

ASSOCIATION OF WISCONSIN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

New Building Administrators Conference Series

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LEGAL TIPS TO GUIDE DECISIONS

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Wisconsin school administrators make many decisions every day that have legal implications for themselves, their students, the school board, and the school district. Following, in no particular order, are ten of the most important considerations to assist school administrators in making decisions that are consistent with legal principles.

1. Make certain that there is legal authority for your actions and your recommendations.
2. Always operate within the scope of your employment.
3. Promote policy and procedure development, as well as compliance with same.

Corollary: Have access to, review, and understand all district policies, procedures, and contractual obligations, including insurance coverages/notice provisions.

4. Think through the procedures required to achieve your stated objectives.

Corollary: Investigate before you act.

5. Avoid ethical violations and conflicts of interest.
6. Understand the underpinnings of Wisconsin's commitment to the principles of open government.
7. Do not retaliate.
8. Document your actions and the actions of others.
9. Stay current with developing statutory and constitutional law developments, especially in areas of privacy and free speech.
10. Know when and whom to ask for advice.