

February 20, 2014

Dear Private School Administrator:

As you may know, 2013 Wisconsin Act 20, the 2013-15 biennial budget act, eliminated Part-Time Open Enrollment and, in its place, established a new program for students entitled Course Options. Course Options still provides a means for Wisconsin students to take courses offered by other Wisconsin school districts, but now also includes the opportunity for students to enroll in courses offered by charter schools, various institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations approved by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) at no cost to the student.

An application process has been established for nonprofit organizations interested in serving as Educational Institutions under Course Options. For the 2014-15 school year, non-profit institutions that are eligible to apply for DPI approval are limited to private schools that meet certain criteria. The application materials are available at the Department of Public Instruction Course Options website: <http://courseoptions.dpi.wi.gov/>. The deadline for submitting the application in order to participate during the 2014-15 school year is April 1, 2014.

The process for a student to take a course through Course Options begins with the parent of the student submitting a Course Options Application form (PI-8900) to the educational institution the pupil wishes to attend no later than 6 weeks prior to the date on which the course is scheduled to commence. The educational institution must send a copy of the application to the pupil's resident school board and, no later than one week prior to the date on which the course is scheduled to commence, the educational institution must notify the applicant and the resident school board whether the application has been accepted or rejected.

The Course Options statute requires a resident school board to reject a student's application to participate in Course Options if the course conflicts with a student's individualized education program and allows the school board to reject an application if:

- The course does not satisfy a high school graduation requirement; or
- The course does not conform to or support a student's academic and career plan, if one exists.

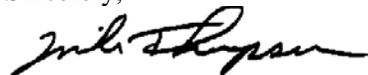
The Course Options statute also allows an educational institution to deny a Course Options application for the following reasons:

- Space is not available in the course;
- The student does not meet the educational institution's criteria for being admitted to the course; or
- The student is not enrolled in a Wisconsin public school district.

Further, the Course Options statute requires that these courses be made available to public school students at no cost to the student. The resident school board is required to pay the educational institution an amount equal to the cost of providing the course to the pupil, calculated in a manner determined by DPI. This cost for nonprofit organizations has been established as the cost of the course or 1/7 of full-time open enrollment amount per credit taken, whichever is less (50% of 1/7 amount for one-half credit course). For the 2014-15 school year, the 1/7 amount is estimated to be \$948.

For additional information please contact Kevin Miller, dual enrollment education consultant, at [kevin.miller@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:kevin.miller@dpi.wi.gov) or (608) 267-3161.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Thompson, PhD  
Deputy State Superintendent

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