

**CADRE and JAMS Foundation Present:
Voices from the Field
Interview Clip #2 Transcript – Nissan Bar-Lev**

Marshall: So, Nissan, Wisconsin was identified as one of CADRE's four exemplar states based on the just absolutely superb work that you and your colleagues have done. As you think about Wisconsin and the state system are there aspects of that system that you believe are particularly contribute to its success?

Nissan: Absolutely. I truly believe, Marshall, that the design of the system around three solid dispute resolution principals have contributed a great deal to the system effectiveness - the stakeholders' involvement, the neutrality and parties driven. As you know, very well Marshall, the WSEMS was built from the ground up by seventeen organizations getting together in 1996-97, over the course of six months, and each organization together with the others worked to put together a system that they will feel comfortable having their members buy into it and over the course of six months this became statutes, Wisconsin statute 115.797 that's been signed on December '97 by Tommy Thompson. The second part, the neutrality, is evident in any facet of our system, which is our second dispute resolution principal - the neutrality is very paramount. As you know, WSEMS is led by partners, the mediation partner, the school partner – representing school interest and parent partners – representing the parent interests. In the original selection of mediators, the three partners have to agree that the mediators are neutral and if any one of us had a doubt that mediator was not considered. We had 85 applicants, we chose 23 that both the parents and school felt comfortable their constituents could apply for mediation and receive a very neutral fair hearing from that mediator. Same thing applies almost any other facet of our system. The selection of the inter coordinator, again had to be approved by both the parent and the school representative. Outreach activities, any training material, PowerPoint, brochure, again has to pass the test of neutrality of the parent as well as the school representative. Party driven, it is our strong belief, and again based on dispute resolution solid principal, that a party going to mediation more likely to succeed if they go to mediation with their choice of mediator and that's what our system has been providing parties. So these are the, I believe, the solid principal that contributed to our success.