



# WISCONSIN CHARTER SCHOOLS INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

March 2021 v.1.1

## Summer School for Independent Charter Schools

Independent Charter Schools (ICS) have the option to offer additional summer school academic classes that are related or similar to instruction offered during the regular academic school year. Such instruction must be taught by appropriately licensed teachers, open to all, and no tuition may be charged. Summer school academic classes are voluntary, and schools are prohibited from requiring student participation. Eligible summer school course attendance is claimed September 15 for payment purposes. Independent Charter Schools may be eligible to receive state aid payments for providing allowable summer school instruction to eligible students. To receive state aid for summer school instruction an eligible school must meet all program requirements. The information below is intended to assist ICS in understanding the state law related to summer school.

*Please do not hesitate to contact Alexander Burke Roberson with any questions at 608.266.0452 or at [alexander.roberson@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:alexander.roberson@dpi.wi.gov).*

### Allowable Summer School Instruction

Allowable summer school instruction is defined as summer school academic courses that are related or similar to instruction that is offered during the regular school term for which credit is given toward graduation. The connection between the instructional objectives of a summer school class and the school's regular school year curriculum should be clear. These academic courses must be taught by appropriately licensed teachers, open to all students, and tuition-free.

The ICS's governance board is responsible for approving instructional objectives, course content, and resources for summer school courses. Independent charter schools are required to adhere to statutes, rules, and guidelines for summer school classes. Board action and policy should be taken and developed accordingly.

Summer school instruction *may* include any of the following:

- a) music programs, lessons, sections or clinics, if taught by an appropriately DPI licensed teacher;
- b) swimming instruction programs, if taught or directed by an appropriately DPI licensed teacher at the site of the instruction; and
- c) field trips if accompanied by an appropriately DPI licensed teacher and if all students have equal access to field trips regardless of their ability to pay.

An ICS may contract for services, including the delivery of instruction for summer school courses. Contracting does not relieve the ICS of responsibility for adhering to statutes, rules, and guidelines for their course offerings. Such responsibilities include establishing instructional objectives, course content, paying for the cost of instruction, and ensuring all teachers are appropriately licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction(DPI).

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The direct instructional portion of a work-study experience offered by the ICS may be considered an academic purpose. Only time spent providing direct instruction or time spent on the job site with an appropriately DPI-licensed teacher may be counted towards eligible summer school instructional minutes.

Summer school classes must start after the end of the previous school term and must end before the start of the new school term.

Independent charter school classes may not include classes that are funded by Federal Title programs.

### **Tuition and Fees**

No tuition may be charged for summer school academic courses provided to students as part of the summer school program.

Students may be charged fees for items that have an individual benefit such as supplies, materials, and personal items. Fees may be no more than the school's actual cost of the item. Schools offering a course in cooperation or through an agreement with another entity must ensure that the cooperating entity does not charge a fee for course enrollment.

Schools are required to provide for indigent students.

An ICS offering summer school classes *may not* charge for any of the following:

- a) Instruction, registration, or tuition
- b) Books for indigent children
- c) Teacher salary
- d) Buildings, maintenance, or equipment
- e) Courses credited for graduation
- f) Computers or microfilm readers
- g) Transportation, food or lodging for off-campus activities and field trips
- h) Organization membership, participation and facility access

If DPI determines an ICS charged an inappropriate student fee, the school's summer school payment will be reduced by an amount equal to the inappropriate student fees charged.

### **Transportation**

There is no specific requirement that ICS provide transportation for summer school. Schools choosing to provide transportation must exercise reasonable uniformity in the minimum and maximum distances pupils are transported and may be eligible for reimbursement under pupil transportation aids. An ICS is required to provide transportation, free of charge, when necessary for students to access courses requiring field trips and off-campus alternate locations.

**Transportation Aid:** If an ICS elects to transport students, the ICS may collect summer school transportation categorical aid for those pupils who reside two (2) or more miles from the school attended. If the ICS receives aid for transportation, they may not charge a fee to transport students to school. The ICS may elect to provide summer school transportation to some, but not all, students. If the ICS provides transportation for less than all pupils, there shall be reasonable uniformity in the minimum and maximum distances pupils are transported. This limited service must be based on the distance pupils are transported from their home or pick-up points to the school.

*Transportation not required or aided:* If the parent of a student who would not otherwise be transported under the ICS board policy requests summer school transportation, an ICS may provide transportation if the parent agrees to pay to the school a fee sufficient to reimburse the school for the costs incurred in providing such transportation. No state aid shall be paid for transportation provided under these circumstances.

Parents may also enter into a personal contract with a private bus company for transportation to summer school. In this case, the ICS should not be the fiscal agent collecting funds as this is a contract between the parents and the private bus contractor.

*Transportation for fieldtrips and off-campus courses:* Although ICS are not required to provide student transportation from home to summer school, ICS are required to transport students, free of charge, to academic classes held at alternate sites during the student's summer school day. An ICS must designate the location of the summer school course. An ICS is required to provide transportation services for a student enrolled in a course that includes required field trips or instruction at alternate locations.

If the ICS offers programs or courses at more than one location during the school day; the ICS is required to provide transportation so that all students can access the various courses offered at different locations. If individual students have schedules that include moving between different course sites, an ICS is required to provide free transportation to the multiple sites. Each summer school program or course is based at one location. If any instructional activities are held at a different location for the course or program, the ICS is required to provide transportation to the additional location free of charge.

### **Summer School Payment**

An ICS may receive a per student payment for students that attend summer school if the following are satisfied:

- a) the school offers no fewer than 19 days of instruction during the summer; and
- b) each summer day of instruction offered by the school is comprised of no fewer than 270 minutes of instruction.

If the above criteria are met, the school is eligible to receive a per student payment for each eligible student that attends the school for summer instruction as follows:

- a) *student attends 15 or more days:* 5% of the maximum per student state aid amount from the prior year
- b) *student attends less than 15 days:* prorated payment calculated as follows: the number of days the student attended divided by 15 multiplied by 5% of the maximum per student state aid amount from the prior year (i.e. days attended / 15 \* 5% of the prior year amount).

The school is required to submit the Summer School Count Report using the Excel workbook provided by the DPI no later than **September 15** following the summer school program. The DPI will review this report and request additional information as needed.

### **Summer School Payment Process**

After the DPI staff review the Summer School Count Report that is **due by September 15** following the summer school program, the summer school payment due to each school will be issued as a separate payment and paid at the same time as the regular charter payment the school receives in December. For example, if a school is eligible to receive a regular charter payment of \$25,000 in

December and their eligible summer school payment is \$5,000, the school will receive one payment in the amount of \$25,000 (as payment for their eligible charter students included on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in September Count Report) and a second payment in the amount of \$5,000 (as their summer school payment).

### **Summer School Important Dates**

#### ***Summer School Count Report*** – due by September 15

Schools must submit the Summer School Count Report by September 15.

#### ***Enrollment Audit*** – due by May 1

The school's independent auditor will review the Summer School Count Report and determine the eligibility of the Charter students for a summer school payment in conjunction with the Enrollment Audit due by May 1.