

# FOSTER CARE DATA EXCHANGE POLICIES AND PRACTICES: Wisconsin



Students in foster care<sup>1</sup>

**About 4,000**



Graduation rate<sup>2</sup>

**53%** students in foster care

**90%** all students



Academic achievement<sup>3</sup>

Meeting or exceeding academic standard

Students in

foster care

All students

**English/language arts**

**14%**

**41%**

**Mathematics**

**15%**

**42%**

## Data Exchange at a Glance

**Formal agreement<sup>4</sup> established between SEA and CWA:**

Yes, in 2018

**Frequency of data exchange:**

Annually

**Direction of exchange:<sup>5</sup>**

One way from CWA to SEA



**Data categories shared:**

Demographic and welfare service information

## Data Exchange Process

Wisconsin has a data-sharing agreement between the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction as the State educational agency (SEA) and the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families as the child welfare agency (CWA). The data-sharing agreement was created in 2018 to follow the guidance of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

**The data exchange at the State level takes place once per year during July or August, and occurs as follows:**



**The CWA prepares the data.** The CWA prepares a data file containing foster care student information. Elements contained in the data file include student first and last name, date of birth, gender, race, ethnicity, homecare removal dates, discharge dates, and the WISE (Wisconsin Information System for Education) ID, a 10-digit unique identifier for all reported students.



**The CWA shares data with the SEA.** The CWA uploads a data file onto a secure FTP site that the SEA can access. Data is retroactive to the school year, so this file is typically uploaded between July and August each year. The SEA stores matched data in its own confidential database, which organizes the data into tables by specific subjects, such as graduation rate and assessment data.

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## Drivers of Success

Some key facilitators that support the implementation of Wisconsin’s data-sharing agreement include:

1. The main driver for implementing the data-sharing agreement in Wisconsin was compliance with ESSA’s reporting requirements. The current agreement enables the SEA to know which students are in care.
2. Another key facilitator is the ease with which the SEA can collect, clean, and analyze data, which has helped Wisconsin achieve a 90 percent match rate for foster care students in school.
3. Additionally, the SEA’s matching process is not overly burdensome on staff and resources.

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## Future Opportunities

Though Wisconsin’s data-sharing processes are rarely burdensome, the current data exchange is only used to identify students in care. The SEA hopes to expand the agreement to be more comprehensive for more federal and State reporting purposes in the future.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The number of children 6 years old and above in foster care in 2020, calculated by using the number of children in care and the age of the children, available at <https://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/cwodatasite/inCareSeptemberThirty/index>. Wisconsin has confirmed that it does not report a student count for the students in the foster care subgroup.

<sup>2</sup> The percentage of students in foster care who graduated in 2021, available at <https://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/dashboard/22275>.

<sup>3</sup> 2018–2019 school year data for all grades, available at <https://eddataexpress.ed.gov/>.

<sup>4</sup> An MOU or other formal agreement.

<sup>5</sup> Data in the exchange can flow from one agency to another or be bidirectional.

## Additional Information

### Data provided by the CWA to the SEA:

- student first and last name
- date of birth
- gender
- race
- ethnicity
- homecare removal dates
- discharge dates
- WISE ID, a 10-digit unique identifier for all reported students

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** about students in foster care, please visit:

**U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education:**

<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/students-foster-care/>

**Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction:**

<https://dpi.wi.gov/foster-care>



The State snapshot is developed based on publicly available information and information provided by the State.