# High Cost Special Education Aid Overview



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FEDERAL FUNDING CONFERENCE
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Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

# Agenda



- Program Summary
- Eligibility
  - o Costs
- Students
- Maximizing Revenue
- Claim Software
- Changes for 2016-17

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# **Program Summary**



### WHAT IS HIGH COST SPECIAL EDUCATION AID?

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# **High Cost Basics**



- Prior year reimbursement
- Actual, additional costs for one student over \$30,000 after Spec Ed/SAP Aid & Medicaid reimbursement deducted
- Fixed pot of money—payments prorated as necessary • 2015-16 Funding: \$3.5 million state + \$2.25 million IDEA
- Paid in June
- Cannot receive w/ Supplemental Special Ed. Aid o dpi.wi.gov/sfs/aid/special-ed/supplemental-special-ad-aids

### **Actual, Additional Costs**



"An actual, additional cost of special education, eligible for High Cost Special Education Aid, is a cost that would not exist but for the need to provide FAPE to one particular student with disabilities, above and beyond the costs of providing FAPE for all the other students with disabilities served by the LEA."

o Program Guidance, p. 1

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# **Questions to Consider**



- Was a position increased or created to serve the student?
- Did you have to create a program specific to their disability when they enrolled?
- Does the IEP specify equipment or services you would not otherwise have available?
- If the student left the district, would the cost go away?

The more firmly you can answer these with "yes," the more likely a cost is eligible.

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### **Actual, Additional Costs?**



Paraprofessional aide working one-on-one with a student	Y
Prorated share of a cross-categorical teacher	N
Vehicle safety harness	?
Placement in private educational program	Y
Work skills placement with job coach	Y
"Specially designed instruction"	N

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# Eligibility



WHICH STUDENTS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR HIGH COST SPECIAL EDUCATION AID? WHAT COSTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

### **Statutory Definition**



Nonadministrative special education and related services costs for a child

- State Special Education & SAP Aid
- Federal IDEA Funding
- Medicaid reimbursement

\$30,000 or more

§115.881 (1), Wis. Stats.

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# \$10,000 Base Toward Eligibility



- Problem: How to allocate shared staff/costs?
  - o Cross-categorical teachers
  - o Speech & language therapy
  - OT & PT
  - o Supplies
- Solution: Give credit toward eligibility for students enrolled in a typical school
  - o First \$10,000 assumed to cover these costs
  - Next \$20,000 covers child-specific services
  - o Not applied to students in special ed-focused schools

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# \$10,000 Base Toward Eligibility



- Represents shared program costs
  - o Cross-categorical teachers & classroom aides
- o Assessments & evaluations
- Audiology & speech/language therapy
- OT & PT
- Professional development
- Pupil services
  - × Guidance, psychologist, school nurse, social work
- o Shared materials & supplies
- o Substitute teachers
- Transition coordinators

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### Exceptions to the \$10,000 Base



- Full-time "special ed school" placement
  - o CESA/CCDEB school (e.g. Syble Hopp, Turning Point)
  - Private school
- o Elmbrook SD Fairview South & SEDA 2r in Milwaukee
- Out-of-state public school
- No base applied but full tuition/cost is eligible, including any services in the \$10,000 base
- Open Enrollment
- o Base transfer rate used (\$6,639 for 2015-16 students)
- No longer in effect for 2016-17 students/ 2017-18 claims

### **Eligible Student-Specific Costs**



- Instructional or transportation aides
- Attendant care
- Hearing or Visual Impairment instruction
- Educational interpreter
- ESY
- Nursing services
- Orientation & mobility training
- Specialized transportation
- Transition services
- Tuition

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# Additional Eligible Student-Specific Costs



- Construction or renovation
- Non-HI/VI instruction
- Equipment
- Materials or supplies
- Technology
- Vehicle modification
- Vehicle purchase/lease in lieu of contracting
- $\bullet \ Other \ student-specific \ costs$

### These require documentation to be submitted

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# **Costs for Multiple Students**



- Cost shared by small group of students with a particular disability or need
  - Examples:
    - **▼** Teacher with specific expertise/certification
    - **x** Attendant care aide
    - ★ Self-contained program ("school within a school")
- Every request reviewed separately
- Approvals specific to that request and LEA

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# **Maximizing Revenue**



HOW DOES HIGH COST SPECIAL EDUCATION AID INTERACT WITH OUR OTHER FUNDING SOURCES?

### Federal Funds and High Cost



- IDEA Flow-Through & Preschool Grants
  - o Cannot receive High Cost SPED Aid on IDEA-funded costs
  - o Can use IDEA to help reach \$30,000 threshold
- Medicaid School-Based Services
- Deducted from eligible costs like state special education categorical aid
- o Includes SBS fee-for-service claims only
- o Does not include MAC or Cost Settlement

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# **State Aids and High Cost**



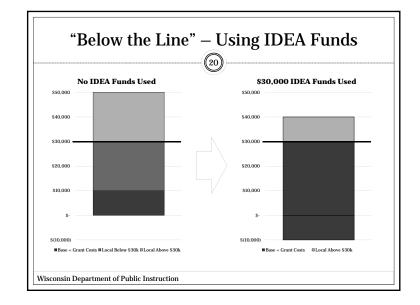
- Estimated Special Education & SAP Aid deducted
  - o 2015-16 claims: 26.38% of aid-eligible costs
    - × Project 011 − eligible directly to you
    - × Project 019 from another LEA − eligible via aid transit
- · No other state school aids deducted
- o General aids
- o Transportation Aid
- o Common School Fund
- o Etc.

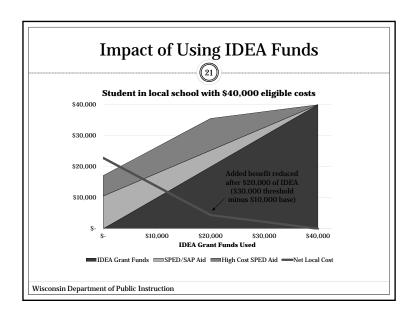
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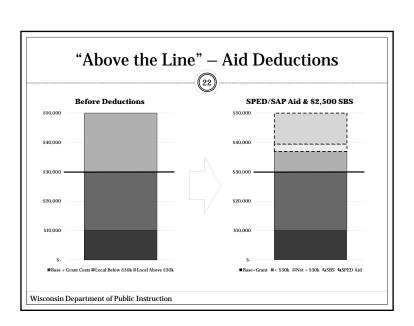
### **How Funding Stacks**

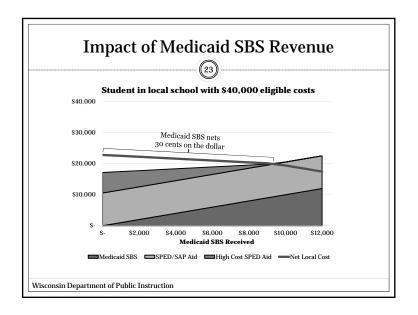


- "Below the Line" Base Cost & Grant Funds
  - o First \$30,000 is base cost (if any) + grant funds
- o Extra grant funds shift costs below the \$30,000 threshold
- "Above the Line" SPED/SAP Aid & Medicaid SBS
  - Special Education/SAP Aid and Medicaid SBS reimbursement offset local costs above the \$30,000 threshold
  - High Cost would only cover 70% (or less) of what you'd receive without those deductions









### **Your Bottom Line**

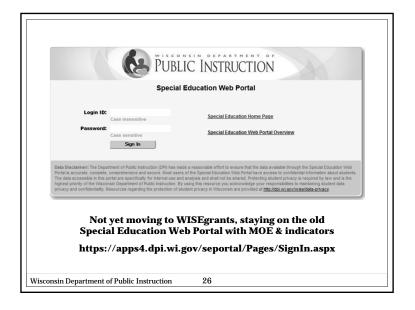


- Using IDEA funds for a High Cost student <u>always</u> decreases your net local costs
  - $\circ$  Most efficient to use \$30,000 minus base cost for in-district students, \$30,000 for placements
- Losing High Cost eligibility due to Medicaid SBS or SPED/SAP Aid does not leave you worse off
- o High Cost "claws back" 70% of SBS revenue
- Identify SPED/SAP Aid eligible costs wherever possible
  - Private placements: Are you billed separately for one-on-one aides or other aid-eligible contracted services?

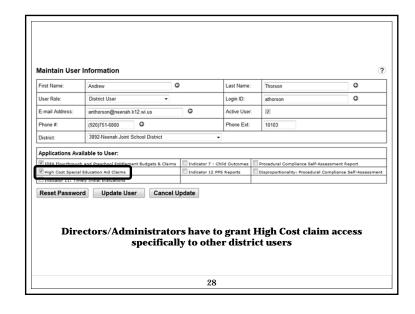
# **Claim Software**



### HOW DO I SUBMIT STUDENTS AND COSTS FOR HIGH COST SPECIAL EDUCATION AID?



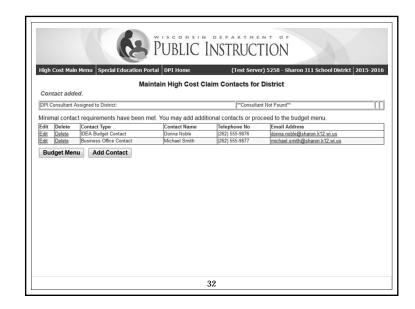


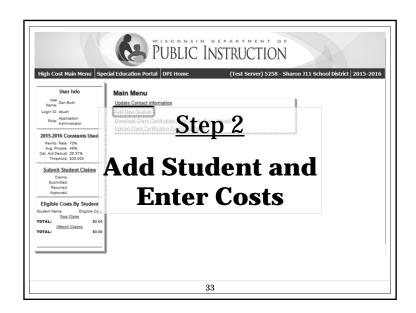


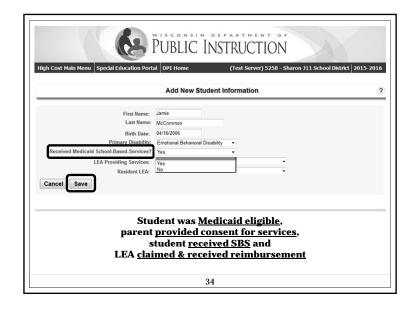


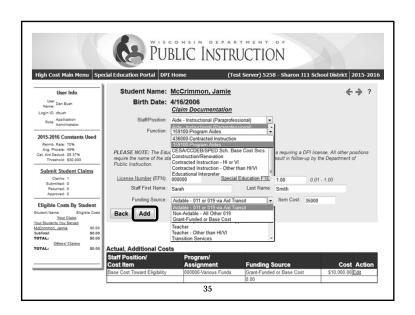
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Maintain High Cost Claim Contacts for District		
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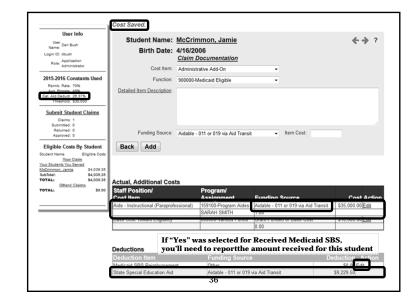
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DPI Consultant Assigned to District:	**Consultant Not Found**
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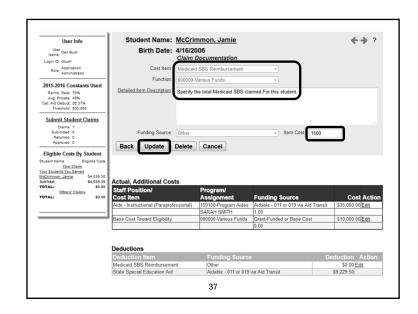


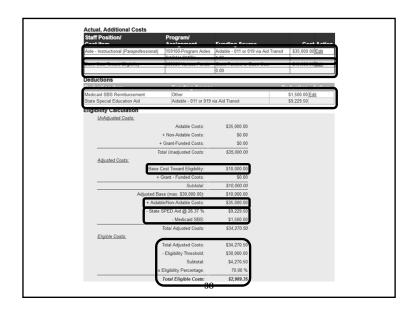


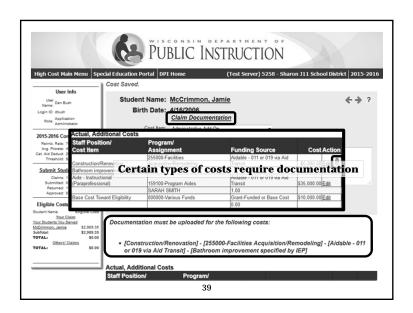


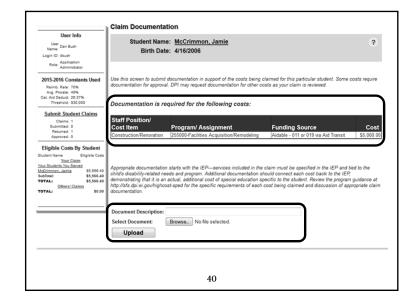


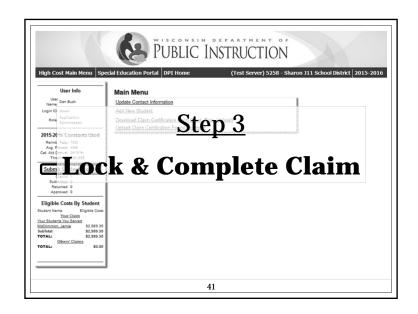


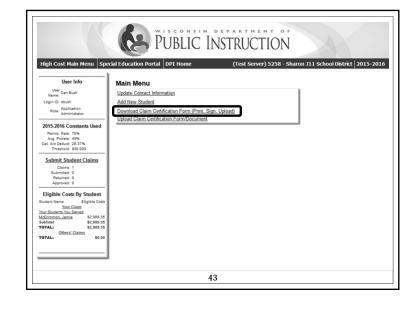


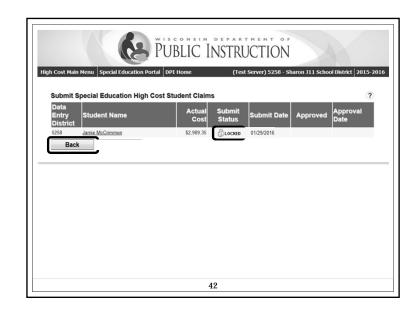


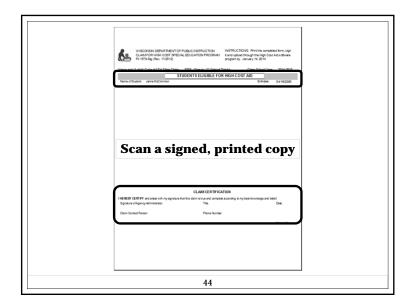


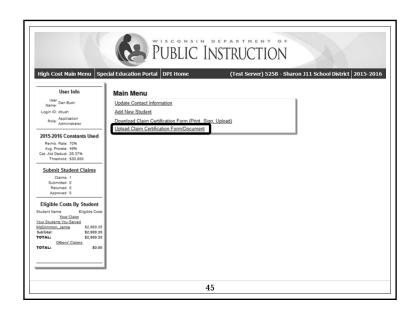


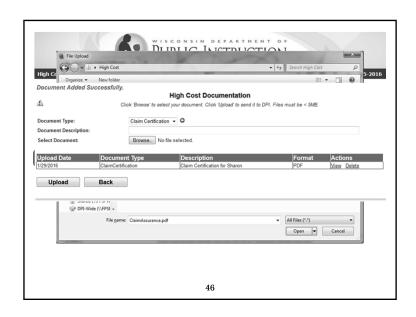




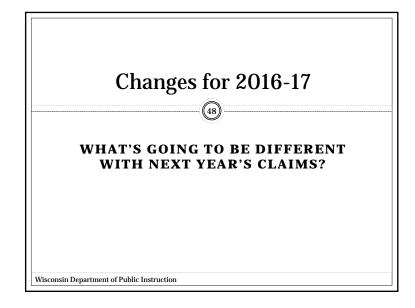








# Next Steps • All claims are reviewed • DPI consultant may follow up because of: • Missing/incomplete information (e.g. no certification form) • Additional documentation • Questioned costs • Claims approved by student • Payments determined in March/April • Aid payments made in June



# Questions?



WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HIGH COST SPECIAL EDUCATION AID?