- **March 16** - GEF 3 Building, Room 041, 125 South Webster Street, Madison;
- **March 18** - CESA 6 Conference Room, 2300 State Road 44, Oshkosh;
- **April 7** - CESA 10 Conference Room, 725 West Park Avenue, Chippewa Falls; and
- **April 14** - CESA 1, Room A, 19601 Bluemound Road, Brookfield.

The proposed rules modify eligibility criteria used to identify children with specific learning disabilities. According to revised federal regulations, a specific learning disability is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language. The disability may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or perform mathematical calculations. A specific learning disability may include conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, or developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; cognitive disabilities; emotional disturbance; cultural or environmental factors; or economic disadvantage.

The state of Wisconsin is required to update and bring Wisconsin administrative rules into compliance with federal law changes. The revised federal requirements specify that local education agencies not be required to consider a significant discrepancy when evaluating children for a specific learning disability and must permit the use of a process based on a child's response to scientific, researched-based intervention or other alternative research-based procedures in determining whether a child has a specific learning disability. The proposed rules allow a five-

(more)

year transition period in which school districts may use a significant discrepancy formula in identifying children with a specific learning disability. After that five-year period, the significant discrepancy formula may no longer be used.

In addition to bringing Wisconsin into compliance with U.S. Code, modifications to the administrative rules will keep the state eligible to receive more than \$200 million in federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds.

The hearing sites are fully accessible to people with disabilities. A copy of the administrative rules and fiscal estimate are available at <http://dpi.wi.gov/pb/rulespg.html>. Copies of these materials also are available by sending an e-mail request to [lori.slauson@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:lori.slauson@dpi.wi.gov) or by writing to Lori Slauson, budget analyst and administrative rules coordinator, DPI, 125 South Webster Street, P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841. Written comments on the proposed rules may be submitted via U.S. mail or e-mail to the addresses above no later than April 23 and will receive the same consideration as testimony presented at the hearings.

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**NOTE:** This news release is available electronically at [http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2010\\_36.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2010_36.pdf).