

**IEP Facilitation
Trend Report
(n=605 for participant data; n=121 for facilitator
data; n= 11 for attorney data)
2004 – 2008**

Summary reports of surveys completed during the period from 2004 – 2008 were used to summarize major trends. Please refer to specific reports for quantitative data.

The number of families choosing to use the Wisconsin Special Education Mediation System for IEP facilitation continues to grow each year. IEP facilitation appears to be an efficient use of time as the average number of IEP facilitation sessions needed was between 1-2 sessions (M=1.63 sessions) lasting approximately 3.35 hours. IEP facilitation appears to be effective as a majority of the cases were able to reach a consensus during the IEP facilitated process.

There is an overwhelming trend that indicates that the participants, facilitators, and attorneys identify that IEP facilitation was helpful. The majority of participants (91.7%) believe that the IEP facilitation process helped the team develop a satisfactory IEP, and they would use the facilitated IEP process again (85.1%). The facilitators (74.4%) and participants (74.4%) believe that the facilitated IEP sessions would lead to improved future IEP meetings. Participants and attorneys also reported that they would use the same facilitator again. All parties involved believe that adequate information was provided to the participants and the process allowed the participants to be a part of the decision making process. This suggests that the process is working for all people involved and that the facilitators are performing their jobs well.

Attorneys are taking an active role (90.9%) at the IEP facilitation meetings versus an advising role. Attorneys for the parents are more likely to attend the meetings than attorneys for the school district. Few families are initiating legal action before attendance at the facilitated IEP meetings. Less than 10% of the cases initiated Mediation, Due Process, Formal IDEA complaint, Class Action Law Suit, or an OCR complaint before the IEP facilitation process. In the majority of cases (86.7%), a developed IEP was the outcome of the facilitated IEP meeting.

Numerous staff and family representatives attend the facilitated IEP sessions. The mother is more likely to attend the meeting than the father. The Special Education Teacher, Regular Education Teacher and

the Special Education Director are the school officials most often in attendance.

There have been varied issues that lead to the need for IEP facilitation. The most common issue that leads to IEP facilitation is communication breakdown (62.8%). Other common concerns include: placement issues, behavior intervention plan issues, IEP issues and accommodation issues.

When consensus could not be reached at a facilitated IEP session, most agree (56.4%) that the other parties were not willing to negotiate. In most cases the participants believed that they were not pressured (24.5%), were respected (85.1%), and that the facilitator was effective (83.2%).

In conclusion, the WSEMS provides adequate training for the facilitator; is a helpful process for the participants, allows for involvement of parties in the decision-making; and attorneys believe they would utilize the facilitated IEP process again. IEP facilitation appears to have decreased the number of post IEP Facilitation litigation decisions and overall all parties are satisfied.