You may apply for **open enrollment** from **February 3-April 30, 2014**

What is Public School Open Enrollment?

Wisconsin's inter-district public school open enrollment program allows parents to apply for their children to attend school districts other than the one in which they live. Applications may be submitted to up to three nonresident school districts.

Who may participate in open enrollment?

Students in 5-year-old kindergarten to grade 12 may apply to participate in open enrollment.

Open enrollment for prekindergarten, 4-year-old kindergarten and early childhood education is limited. Parents should call their resident school districts to find out if their preschool-aged children qualify for open enrollment.

How and when may parents apply?

The open enrollment application period for the 2014-15 school year is from February 3-April 30, 2014. **The application period closes at 4:00 p.m. on April 30, 2014. *Late applications will not be accepted for any reason*.**

Parents may apply in one of two ways:

- On-line (recommended) at http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/sms_psctoc.
- Although on-line application is recommended, paper applications may be obtained from the Department of Public Instruction and must be delivered (hand-delivery is recommended) to the nonresident school district.

Can I apply to a virtual charter school under open enrollment?

A student may only open enroll to an online/virtual school if: (1) the school has been created as a virtual charter school that meets the requirements of the charter school law [Wis. Stats. 118.40 (8)] or (2) the student is required to physically attend school in the nonresident school district every day that school is in session. Other important things to know about applying to virtual charter schools:

- A virtual charter school is not home-schooling. Students attending virtual charter schools are public school students.
- You must know the nonresident school district in which the virtual charter school is located. If you have any questions about this, call the virtual charter school.
- You must know your resident school district in order to apply.
- A list of 2013-14 virtual charter schools may be found at http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/sms_psctoc.

Can an application be rejected?

Yes. Nonresident school districts may deny an application if regular or special education ***space is not available*** for the student, or if the student has been ***referred for a special education evaluation*** but has not yet been evaluated. Nonresident school districts may also deny an application if the student has been ***expelled*** during the current or preceding two years for certain violent conduct, or if the student was ***habitually truant*** from the nonresident school district during any semester in the current or previous school year.

If there are more applications than spaces, students must be selected randomly, after giving preference to students already attending school in the nonresident school district and siblings of currently-attending students.

Some school districts establish waiting lists to fill unused spaces, but others do not.

Can a resident district prevent a student from leaving?

A resident school district may prevent a student from leaving the district if the tuition charge for the student's special education in the nonresident school district is an undue financial burden for the resident school district.

If you have further questions about open enrollment for children with disabilities, contact the resident or nonresident school district or the DPI.

Can parents appeal if an application is denied?

Parents whose applications are denied may appeal to the DPI within 30 days of the denial. State law requires the DPI to uphold the school district's decision unless DPI finds that the decision was arbitrary or unreasonable. The DPI's decision may be appealed to circuit court.

Must students reapply every year?

Once a student is accepted into a nonresident school district, the student may continue to attend that district without reapplication except that:

- The nonresident district may require a student to reapply one time—at the beginning of middle school, junior high or high school.
- Under certain circumstances, a student who needs special education may be required to return to the student's resident school district.

Is there a cost to parents for open enrollment?

There is no tuition cost to parents for participation in open enrollment. Parents of open enrolled students may be charged the same fees as resident students.

Who is responsible for transportation?

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school.

If transportation is required in the individualized education program (IEP) for a child with a disability, it must be provided by the nonresident district.

School districts ***may*** provide transportation to open enrollment students if they wish. Usually, if transportation is provided, parents must transport the student to a location in the nonresident district.

Low-income parents may apply to the DPI for partial reimbursement of their transportation costs.

Can a parent select a specific school in the student's *resident* school district?

The state's open enrollment program applies only to transfers from one school district to another school district. It is up to each individual school board to decide whether or not to allow transfers from one attendance area to another attendance area in the same school district.

Can an open enrolled student participate in sports and other extra –curricular activities in the nonresident school district?

Open enrolled students have the same rights and responsibilities as resident students.

Inter-scholastic athletics are governed by the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association ***(WIAA),*** which has recently adopted new rules concerning transfer students. Parents should check with the school district's athletic director about eligibility.

Important open enrollment dates

February 3 – April 30, 2014 – Parents must submit applications online or directly to the nonresident school district.

June 6, 2014 – Nonresident school districts must mail notices of approval or denial. If the application is approved, the school district must notify the parents of the specific school or program to which the student is assigned. If the application is denied, parents have 30 days to file an appeal.

June 13, 2014 – Resident districts must notify applicants if the application is denied. If the application is denied, parents have 30 days to file an appeal.

June 27, 2014 – Parents of accepted applicants must notify the nonresident district if the student will attend the nonresident district in the 2014-15 school year. If the parent fails to make this notification, the nonresident district may refuse to allow the student to attend the district.

For more information contact:

Public School Open Enrollment Program
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841
Toll-free: 888-245-2732
Email: openenrollment@dpi.wi.gov
Web site: http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/sms_psctoc

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

2014-15

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2014-15 School Year

Full-Time

Inter-District

Open Enrollment

In Wisconsin Public Schools

(Information for Parents)

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Tony Evers, PhD, State Superintendent