

News Release

Education Information Services ■ 125 South Webster Street ■ P.O. Box 7841 ■ Madison, WI 53707-7841 ■ (608) 266-3559

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI-NR 2020-06

Monday, Jan. 27, 2020

Contact: DPI Media Line, (608) 266-3559, media.inquiries@dpi.wi.gov

Open enrollment application period opens Feb. 3

Nearly 63,000 students used open enrollment program last year

MADISON — Parents and guardians will once again have an opportunity to send their children to any public school in Wisconsin through the Public School Open Enrollment program.

The online open enrollment application period for the 2020-21 school year opens Feb. 3, 2020, and runs through April 30, 2020. Application materials and additional information are available [on the Department of Public Instruction's website](#).

Traditionally, children in Wisconsin are assigned to public school districts based on the location of their parents' or guardians' residence. In operation since the 1998-99 school year, open enrollment is a tuition-free opportunity for parents or guardians to apply for their children to attend a public school in a school district other than the one in which they live. During the 2018-19 school year, 62,962 students transferred through open enrollment. Program statistics for the 2019-20 school year will be available in the fall.

Applications must be submitted during the Feb. 3-April 30 application period. Early and late applications will not be accepted. Districts will notify applicants by June 5 on the status of their open enrollment application. There is also an [Alternative Open Enrollment application](#), in which applications may be submitted outside of the three-month open enrollment period, but additional restrictions and criteria apply. [Click here for more information](#) on the Alternative Open Enrollment application. Resident districts cannot deny a student's open enrollment application for cost reasons.

To assist in submitting open enrollment applications, a directory of public school districts [is available on the DPI's website](#). Additional information from local school districts, or from an open enrollment consultant is available toll-free by calling (888) 245-2732, or emailing openenrollment@dpi.wi.gov.

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Transportation to and from a nonresident school, in most circumstances, is the responsibility of the parent or guardian. However, some school districts may provide partial transportation. Those with questions about transportation options should contact the nonresident school district office. Reimbursement of a portion of transportation costs is available for families whose children are eligible for free or reduced price school meals based on federal income guidelines.

The Public School Open

Enrollment program is funded by state general equalization aid transfers between sending and receiving school districts, with the transfer amount calculated on statutory provisions. For the 2019-20 school year, the transfer amount is an estimated \$7,771 per student, or \$12,723 for students with disabilities.

Guidance for Parents and Guardians

- Parents and guardians may complete open enrollment applications online. The online application will be available from midnight Feb. 3 until 4 p.m. on April 30, 2020.
- Parents are limited to no more than three applications to nonresident school districts for each child during the open enrollment application period.
- Applications must be filled out completely and accurately.
- Parents may request enrollment in a specific school or program in the nonresident school district; however, enrollment is subject to space and other limitations and is not guaranteed.
- Most students who attend a nonresident school district under open enrollment in the current school year are not required to reapply for the subsequent school year. However, if the student will be entering middle school, junior high school, or high school in the 2020-21 school year, districts may require re-application. Districts must notify parents of any re-application requirement prior to the start of the application period on Feb. 3.
- Parents may apply for their children to attend 4-year-old kindergarten under open enrollment only if the resident school district also offers a 4-year-old kindergarten program for which the child is eligible.

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NOTE: This news release is available electronically at <https://dpi.wi.gov/news/releases/2020/open-enrollment-application-period-opens-feb-3>