

Indicator 8: Family Engagement Survey

Frequently Asked Questions





Indicator 8 Family Engagement Survey - Frequently Asked Questions

General Information

Question 1: Who should we contact at DPI for help?

For general questions about this information, contact the Special Education team through the [online contact form](#) or at (608) 266-1781.

Question 2: How do we know if our LEA (district) is required to conduct a Family Engagement Survey to collect the data for Indicator 8?

For the current school year: A cohort of LEAs (districts) will be required to conduct the Indicator 8 Family Engagement Survey, as well as Indicator 11 (Timely Initial Evaluations) and Indicator 14 (Post School Outcomes survey). Districts selected for conducting the survey in the current year are notified of their participation by mail and the complete list of districts conducting the survey is posted to the [Cyclical Indicator Spreadsheet](#) on the DPI website. [Contact the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#) if you have questions about your participation in the current school year.

Question 3: When is the Family Engagement Survey window?

Mid-January through June 30. If June 30th falls on a weekend, the close date will be the following Monday. Directors of Special Education and Pupil Services will receive instructions by email on how to access the Survey Manager application and download their Student List spreadsheet when the survey window opens.

Question 4: What is the parent engagement survey?

Participating districts invite their families to take the family engagement survey once every five years. The survey is sent to every parent or legal guardian in their district whose child is receiving special education services ages 3 through 17.

Question 5: How do I access the Indicator 8: Family Engagement Survey Manager application?

The Indicator 8: Family Engagement Survey Manager application can only be accessed through Special Education Web Portal through WI DPI's WISEhome Information Page. Click on WISEhome and use your WAMS ID and password to log into the Special Education Web Portal. Within the first table on the Main Menu of the Special Education Web Portal, select the "Setup Survey" or "Collect Responses" link in the "Required Action" column for the "Indicator 8: Family Engagement Survey Manager" application. Both the "Setup Survey" and "Collect Responses" links will bring you into the Family Engagement Survey Manager application.



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Note: This Special Education Web Portal may have permissions for administrators and administrative staff. However, only the Pupil Services or Special Education Director has initial access to the Indicator 8 Survey Manager until they grant access to other users through the Special Education Web Portal. Thus, the Indicator 8: Family Engagement Survey Manager application will not appear for anyone except the Special Education or Pupil Services Director until that person grants access to the application to other users in the district.

Please ensure to add a primary contact and update the student list before activating the survey. Student list cannot be revised after survey activation.

Question 6: Who can access the Indicator 8 Survey Manager?

The Indicator 8 Survey Manager was developed for LEA (district) Pupil Services and Special Education Directors and their designees to use for survey management. The Pupil Services or Special Education Director can grant access to a designee through the Special Education Web Portal. Please ensure to add a primary contact and update the student list before activating the survey. Student list cannot be revised after survey activation.

Who Should Receive the Family Engagement Survey?

Question 7: For LEAs (districts) required to conduct the Family Engagement Survey, what qualifies a student to be on the list for the Indicator 8 Family Engagement Survey?

The spreadsheet of student names used to create mailing lists to parents for the survey is on the date the survey is opened by DPI (typically mid-January to early February of each year). The survey is intended for parents of students with IEPs aged 3 through 17 enrolled in public school to report how well schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. Thus, parentally placed private school students and students who are 18 prior to mid-January (legally adults) are not included in the list of students imported into the Survey Manager application by DPI, and districts are not required to invite the parents or legal guardians to take the survey. If a student was a parentally placed private student after DPI opened the survey but is now enrolled in public school, the LEA has the option to manually add the student to the Student List by entering the student's WISEid (formerly known as the Wisconsin Student Number WSN).



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Question 8: What if we are adding a student and the WISEid won't match?

The application list pulls your student list from WISEdata, which comes from your district's Student Information System (SIS). There could be two factors preventing you from matching your students' WISEids and adding them to the application's student list:

- There could be a SIS error preventing the student's enrollment record from flowing into WISEdata, and later into the application. To check this, try to search for the student in WISEdash for Districts using the "Student Search" tool. If the student is missing from WISEdash for Districts, contact the staff at your district who maintain your SIS or open a [WISE Help Desk ticket](#).
- There could be an error with the Special Education-specific information in your district's SIS that allows the enrollment record to flow to WISEdata, but the application filters the student out of its data pull. For example, if a student's most recent IEP and IEP meeting are not logged in a district's SIS, the student's previous IEP may have expired and WISEdata may no longer consider this student to be receiving Special Education services. In this case, the application would prevent the district from adding this student (who appears to not have an IEP in WISEdata) to the application's student list.
- If you need help understanding your SIS data or have trouble fixing WISEdata errors or warnings, contact the staff at your district who maintain your SIS or open a [WISE Help Desk ticket](#).

Question 9: Can a student be excluded from the spreadsheet by the LEA (district)?

Students can be excluded from the survey prior to survey activation. A reason must be provided. Questions 9 through 13 below provide guidance on situations when a student can and cannot be excluded from the spreadsheet. Most common situations when a student can be excluded include:

- parentally placed private school students,
- students dismissed from special education in previous school year, and
- students who left the district and for whom the LEA does not have a forwarding address.

Question 10: What if a student on the list moved out of the district, was an out of district placement by the IEP team, or graduated?

If the student moved or was placed in an out of district placement by the IEP team during this school year and you have the parent's current address, send the letter.



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If the student graduated or moved out of the district before this school year, do NOT send the letter to the parent. If you review your student list prior to activating the survey, you can exclude the student from the survey (write “graduated” or “moved and no address” as the reason which must be provided).

Question 11: What if the student is a parentally placed private school student?

Parentally placed private school students are not imported into the Family Engagement Survey Manager. If a parent re-enrolls in public school, then the LEA should add the student’s enrollment to their Student Information System and to WISEdata, which updates from the district’s SIS overnight. Once the student’s enrollment is in WISEdata, the district may add that student to the Indicator 8 Survey Manager using WISEId Match and the Survey Manager will generate a Username and Password for each parent.

Reminder: The Survey should be sent to one parent per address or household. If there are two parents at different addresses, both should be invited to take the survey. If both parents respond to the survey, both responses will be recorded; however, only the first response will be used for DPI’s official reporting purposes. The purpose of the survey is to get feedback from parents who receive special education services in public schools.

Question 12: What if the child was dismissed from special education?

If the child was dismissed during this school year (prior to survey window opening date, typically mid-January), send the letter to the parent. If you review your student list prior to activating the survey, you can exclude the student from the survey (write “dismissed previous school year” as the reason which must be provided).

Note: If a student was dismissed from special education but their name is still in the application’s student list, this could be due to outdated information in your district’s Student Information System about the student’s disability status. After you correct this information in your SIS, WISEdata will update the next day with the correct information. At that point you may exclude the student from the application’s student list (prior to activating the survey).

Question 13: If a student was already 18 when the survey window opened (usually mid-January), should we send the letter to the student?

No. The survey is written for parents. These students will not be imported into the Indicator 8 Family Engagement Survey Manager application and cannot be manually added.



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Question 14: What if the student is open enrolled into the LEA (district)?

Students are assigned to LEAs (districts) based on having a current IEP at the time the survey window opens. If an LEA is conducting the survey and a newly open enrolled family asks to take the survey, then the LEA may add that student manually to the student list through the Indicator 8 Survey Manager and the Survey Manager will generate a Username and Password for the student's parent or legal guardian to take the survey..

Question 15: If our list of students includes siblings, should the parent receive a letter for each of them?

Yes. Each letter will include a different student name and a different username/password. Parents may have different experiences and perspectives for different children. LEAs (districts) may enclose multiple letters in one envelope but response rates are based on each student code used (not based on number of families).

Question 16: To which parent should we send the letter if there are two parents who are divorced, both with educational rights?

Send a letter to each parent, unless the school has a court order that specifies otherwise. The application allows a district user to add up to two parental contacts per student and send a letter to each parent separately.

Question 17: Should the letter be sent to a foster parent, who is typically most involved with the child's education on a day-to-day basis?

The letter should be sent to the person who meets the legal definition of "parent" in [Chapter 115.76 \(12\)\(a\)](#).

Generating the Letters

Question 18: How do parents find out about the survey?

Each LEA (district) in the current procedural compliance self-assessment cycle who is responsible for conducting the survey must send a letter to the parent(s) of each student eligible to take the survey that includes the unique username and password for each parent. DPI provides each LEA with information to send the letter through the survey manager system, including the student information, username, and password for the parent.



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Question 19: Can the LEA (district) email parents their username and passwords for the survey?

LEAs may email the parent; however, each parent must use the assigned username/password to be able to take the survey. Thus, the LEA would have to ensure each parent received their own individual username/password to be able to take the Family Engagement Survey. DPI highly recommends that districts use the email or paper letter features within the Survey Manager application to ensure that parents are sent the correct usernames and passwords. If parents request a letter explaining the survey and including their username and password, this should be provided to the parent.

If the district elects to send the survey via email to all parents and an email is not available or the email is returned undeliverable, then the district must send a paper letter to those parents to ensure they are able to take the survey. The Survey Manager application now includes a feature allowing you to generate PDF letters, which you can print and mail.

Question 20: Can the LEA (district) target survey letters to specific parents to ensure they meet their required response rate among demographic groups?

Yes. DPI highly recommends that districts re-send letters to parents who have not yet responded in order to improve response rates. The application includes a feature that allows users to customize letters, select a customized letter, and assign letters to specific groups of parental contacts. This feature includes a “Responses” filter that indicates if parents have not yet responded to the survey (Responses = “No”). Setting the Responses filter to No will narrow down the parent list to just those who have not yet responded, allowing the user to target these parents. In addition, the letter-assignment feature allows the user to filter for the parents of students in specific racial/ethnic groups, the parents of students with specific disabilities, or parents who speak English or Spanish.

Question 21: What should be the Username and Password and/or how do I get the Username and Password for the Parent Letter?

The username and password are generated by DPI and are included in the Indicator 8 Family Engagement Survey Manager application. When the school assigns a letter to their parental contacts within the application, the Username and Password will be automatically filled into each letter from the application database. The Username is a unique code for each parent. The Password is the four-digit LEA number. When the parent goes to the Family Engagement Survey site, they will be prompted to choose a language to take the survey in and is then



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prompted to enter the Username and Password (spaces do not need to be entered for the Username—the spaces are added to make the Username easier to read).

Question 22: If parents have trouble with the survey, who can help?

WSPEI and WI FACETS personnel are familiar with the survey and are prepared to assist parents by reading the questions on the survey to parents, provide understanding of the questions on the survey to parents, and enter parent responses into the survey for them. The LEA is not allowed to enter parent responses into the survey online or write parent answers on paper surveys. In addition, all completed paper surveys must be mailed with a self-addressed envelope to DPI, and not to the LEA. Paper surveys should be mailed to: Attn: Special Education team at: P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI, 53707-4841.

After Parents Receive the Letter

Question 23: What should we do if a parent calls and says they do not want to complete the survey?

If a parent states that they do not want to complete the survey, you can go into the online survey and enter the parent's Username and Password. There is a Welcome screen and then a Consent screen, in which you can check the "No" box next to consent. The survey will then close and the status of the Survey Code will change to "Declined".

Question 24: A parent called because their Username and Password is not working. We tried it and received the message "Invalid username or password."

1. Ensure you have activated the survey for your district. The Required Action column in the Special Education Web Portal should display "Collect Responses" and the Survey Collection Status box on the Indicator 8 Family Engagement Survey Manager home page should be set to "Survey Open."
2. If the survey is active, ask the parent if they would like to complete the survey over the phone with a WSPEI or WI FACETS staff member. Another option is to mail a paper survey to the parent that they fill out and send directly to DPI. If the parent wants to take the survey over the phone and the person entering the survey does not work directly with the student, try the Username and Password.



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3. If none of these options work, call (608) 266-1781 or [contact the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#) and report the problem.

Question 25: Where are the paper surveys for the school to send to the parent upon request?

Paper surveys can be generated individually or in bulk within the Indicator 8 Family Engagement Survey Manager application on the page called “1. Parental Contacts” in the student list. Pupil Services and Special Education Directors have access to the Survey Manager by default and they can designate access to others within the Special Education Web Portal. If you plan to use the bulk printing feature, please know that the system may take up to 10-15 minutes per 100 students to generate the mailing or longer to use this feature. A new feature of the Survey Manager automatically adds the survey username and password onto the bottom of each page of the survey to ensure it is properly entered.

Question 26: Can the LEA (district) read the survey to parents or help them with understanding questions?

Yes, you may read the survey questions to parents and generally explain the questions being asked. However, you may not enter in survey responses for the parents.

Question 27: What are different ways that parents can take the survey?

Parents may complete a survey using one of the methods below:

1. Computer - If a computer is available to parents at a district building (e.g., during parent-teacher conferences, open houses, IEP meetings, etc.), please instruct them to go to the [Special Education Family Engagement Survey page](#) and complete the online survey by **June 30**. They will enter the Username and Password given to them in the letter you have mailed.
2. Phone – Parents may call a WSPEI CESA Family Engagement Coordinator or WI FACETS and they will read and explain the questions to the parent and type their answers into a computer over the phone. To identify your WSPEI CESA Family Engagement Coordinator and find their contact information go to the [WSPEI web page](#). You can contact a WI FACETS staff member at (877) 374-0511.
3. Paper survey – Parents may call their School District before **June 15** and ask for a paper copy to be mailed to them. Paper surveys must be generated and printed by the District through the Indicator 8 Survey Manager application and must be returned directly to WI DPI using a self-addressed stamped envelope. Mail to:



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Special Education Team
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841

Schools may also invite parents to complete the survey in a computer lab at a school, ask parents to complete the survey after IEP meetings, or invite parents to take the survey after other school events (parent nights, report card pickup, etc).

Question 28: Can the LEA (district) enter in paper surveys for the family into the online survey web portal?

Starting in 2019, district staff may NOT enter paper surveys to ensure confidentiality of the student and family. Paper surveys should be mailed to DPI (ATTN: Special Education team, P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841) and LEAs should provide parents with a DPI addressed stamped envelope when giving a paper survey. WSPEI CESA Family Engagement Coordinators may be available to help support data entry for the Family Engagement Survey. To contact a WSPEI coordinator go to [the contact form on their web page](#).

Following Up

Question 29: May we use WI FACETS, WSPEI staff, or contracted help to call parents (disclosing parent names and phone numbers to non-employees)?

Yes, if you draw up a contract that is signed by a district representative and the helper who is not an employee of the district or CESA. The contract should include confidentiality language. WSPEI staff are CESA employees that are able to assist with the Family Engagement Survey.

Question 30: What are some options for improving response rates?

The LEA can access the Indicator 8 Family Engagement Survey Manager and view real-time response rates at any time. LEAs can also navigate to the Student List page of the Family Engagement Survey Manager and filter their student list to only those codes that are Unused. LEAs may send out reminder letters to parents, call parents, or request the help of a [WSPEI Family Engagement Coordinator](#) to contact parents. Someone at the LEA should be assigned to monitor survey response rates to ensure high response rates (minimum of 10 percent and at least 6 respondents, whichever is greater). In order to be counted as a response, more than 50



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percent of the survey questions must be answered (12 questions). LEAs should plan on multiple methods for follow up and include at least three attempts.

Question 31: If we send a letter to both parents who live at separate addresses, and only one completes the survey, must we include the other parent in our follow-up?

No. You have given the opportunity to both parents. Status of the survey on the Student List page will be set to “Submitted”.

Question 32: How does an LEA (district) know if their survey response rate met the required minimum? If the LEA reaches the minimum but would like to keep trying to increase its response rate, would it have access to the information needed to continue?

The US Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs requires that DPI submit the representation of parents surveyed based on race and disability impairment area to ensure equitable responses to the survey. Districts are able to identify in the survey management system if they have equitable representation of responses across race and disability impairment identification and follow up as needed to ensure equitable responses across student demographics in their district.

The Survey Manager allows districts to view real-time access to response rate data. Keep in mind that there will always be extra time involved for DPI to receive and enter paper survey results. Once the LEA activates the survey, there is a Response Summary section added to the bottom of the home page. The Response Rate Met column will be a red x until the minimum number of responses has been received. At that time, the Response Rate Met column will change to a green checkmark. At the end of the survey window, any LEA that did not have at least 10 percent of its sample returned, or 6 surveys, whichever is greater (the number in the Required Responses column of the Response Summary section of the home page), must follow up with the parents who have Usernames and Passwords that were not returned through the end of the survey window. In the Survey Manager, parent Usernames and Passwords that were not returned will be available to LEAs so they can follow up with additional letters, phone calls, or electronic communication.

LEAs are encouraged to continue their follow-up even if they have reached the minimum response rate requirement. LEAs that have no surveys returned in the final weeks of the survey window may be contacted individually by DPI.

Note: We added a “Responses Distribution” button to the “District Home” page. That button opens a pop-up window that shows four columns:



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- A) The number of students total and in each race, ethnic group, and disability category who have IEPs and are pulled into the application.
 - B) The target number of responses based on the 10 percent goal (rounded to the nearest student).
 - C) The parental responses collected so far.
 - D) The response rate (col C/col A).
 - E) “Percent of target” (col C/col B) which will be 100 percent for each category for whom exactly the number of target responses were received in a category.
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Data, Samples, and Reports

Question 33: How is the Required Responses figure that appears in the Family Engagement Survey Manager home page calculated?

The Survey Manager application calculates the number of Required Responses based on the total number of students on the Student List page that haven't been excluded at the time the LEA activates the survey. The Required Responses figure is 10 percent of the Response Rate Sample or 6 respondents, whichever is higher.

Question 34: When will the data from our LEA (district) Family Engagement Survey be reported to the federal Office of Special Education Programs?

DPI submits statewide data on Indicator 8 in the Annual Performance Report by February 1 of the year following the collection of the data. Data collected in one year will be submitted the following year.

Question 35: What data from our LEA (district) will be reported back to the LEA?

DPI provides question by question reports to each LEA who has at least 6 responses to the survey. The question by question reports are available for both preschool and school age surveys. Each report includes the number of parents that responded to the survey for that age group and the percent of parents who agreed with each item on the survey. If there are fewer than 6 responses for either age group, the LEA does not get a detailed report for that age group because parents are promised confidentiality of responses.



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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Starting in 2015-2016, parents can also submit comments at the end of the survey and can choose whether those comments are sent to their Director of Special Education and Pupil Services Director. If you had a parent that chose to share comments, a report of those comments will be available in the Family Engagement Survey Manager after the close of the survey.

Question 36: How and when will LEAs receive their individual reports and how does the public get information about individual district Family Engagement Survey reports?

Reports are made available through the Special Education Web Portal that can be accessed by the district Special Education Director through WI DPI's [WISEhome Information Page](#). Publicly available, i.e. redacted, Indicator 8 reports are available as well through the [Special Education District Profile](#). LEAs will be notified by e-mail that their reports are available through the Special Education Web Portal and when the public profiles are posted. To access public indicator 8 district question by question reports, click on the special education district profiles link, choose the district (LEA), and scroll down to Indicator 8. If you do not see a report listed, you can contact DPI. Some districts may not have reports available if they had fewer than 6 respondents to either a preschool age or school age survey.

Question 37: What if an LEA (district) does not meet the response rate requirement?

LEAs not meeting response rate requirements may be required to conduct the Family Engagement Survey in the following year until they meet the minimum response rate requirements.

Question 38: How is the single percentage calculated for each Special Education District Profile?

ALL questions on both preschool and school age surveys are used to calculate individual LEA and statewide Indicator 8 scores. The LEA and statewide Indicator 8 mean rate of agreement is calculated for each completed survey, which is then summed across all respondent data and then divided by the total number of surveys submitted. All included surveys are weighted equally, and all partially completed surveys are counted so long as more than 50 percent of the survey questions were answered.

Question 39: Why doesn't my October 1 Child Count not match the students loaded on the Student List within the application?

DPI no longer uses October 1 Child Count snapshot to populate the Student List. DPI uses current data as of the date the survey is opened (typically between Jan 15 and Feb 15).