What is Public School Open Enrollment?
Wisconsin’s public school open enrollment program allows parents to apply for their children to attend a school district other than the one in which they live. Applications may be submitted to up to three nonresident school districts if the pupil wishes to attend a brick and mortar school. There are no limitations to the number of open enrollment applications that can be submitted to a virtual charter school.

Who may participate in open enrollment?
Pupils in kindergarten to grade 12 may apply to participate in open enrollment.

Open enrollment for prekindergarten, four-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.

Can I apply to a virtual charter school under open enrollment?
A pupil 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 pupil is required to physically attend school on a regular basis in a school located in the nonresident school district on the days that school is in session. Other important things to know about applying to virtual charter schools:

- A virtual charter school is not homeschooling. Pupils attending virtual charter schools are public school pupils.
- You must know the nonresident school district in which the virtual charter school is located.
- You must know your resident school district to apply.
- A list of virtual charter schools may be found at https://dpi.wi.gov/parental-education-options/charter-schools/virtual-charter-schools.

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 pupils reapply every year?
Once a pupil is accepted into a nonresident school district, the pupil may continue to attend that district without reapplication except that:

- The nonresident district may require a pupil to reapply one time—at the beginning of middle school, junior high or high school.
- A pupil may be returned to the resident school district if the special education required in a new or revised IEP is not available in the nonresident district or there is no space.
- A pupil who has become habitually truant in the nonresident district may be returned to the resident district.

(continued on next page)
Is there a cost for parents to participate in the open enrollment program?
There is no tuition cost to parents for participation in open enrollment. Parents of open enrolled pupils may be charged the same fees as resident pupils.

Who is responsible for transportation?
Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school.
If transportation is required in the IEP for a child with a disability, it must be provided by the nonresident district.
School districts may provide transportation to open enrollment pupils if they wish. Usually, if transportation is provided, parents must transport the pupil to a location in the nonresident district.
Low-income parents may apply to the DPI at the end of the school year for partial reimbursement of their transportation costs.

Can a parent select a specific school in the pupil’s nonresident school district?
Yes. A parent may request a specific school or program in the nonresident district. However, assignment to the requested school or program is not guaranteed and your pupil may be assigned to a different school other than the one requested. It is up to each nonresident district to determine a pupil’s school assignment.

Can an open enrolled pupil participate in sports and other extra-curricular activities in the nonresident school district?
Open enrolled pupils have the same rights and responsibilities as resident pupils.
Inter-scholastic athletics are governed by the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA), which has rules concerning transfer pupils. Parents should check with the school district’s athletic director about eligibility.

IMPORTANT OPEN ENROLLMENT DATES

February 7 – April 29, 2022
Parents must submit applications online or directly to the nonresident school district.

June 10, 2022
Nonresident school districts must send notices of approval or denial via US mail or email. If the application is approved, the school district must notify the parents of the specific school or program to which the pupil is assigned. If the application is denied, parents have 30 days to file an appeal.

June 17, 2022
Resident districts must notify applicants if the application is denied. If the application is denied, parents have 30 days to file an appeal.

June 24, 2022
Parents of accepted applicants must notify the nonresident district if the pupil will attend the nonresident district in the 2022-23 school year. If the parent fails to make this notification, the nonresident district may refuse to allow the pupil 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, option 2
openenrollment@dpi.wi.gov
https://dpi.wi.gov/oe

2022-23
The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, creed, age, national origin, ancestry, pregnancy, marital status or parental status, sexual orientation, or disability and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups.