



Date: November 18, 2024

To: Continuing Schools Interested in Participating
in the Private School Choice Programs (PSCP or Choice)

From: Private School Choice Programs Staff

Re: PSCP 2025-26 Registration Forms and Information for Continuing Schools

Please read the following information detailing the requirements for continuing schools to register to participate in the PSCP in the 2025-26 school year.

This letter will cover the following items required for registration:

- Notice of School's Intent to Participate in the PSCP for the 2025-26 School Year
- Voluntary Agreement for the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Approval of School's Random Selection Plan
- Intent to Offer Summer School (for schools interested in Summer School)
- Auditor Fee

The [School Registration Checklist](#) was created to assist schools in ensuring all registration forms are completed correctly and all required information has been submitted to the DPI by the deadline. The DPI encourages all schools to use the registration checklist to keep track of school registration requirements. Please note the DPI does not provide confirmation of receipt of items. Schools should follow the directions under each item on the School Registration Checklist to confirm the item has been completed.

Please also note, all of the school registration forms and the auditor fee are due to the DPI by Friday, January 10, 2025, unless otherwise noted. If a school fails to meet this deadline, the school will not be eligible to participate in the PSCP during the 2025-26 school year. Therefore, it is in the school's best interest to submit these required forms as soon as possible so that any errors or questions may be resolved well in advance of the January 10 deadline.

Additional information also included for the following in this letter:

- Designees
- Choice Administrator Changes
- Surety Bond Requirement
- 2025-26 School Budget
- Accreditation Requirements
- Insurance & Fidelity Bond Requirements
- PSCP Open Application Periods
- Hours of Instruction
- Count Dates
- Payment Amounts

If you have questions about the items required for registration or the additional information, please email privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov or call 888-245-2732 ext. 3.

Notice of School's Intent to Participate (ITP): The school's ITP must be completed, signed, and submitted electronically by the school's Choice administrator in the [Online Application System \(OAS\)](#) no later than **January 10** in order for the school to be eligible to participate in the PSCP for the 2025-26 school year.

Please read each section of the ITP form in OAS and ensure you understand the information contained within the form before signing and submitting the form. By electronically signing the form, you agree that compliance with program requirements constitutes a condition of receipt of funds and that in the event of failure to comply, your school's participation in the program can be terminated and/or PSCP payments withheld.

The ITP form is submitted in OAS. The school will submit the ITP form under one program username in OAS, even if the school participates in multiple programs. Designees for the school may enter information in the ITP form in OAS. The school's Choice administrator must submit the ITP form in OAS.

To access the ITP form in OAS, see below for the username the school should use to sign in. Next, click "Intent to Participate" on the left OAS menu bar.

- For schools that participate in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP) and other programs in the 2024-25 school year, the school must use its MPCP OAS username and password to complete and submit the ITP form for the 2025-26 school year.
- For schools that participate in the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) and Racine Parental Choice Program (RPCP) but not the MPCP in the 2024-25 school year, the school must use its WPCP OAS username and password to complete and submit the ITP form for the 2025-26 school year.
- For schools that participate in one Choice program for the 2024-25 school year (MPCP, RPCP, or WPCP), the school must use that OAS username and password to complete and submit the ITP form for the 2025-26 school year.

The school may indicate it will participate in one or multiple programs when completing and submitting the ITP form in OAS for the 2025-26 school year. The school is not required to participate in the program under which it submits the ITP if the school does not intend to participate in that program for the 2025-26 school year.

- The ITP form in OAS has been pre-loaded with current school and Choice administrator information. The Choice administrator must update fields where appropriate and complete fields that have not been preloaded.
- If the school has any changes to the school name, the school must submit a School Information Update Form, which is available on the [School Submitted Reports and Forms webpage](#).
- If the school has a new Choice administrator that will complete, sign and submit the ITP, see the [Choice Administrator Training and Access to OAS](#) webpage for the Program Requirements Training and Quiz and the OAS Access Training Requirements (training and bulletin reviews) and Quiz that must be completed prior to submitting the ITP.
- If the school is changing its organizational structure or Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), the school must email the department with information on the change as soon as possible.

Please note the administrator completing and signing the ITP must be the sole owner of the school or appointed by the operating organization of the school and must have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education or a teaching license or administrator's license issued by the department. See the [Staff Credentials Bulletin](#) for additional information on this requirement.

State law requires schools to ensure that an owner, officer, director, trustee, administrator, administrator's designee or an individual with administrative, financial or pupil health and safety responsibilities, whether compensated or uncompensated, is not a disqualified person as defined under Wis. Stats. §§119.23(1)(ag) or 118.60(1)(ag). A disqualified person is defined as a person who had a controlling ownership interest in, or was an officer, director or trustee of a private school barred or terminated from the program, or was the administrator of a private school, a person identified as an administrative designee, or an individual responsible for the activity that resulted in an order being issued barring or terminating a private school from participation in the program. If a school retains a disqualified person, the school may be terminated from the program. The list of disqualified individuals is available on the [Information for Schools](#) page.

Random Selection Plan: Schools participating in the MPCP and/or the RPCP must have a random selection plan to ensure students are selected on a random basis. If the number of eligible Choice student applications for any grade level received during an open application period exceeds the number of seats available, schools participating in the MPCP and RPCP must hold a random drawing to determine which applicants are accepted and the waiting list order. State law requires the DPI to conduct the random selection for the WPCP for the 2025-26 school year. Therefore, schools that will only participate in the WPCP are not required to submit a random selection plan. Please see the Random Selection section of the [Application Process Bulletin](#) for additional information.

Each private school that intends to participate in the MPCP and/or the RPCP shall submit its random selection plan no later than the due date of the ITP, **January 10**.

The Choice administrator of the school may choose **one of the following** for the random selection plan:

1. Voluntarily agree that the school will accept students into the MPCP and/or the RPCP and conduct a random selection, if required, in accordance with the random selection agreement on the [school registration page](#). The school may select the voluntary agreement when completing the ITP.
2. Submit its own random selection plan for approval by the State Superintendent by the due date of the ITP, January 10. The school may select to submit its own random selection plan when completing the ITP. The school must then also submit the plan via email to the DPI at privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov by January 10. If the school does not submit a plan by January 10 or the plan is not approved by the DPI by January 31, the school shall use the voluntary agreement.

Summer School: PSCP schools that are interested in offering Choice summer school in the upcoming summer will indicate their intent to offer a Choice summer school program on the ITP. The schools will also enter the expected number of students for the summer school program in the ITP. Choice administrators interested in offering summer school should review the [Summer School Bulletin](#). Schools should note that summer school courses funded through federal Title programs are not eligible for payment through the private school Choice summer school program.

Auditor Fee: Private schools that intend to participate in the PSCP must pay the DPI a nonrefundable Auditor fee of \$275. This fee must be received by **January 10**. The school must submit the \$275 auditor fee payment by one of the following methods:

- 1) Pay online via the Online Auditor Fee Form, **OR**
- 2) Mail the paper Auditor Fee Form with a cashier's check (mailing address on form).

The links to the Online Payment Form or the paper Auditor Fee Form are on the [school registration webpage](#). **The DPI recommends the school use the online payment option. If the school pays online, do not mail the paper form to the DPI.**

Schools that pay online will receive a Confirmation page that includes a confirmation number and information showing the amount paid, payment method, billing address, and the email address to which a confirmation email from the online payment site is sent. The school may print the confirmation page for their records. Schools may use the confirmation email from the online payment site to confirm the payment of the auditor fee.

No refunds of the fee will be made, regardless of whether or not the school participates in the PSCP.

Designees: The school's Choice administrator may designate one or more individuals to assist in processing Choice student applications and other reports in OAS. *Schools interested in adding new designee(s)* should see the [Designee Training and Access to OAS](#) webpage. *For existing designees for the school*, the Designee Authorization and Update Form, available on the [School Submitted Reports and Forms](#) webpage, may be submitted via email to privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov to update a designee's contact information.

Choice Administrator Changes: Schools are required to have a Choice Administrator at ALL times. *If a continuing school will have a new Choice administrator*, please see the [Choice Administrator Training and Access to OAS](#) webpage. *If the current Choice administrator of a continuing school is updating contact information*, he or she may submit a Choice Administrator Authorization and Update form, available on the [School Submitted Reports and Forms](#) webpage, via email to privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov.

Surety Bond for Continuing Schools: Schools that provided a surety bond rather than a budget to meet the new school financial requirement option are required to annually provide a surety bond until the school receives written notification from the DPI that the school no longer is required to provide a surety bond. Training 3-5 available on the [On Demand Training](#) webpage provides information on the requirements to remove the surety bond and how the surety bond amount is calculated.

The 2025-26 ITP will identify that all schools with a surety bond requirement in the 2024-25 school year must provide a surety bond for the 2025-26 school year. By mid-March, the Choice administrator for all schools that had a 2024-25 surety bond requirement will receive one of the following from the DPI:

1. An email from the DPI indicating the school has met the surety bond removal requirements and no longer needs to provide a surety bond.
2. If the school has not met the surety bond removal requirements and needs to provide a surety bond for the 2025-26 school year, the school will receive an email from the DPI with the prefilled 2025-26 surety bond form. The school must provide a new surety bond. The school will need to work with its surety bond provider to complete the surety bond form. By May 1, the school must email the completed surety bond, Power of Attorney form, and DocuSign Certificate of Completion (if applicable) as a pdf document to dpichoiceauditreports@dpi.wi.gov.

2025-26 School Budget: Schools that are continuing in the Choice program are required to complete a budget by June 30. The school may either use the DPI's budget form, which will be available by the beginning of March at [School Submitted Reports and Forms](#), or prepare its own budget. If the school prepares its own budget, the budget must include the following:

1. Anticipated enrollments for all pupils enrolled in the school (3rd Friday in September and 2nd Friday in January).
2. Anticipated enrollments for Choice program pupils (3rd Friday in September and 2nd Friday in January).
3. Estimated total revenues and costs.
4. Estimated eligible education expenses for the Choice program.
5. Estimated offsetting revenues for the Choice program.
6. A schedule of anticipated beginning and ending net assets.
7. Anticipated beginning and ending Choice program reserve balance.
8. Identification of the contingent funding sources the school will use should actual enrollments be less than expected.

Training 6-3 available on the [On Demand Training](#) webpage provides additional information on the continuing school budget requirements. The school's independent auditor will ensure that this requirement has been met for

continuing schools as part of the annual Fiscal & Internal Control Practices Report which is due every December 15th. Continuing schools do not need to send their annual budget to the DPI, unless it is specifically requested.

Accreditation Requirements: All schools continuing in the PSCP that are fully accredited must provide evidence of current accreditation annually to the DPI by August 1.

All schools continuing in the PSCP that are not fully accredited must achieve full accreditation, for all grades the school offers, by an approved accrediting entity no later than December 31 of the third year following the first school year in which the private school begins participating in the PSCP. Schools must plan to meet all requirements for full accreditation and ensure that all grades the school offers are accredited prior to the deadline.

Please see the [Accreditation Bulletin](#) for details on the requirements and due dates.

Insurance & Fidelity Bond Requirements: Under Administrative Rule PI 35 and 48, all schools participating in the PSCP are required to continuously maintain minimum levels of insurance coverage and maintain a fidelity bond. Please see the [Insurance and Fidelity Bond Bulletin](#) for an overview of the requirements. Failure to maintain the required insurance coverage or fidelity bond may result in the withholding of Choice payments and/or termination from the Choice program.

Open Application Periods Information: The [Application Process Bulletin](#) provides information on the rules and timelines related to open application periods. Open application periods are the only times schools may accept PSCP student applications. Please read through this information carefully as you decide which of the open application periods the school will participate in during the 2025-26 school year. By law, schools participating in the WPCP may only accept student applications during one open application period. If the school will participate in the WPCP, the school must participate in this open application period. After January 10, schools participating in the MPCP and the RPCP will not be allowed to amend their open application periods. Please note that the available open application periods differ for all three programs.

Hours of Instruction: All private schools in Wisconsin are required to provide at least 875 hours of instruction each year. Choice schools have additional requirements.

Private schools that participate in the PSCP must provide at least 1,050 hours of direct pupil instruction to grades 1 to 6 each year and at least 1,137 hours to grades 7 to 12 each year. Hours include recess and time for pupils to transfer between classes, but do not include lunch periods. No more than 140 hours of work study under Wis. Stat. §118.56 may be counted as hours of direct pupil instruction. A school's accrediting organization may have additional requirements, and it is recommended schools contact their accrediting organization for minimum requirements.

The minimum required hours for direct pupil instruction for a 0.5 full time equivalent (FTE) K4 and a 0.5 FTE K5 program are 437 hours each year. The scheduled daily hours for a 0.6 FTE, 0.8 FTE, and 1.0 FTE K5 program must match the scheduled daily hours for the full day of first grade, and a 0.6 FTE, 0.8 FTE, and 1.0 FTE K5 program must provide the applicable minimum hours of direct student instruction as seen below:

- 0.6 FTE program must provide at least 630 hours (students attend 3 full days of instruction each week)
- 0.8 FTE program must provide at least 840 hours (students attend 4 full days of instruction each week)
- 1.0 FTE program must provide at least 1,050 hours (students attend 5 full days of instruction each week)

Note: For schools that offer K5 *but do not offer first grade*, the required minimum K5 hours are 525 for a 0.6 FTE program, 700 for a 0.8 FTE program, and 875 for a 1.0 FTE program. For schools that only offer K4 and/or K5, at least one of the kindergarten programs must provide at least 875 hours of instruction.

Annually, each private school participating in the PSCP reports their Hours of Instruction in OAS on the 3rd Friday in September Count Report, due by the last weekday in September. To assist in the completion of the report in OAS, schools may wish to download the DPI Hours of Instruction Excel Report to calculate their hours. The Hours of Instruction Excel Report file and an example of how to complete the Excel report can be found on the following webpage: [School Submitted Reports and Forms](#). ***Continuing schools do not need to submit a copy of the Hours of Instruction Report Excel file to the DPI unless specifically requested.***

Count Dates: Schools are encouraged to have a full day of instruction on the count dates. In order for students to be eligible for Choice payments, the students need to be at the school on the count dates (3rd Friday in September and 2nd Friday in January) or any day before and any day after the count dates. If a student is not in attendance the full day of the count date, the school must ensure that the student was not enrolled in another school or home-based private educational program during the period of absence from the school. The count dates for the 2025-26 school year are: Friday, September 19, 2025, and Friday, January 9, 2026.

Payment Amounts: The Choice program payment amounts for the 2025-26 school year are not currently available as they are determined through the state's Biennial Budget process. Schools may use the 2024-25 school year payment amounts for planning purposes for the 2025-26 school year. The 2025-26 payment amounts should be available by late summer 2025 and will be posted on the [Choice Program Payments – Frequently Asked Questions](#) webpage. Please see the [Choice Program Payments – Frequently Asked Questions](#) webpage and Training 9-1 on the [On Demand Training](#) webpage for additional information on Choice program payments.