

PRIVATE SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAMS
STUDENT APPLICATION CHECKLIST
2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR

The Private School Choice Programs (Choice) includes the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP), Racine Parental Choice Program (RPCP), and the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP). The information in this document is based on Wis. Stats. §§118.60 and 119.23 and Wis. Admin. Code PI 35 and PI 48. Please see the Residency Documentation Bulletin for information on the required residency documentation, the Income Documentation Bulletin for information on the required income documentation, and the Application Verification and Corrections FAQ for information on how to correct the Online Application System (OAS). To be considered complete, all applications require residency documentation and certain applications require income documentation. See further information on the application process in the Application Process bulletin. These documents are available at <http://dpi.wi.gov/sms/choice-programs/student-applications-processing>.

Schools are required to retain a copy of the letter accepting or denying the application, and all supporting documentation received, even if the application is not accepted. **Schools should retain a copy of all documentation received for an application, even if other information is required to correct the application.**¹ Schools should not destroy any of the application documentation received.

Residency Information:

1. _____ **School District Determination:** Determine what school district the address is in by completing one of the permitted school district verifications in the Residency Documentation Bulletin. Maintain a print screen of the school district verification for your auditor’s review. Note: If the family is participating in the Safe at Home program 1-4 are not required. See 5h for information on the Safe at Home program requirements.
2. _____ **Address in Required District for MPCP:** Based on the school district identified in 1, determine that the address is in the City of Milwaukee (Milwaukee Public School District). If not, the application is ineligible.
3. _____ **Address in Required District for RPCP:** Based on the school district identified in 1, determine that the address is in the Racine Unified School District. If not, the application is ineligible.
4. _____ **WPCP School District Verification:** Complete the following:
 - 4a. _____ Based on the school district identified in 1, determine that the address is in Wisconsin but not in the Racine Unified School District or City of Milwaukee (Milwaukee Public School District). If not, the application is ineligible.
 - 4b. _____ Verify that the school district identified in 1 matches the school district on the OAS Application Verification screen. If not, this must be corrected as described in the Residency Documentation Bulletin and Application Verification and Corrections FAQ.

¹ If a birth certificate, marriage certificate, certificate of naturalization, or certificate of citizenship is provided, the school should follow Appendix C of the Residency Documentation Bulletin rather than making a copy of the document.

5. _____ **Required Residency Documentation:** Determine that the parent/guardian has submitted a copy of **ONE** of the following to support that the student(s) lives at the address on the OAS Application Verification screen. Please note, this is a complete list of acceptable forms of residency documentation. **The residency documentation provided must meet the requirements in 6, 7, and 8 below.**
- 5a. _____ Wage statement or W-2 year-end earnings statement (i.e. Form W2 Wage and Tax Statement). (Note: W2s are not acceptable for applications received after April.)
- 5b. _____ Water, sewer, gas, electric, cable, satellite or landline phone bill. The bill must be for services at the address on the application and have a mailing address that matches the address on the application. The date that is used to determine if the bill meets the date requirements is the bill date or the last meter reading date on the bill.
- 5c. _____ Letter from the water, sewer, gas, electric, cable, satellite, or landline phone utility, regarding these utility services at the address on the application. This letter must have been sent to the address on the application. Examples of this letter include a letter from the utility company establishing service at the new address or a past due letter sent to address on the application for service at that address.
- 5d. _____ Signed and dated lease agreement with a term that includes the date the parent applies to the school (must be complete and legible). Expired leases are not acceptable. Month-to-month leases may be used if they have a start date between the required dates explained in 8.
- 5e. _____ Governmental correspondence. Examples include a property tax bill, Supplemental Security Income “SSI”, Wisconsin Works “W2,” Food Share, Housing Assistance, or United States Postal Service letter. Printed statements from Access.gov can be used as residency support if the statement includes the name of the parent/guardian and a date that meets the requirement explained in 8.
- 5f. _____ If homeless, a letter on the organization’s letterhead from a shelter for the homeless or from a private or public organization providing services for homeless individuals signed and dated by a representative of the organization.
- 5g. _____ Properly completed Alternative Residency Verification form (Form PI-PCP-51) only for situations where 1) the student is not living with his or her parent or guardian or 2) the parent/guardian does not have one of the residency documents in 5a-5f or 5h and someone else is able to provide one of the residency documents listed in 5a-5e for the family. The form must be fully completed, including being signed by the household occupant and the parent/guardian. Additionally, the required documentation from the household occupant and parent/guardian must be provided during the open application period the application is received.
- 5h. _____ Safe at Home card. If a family is participating in the Safe at Home program through the Wisconsin Department of Justice, the school must complete the items found under number 8 of the “Permitted Residency Documents” section in the Residency Documentation Bulletin.
6. _____ **Matching Parent/Guardian Name:** Determine that the first and last name of the parent/guardian on the residency documentation in 5 exactly matches the name of one of the parents/guardians on the OAS Application Verification screen except for capitalization, spacing, and punctuation. The parent/guardian name must be the legal name of the parent/guardian. See 9 for information on allowed corrections if it does not match.

7. _____ Matching Address: Determine that the address on the residency documentation in 5 exactly matches the address on the OAS Application Verification screen AND the address on the school district verification document in 1 except for capitalization and punctuation. The street number, street name, city, and state must be included on the residency documentation and in the OAS Application Verification screen. Additionally, the street suffix (ave, dr, etc), and street direction (N, S, E, W) must be included on the residency documentation and in OAS if it is on the school district verification document. The street suffix and direction may be abbreviated. See 9 for information on allowed corrections if it does not match.
8. _____ Required Date: Determine that the residency documentation in 5, except for the Safe at Home card, includes a date between three (3) months prior to the start of the open application period in which the application was received and the end of the open application period in which the application was received. The allowed dates are identified in the OAS Application Verification screen. If a lease agreement with a term is obtained, the date the application is received must fall within the term of the lease. The start date of a month to month lease must be dated within three (3) months prior to the start of the open application period in which the application is received.
9. _____ Received During Open Application Period & Allowed Corrections: If no residency documentation in 5a-5h was received during the open application period, the application is ineligible. If residency documentation in 5a-5f or 5h was received but did not comply with all of the requirements, it may be corrected. See the “Corrections to Residency Documentation” section of the Residency Documentation Bulletin for additional information on when the residency documentation may be correctable.

Income Determination-New Student Application Only (Complete 10 or 11 as applicable):

10. _____ Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Income Determination method used.
- 10a. _____ Kinship/Foster Care: If the pupil is in kinship care or foster care, support for the student participating in the program is provided. The requirements in 10b-10e of this checklist are not applicable. Documentation that would be sufficient for this is a verification letter showing the child is in the foster or kinship care program, a check for foster or kinship care, court documents showing placement for foster care students, or a reassessment letter for payment under the kinship care program indicating that the requirements have been met. The verification and reassessment letter must come from one of the contracted agents for the kinship care agency. A list of the contracted agents for Milwaukee is available at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mcps/contacts>.
- 10b. _____ Parent/Guardian has Income: The income determination is based on the adjusted gross income for all parent(s)/guardian(s) on the application. If a parent/guardian on the application received income, obtain the supporting documentation identified on the OAS Application Verification screen and complete the following:
- Determine that it is for 2019 income.
 - Determine that the amount of income received per the supporting documentation matches the information in the OAS Application Verification screen. If the amounts do not match and it is before the end of the open application period in which the application was received, ask that the parent/guardian log back into the online parent application and correct the amount(s). If it is after the open application period in which the application was received, see the “Amounts Match” section of the Income Documentation Bulletin to determine if the application is eligible or not.
 - If social security benefits were received, the support must be a 1099. Ensure that the support is for social security benefits and not supplemental security income (SSI). If the parent received SSI and not social security benefits, the parent must log back into the online parent application before the end of the open application period in which the application is received and change the income/benefits received to SSI. If not, the application must be determined ineligible.

- All supporting documentation (tax returns, 1099s, etc) includes the first and last name of the parent/guardian for the income type specified on the OAS Application Verification screen. The name must exactly match except for capitalization, spacing, and punctuation. If the parent/guardian name is incorrect, see the Application Verification and Corrections FAQ for information on how to make corrections.

10c. _____ Tax Return Support: If a copy of the 2019 tax return is provided, complete the procedures in 10b and ensure the following:

- The return is the Federal income tax form 1040. Wisconsin tax returns are not sufficient.
- The first two pages of the return are provided.
- The return should be signed and dated, including by both taxpayers if a joint return. However, the application is still eligible even if the tax return is not signed by one or both taxpayers.

10d. _____ Parent/Guardian has No Income: If the parents/guardians did not file a tax return and the income of the parents/guardians is \$0, the parent/guardian is required to explain how basic needs were provided and indicate all government assistance received. Ensure the following:

- The explanation of basic needs (food, clothing and shelter) is sufficient to explain how basic needs were provided.
- If any government assistance is indicated in the explanation of basic needs, ensure that the program is also identified in the required documentation section of the OAS Application Verification screen.
- Obtain documentation showing 2019 participation in ALL government assistance programs listed on the OAS Application Verification screen. The evidence must be from the assistance provider, show the parent/guardian participated in 2019, and include the legal first and last name of the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian name is incorrect, except for capitalization, spacing, or punctuation differences, see the Application Verification and Corrections FAQ for information on how to make corrections.
- The document for supplemental security income (SSI) indicates the parent received SSI and not social security benefits. If the parent received social security benefits and not SSI, the parent must log back into the online parent application and change the income/benefits received to social security benefits. If not, the application must be determined ineligible.
- The explanation of basic needs does **not** indicate that the parent received any income (even if cash income). If there is any income identified, the parent must log back into the online parent application and include this income in the online parent application. If the parent has any income and it is after the open application period in which the application was received, the application is ineligible.

10e. _____ Received During Open Application Period & Allowed Corrections: If no income related documentation was received during the open application period, the application is ineligible. If income related documentation was received during the open application period that the application was received from at least one of the parents/guardians on the application but it was not the allowed support or was for the incorrect year, the school may be able to correct the application in limited circumstances. See the Income Documentation Bulletin for additional information on when the application may be correctable. An explanation of how applications with missing income documentation may be corrected is in the “Corrections if Income Documentation is Missing” section and an explanation of how applications with missing government assistance documentation may be corrected is in the “Corrections if Government Assistance Documentation is Missing” section.

11. _____ DOR Income Determination method used.

11a. _____ DOR Income Determination Already Completed: Determine if the DOR found the student eligible or ineligible for the program. If the student was determined ineligible for the program, the school must send a letter of denial to the parent/guardian.

11b. _____ DOR Income Determination **Not** Already Completed: Enter the social security number(s) or Taxpayer ID Number(s) in OAS if they are not already entered and complete the “preliminary DOR check”.

- If the DOR is unable to find records for the parents/guardians and it is before the end of the open application period, the parent/guardian must log back into the online parent application, use the DPI Income Determination method, and resubmit the application. If it is after the end of the open application period, the application is ineligible.
- If records are available, complete the DOR income determination in OAS.

General Review:

12. _____ Student Names and Dates of Birth Correct: The student’s first and last name must be the legal name of the student. The student’s middle initial and suffix do not need to be reviewed and no changes need to be made if they are incorrect. Additionally, if the difference is due to spacing, capitalization or the use of a hyphen, no change is required. Review the student’s name and date of birth based on other information available to the school (if available). If the application is incorrect and the student is age eligible for the program, see the Application Verification and Corrections FAQ for information on how to correct OAS.

- If the date of birth is incorrect for students applying to K4, K5 and 1st grade, determine whether the student is age eligible for the grade applying to. The student must have been born on or before the following dates, or the student is ineligible: (a) September 1, 2016, for K4; (b) September 1, 2015, for K5; or (c) September 1, 2014, for 1st grade. Additionally, students may not be 21 as of the date they apply or September 1, whichever is later.
- If the student name or date of birth needs to be corrected, verify the name and date of birth using an annotated birth certificate or immunization record. See the Application Verification and Corrections FAQ for additional information.

13. _____ Age Eligible for Grade Applying: Determine that the grade the student is applying to is correct for students with a date of birth between September 1, 2014 and September 1, 2016. If it is not correct, determine that the student is age eligible for the grade the pupil should be in. The student must have been born on or before the following dates, or the student is ineligible: (a) September 1, 2016, for K4; (b) September 1, 2015, for K5; or (c) September 1, 2014, for 1st grade. Please note there are no exceptions to the age eligibility requirement.

Verifications:

14. _____ Corrections to Application in OAS: If any corrections are required to the application information in OAS, they must be made before completing the verification. See the Application Verification and Corrections FAQ for information on how to make corrections.

15. _____ Verification: Complete the verification for the application in OAS. WPCP verifications must be completed by the first weekday in May. MPCP & RPCP verifications must be completed prior to the next application period, prior to completing a random drawing, if required, within 60 days of the end of an application period during which an application is received by the school, or prior to the next count date, whichever occurs first. If the application is not verified in OAS within 60 days of the end of the open application period in which the application was received, the application will automatically be determined ineligible in OAS.

Other Requirements for MPCP and RPCP:

See Appendix A in the Application Process Bulletin for further information on these requirements.

16. _____ Random selection, if needed, must occur within one week of the close of the open application period and prior to the next count date, if applicable.

17. _____ Letter of Acceptance or Denial: Applicants must be notified, in writing, whether they are accepted or not accepted in the MPCP or RPCP at the school no later than 60 days after the end of the open application period that the application is received. If an applicant is determined ineligible, the letter must identify the reasons the application is ineligible. If an applicant is placed on a MPCP or RPCP waiting list, the letter must identify the applicant's place on the waiting list. Schools are required to retain a copy of the letter of acceptance or denial and all supporting documentation received even if the application is not accepted. Do not destroy the application documentation received by the school. **Schools should retain a copy of all documentation received for an application, even if other information is required to correct the application.**¹

18. _____ Submit accepted applications in OAS: This cannot be completed until after the open application period in which the application is received. Only submitted applications will be available in the count reports.

Other Requirements for WPCP:

See Appendix A in the Application Process Bulletin for further information on this requirement.

19. _____ Letter of Denial: A WPCP applicant who is determined ineligible must be notified, in writing, that the application was determined ineligible and the reasons why the application was determined ineligible. The school must provide this notification no later than June 1, 2020. Schools are required to retain a copy of the letter of denial and all supporting documentation received. Do not destroy the application documentation received by the school. **Schools should retain a copy of all documentation received for an application, even if other information is required to correct the application.**¹ WPCP applicants that are identified as eligible in OAS will receive an email from the DPI after DPI completes the random drawing.