

**Wisconsin Special Education
Mediation System
Trends
(n=194 for participant data; n=58 for mediator data;
n=8 for attorney data)
2007 - 2008**

Summary reports of surveys completed during the period of 2007 – 2008 were used to summarize major trends. Please refer to specific reports for quantitative data.

Mediation appears to be an efficient use of time as the number of mediation sessions continues to be approximately 1-2 sessions (M=1.76) lasting approximately 4.0 hours. Most cases reached an agreement during the mediation process (93%). Numerous disciplines and family representatives attend the mediation sessions with the mother being the family member who attended in most cases (94.8 %) and the Director of Pupil Services/Special Education for the school (86.2%).

There have been varied concerns that have led to mediation. Most cases involve a number of issues. Communication breakdown was the most common concern (59.6%) followed by IEP issues (45.6%) and a disagreement over placement (38.6%). Other common concerns include: personnel issues (24.6%), denial of FAPE (22.8%), dispute with teacher or aide(22.8%) and discipline issues (21.1%).

Mediation appears to work as some type of agreement continues to be reached in most cases (92%). There is an overwhelming trend that indicates that the participants, mediators and attorneys identify that mediation was helpful. Participants (80.9%) and attorneys (75%) report that they would use the same mediator again. All parties involved believe that adequate information is provided to the participants and allows participants to be a part of the decision making process. This suggests that the process is working for all people involved and that the mediators are performing their jobs well.

In conclusion, the mediation system provides adequate training for the mediator; a helpful process for the participants, allowing for involvement in the decision-making skills; and attorneys believe they would utilize mediation again and are satisfied.