

# Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities: Senate passes education package impacting people with disabilities

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Yesterday the state Senate also passed a package of education bills that will negatively and disproportionately impact students with disabilities.

“Students with disabilities can least afford to be left behind, but advocates and families are worried that is exactly what will happen,” said Swedeen. “The cumulative effect of this legislation means public schools required to educate students with disabilities will have more students experiencing higher needs and less funding to support them.”

Two bills (**AB 967** and **AB 968**) would expand charter schools.

“Parents of students with disabilities do not have the same choices when all charter schools can choose the students they want to educate,” said Swedeen. “Families of children with disabilities tell us that charter schools often do not accept their child for admission. All schools that get state taxpayer dollars should provide the same access to all students.”

**AB 966** would break Milwaukee Public Schools into four separate districts.

“Students with disabilities make up almost 20% of Milwaukee’s student body, and parents can choose which school anywhere in the district best fits their student. What happens to students with disabilities after new district lines are drawn?” said Swedeen.

**AB 963** increases the likelihood students with disabilities will be targeted because of behaviors related to their disability.

“Many children with disabilities act out or exhibit behaviors to communicate,” said Swedeen. “Informing other parents about students with disabilities’ behavior violates the child and families’ rights and may lead to the child being more isolated or labeled as problematic.”

**AB 995** would take away school districts choices about whether to set a mask policy.

“The pandemic has caused extraordinary and ongoing hardship for students with disabilities and their families,” said Swedeen. “Legislation that takes away local control from schools puts families of medically fragile and immune-compromised children in the impossible position of risking their child’s health or foregoing education.”