

Medicaid Funding in Schools: Threat to Children with Disabilities

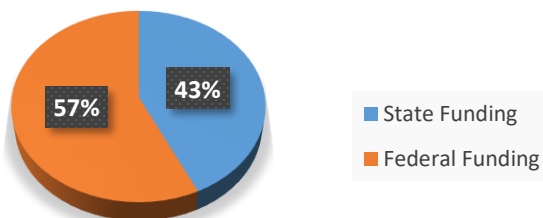


Medicaid in Wisconsin helps provide funding for over 118,000 students receiving special education in our public schools in Wisconsin. Wisconsin law allows the school-based services (SBS) benefit to provide federal funding to Wisconsin schools to help pay for medically related special education and related services. The service package is extensive and touches many students who may access services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act.

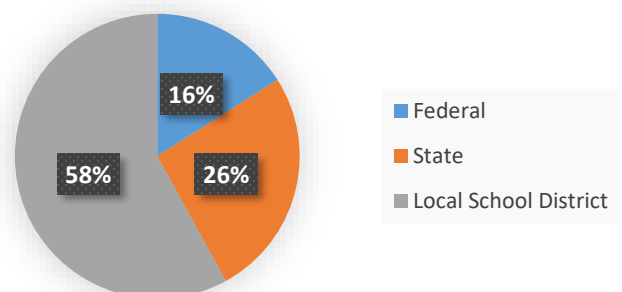
The IDEA and 504 require students to have plans that outline their special education and related services to attend school and receive a free and appropriate education. Currently, federal funding for special education is about 16% of the cost of educating students. The State picks up another 26% and school district provides the rest of the funding. The services are federally required and must be funded. Federal Medicaid funding is providing a substantial portion for Wisconsin students.

Wisconsin spends \$187,671,697 on school based Medicaid services and the Federal government provides \$107,416,062 or 57% of the total cost. With a 25% cut across the board in Medicaid funding, these services are in jeopardy for families in Wisconsin.

Medicaid Funding for School Based Services



Special Education Funding



School Based Services Covered

- Speech and Language Pathology
- Audiology
- Hearing Services.
- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Nursing services
- Services by Teachers
- Psychological Services
- Counseling
- Social Work
- Developmental Testing
- Transportation Systems
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Community Based Therapy

Possible Impacts of the Cuts

- Students will not receive the services they need to make progress.
- Students may be grouped together more often to provide services.
- Districts must shift funding or cut other programs and services.
- The State of Wisconsin will need to provide more funding for schools.
- Children will not be able to receive education in their least restrictive environment.
- Durable medical equipment and technology may not be available to meet student need
- Students may not be college and career ready impacting our future economy.

Cuts to Medicaid could result in staff cuts of up to:

- 188 School Nurses
- 148 School based social workers
- 121 School Counselors and Psychologists
- 143 School based physical therapists
- 150 School based speech language professionals.

Any questions contact: Sally Flaschberger at Disability Rights Wisconsin, Sallyf@drwi.org