	SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

Bulletin 01-03 **Revised June 2020**

Residency Documentation

The Special Needs Scholarship Program (SNSP) allows a student with a disability, who meets certain eligibility requirements, to receive a state-funded scholarship to attend a participating private school.

Schools are required to obtain residency documentation as part of the application and transfer request process. All residency documentation provided as part of an application or transfer request must be verified within the twenty-one (21) day verification period after the SNSP application or transfer request form is received. If the originally provided residency documentation does not meet all of the requirements in Step 1, new documentation must be obtained that meets the requirements within the twenty-one (21) day verification period. If the new documentation is not provided during the twenty-one (21) day verification period, the student's SNSP application or transfer request form must be determined ineligible and a new application or transfer request form with the required documentation must be provided.

Schools are also required to determine all continuing SNSP students' addresses as of the 3rd Friday in September and report the address and school district in the 3rd Friday in September Pupil Count Report. Continuing SNSP students are students who had SNSP application or transfer request forms that were accepted in a prior school year. See the Continuing Student Eligibility Bulletin available on the Bulletin webpage for additional information on the Continuing Student Requirements.

See the Student Application & Transfer Request Processing webpage for additional information on student eligibility, applications, and transfer request forms. The requirements in this bulletin are based on Wis. Stat. 115.7915 and Wis. Admin Code PI 49.

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STEP 1 – OBTAIN RESIDENCY DOCUMENTATION

Participating private schools must obtain the required residency documentation. The residency documentation cannot have any information, including dates, covered with white-out. The residency documentation must meet all of the requirements below.

Required Date

Applications & Transfer Requests
All residency documentation must be dated within three (3) months prior to the date the application or transfer request form was received, except a Safe at Home card as described in 8 of the Permitted Residency Documents section below. The start date of a month to month lease must also meet this requirement. If a lease agreement with a term is obtained, the date the application or transfer request form was received must fall within the term of the lease.

Continuing Student Residency Verification
The residency documentation must include the student's address as of the 3rd Friday in September. All residency documentation must be dated between the third Friday in August (August 21, 2020 for the 2020-21 school year) and the last weekday in September (September 30, 2020 for the 2020-21 school year), except a Safe at Home card as described in 8 of the Permitted Residency Documents section below. The start date of a month to month lease must also meet this requirement. If a lease agreement with a term is obtained, the term of the lease must include the 3rd Friday in September.

Permitted Residency Documents

The list below is a complete list and includes all acceptable forms of residency documentation. No other forms or documents are acceptable residency documentation.
1.   Wage statement or 2020 W2 year-end earnings statement (i.e. Form W2 Wage and Tax Statement). Note: 2020 W2 year-end earnings statements are only accepted for applications or transfer requests received between January 2021 and April 2021.

2. Water, sewer, gas, electric, cable, satellite, or landline phone bill. Cell phone bills are not acceptable. Schools should use the bill date or the last meter reading date on a utility bill to determine that the bill meets the date requirements described in the required date section above. The bill must be for services where the student resides and have a mailing address where the student resides.

3. Letter from the water, sewer, gas, electric, cable, satellite, or landline phone utility, regarding these utility services at the address where the student resides. This letter must have been sent to the address where the student resides. Examples of this letter include a letter from the utility company establishing service at the new address or a past due letter sent to the address where the student resides for service at that address.

4. Signed and dated lease agreement with a term that includes the required date. The lease agreement must be complete and legible. Expired leases are not acceptable. Generally, schools should try to obtain one of the allowed residency documents other than month-to-month leases. However, if a month-to-month lease is used, the start date must be during the required dates. Rent receipts ARE NOT an allowed residency document.

5. Governmental correspondence. Examples include a property tax bill, Supplemental Security Income "SSI", Wisconsin Works "W2" Cash Benefits, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families "TANF," Food Share "Food Stamps," United States Postal Service, or Housing Assistance letter. Printed statements from Access.gov can be used as residency support if the statement includes a date that shows it meets the date requirement and the parent/legal guardian (parent) name.

6. Homeless individuals may identify a location for their residence if it is an identifiable location which could conceivably serve as a temporary residence. A homeless family should provide 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 that is signed and dated by a representative of the organization indicating that the family lived at the location during the required dates.

7. Properly completed Alternative Residency Verification form (Form PI-SNSP-003) only for situations where: (a) the student is not living with one of his or her parent; or (b) the parent(s) does not have one of the residency documents in 1-6 or 8 and someone else living at the address where the student resides is able to provide one of the residency documents in 1-5 above for the family. The form must be fully completed, including being signed by the household occupant and the parent. Additionally, the required documentation from the household occupant and parent must be provided with the form. The Alternative Residency Verification form is available on the [SNSP Student Application and Transfer Request webpage](#).

8. Safe at Home card. If the family participates in the Safe at Home program through the Wisconsin Department of Justice, the school must obtain the Safe at Home card (card) from the parent and determine that the card is not expired. If the card is expired, the family must get an updated card or they must update and submit documentation that does not use the Safe at Home address.

    - Application or Transfer Request-The school must complete all of the following for an application or transfer request that uses the Safe at Home option:
        i. Verify that the parent first and last name on the card match the student's application or transfer request.
        ii. Verify that the address on the card matches what is on the student's application or transfer request. The unit number on the card does not have to be listed. If the family has a card that is not expired and the address on the student's application or transfer request does not match the card, the address must be corrected. Any corrections to the application or transfer request form are to be made with a "strike through line" and initialed by the SNSP administrator or designee.

      iii. The school does not need to obtain a school district verification document for the address. However, the school must confirm that the current resident school district has been completed on the paper application or transfer request (i.e. determine that that the current resident school district has been completed).

- Continuing Student Verification:
  - i. If the student is a continuing student in the SNSP, the parent must provide confirmation to the school that the pupil still resides in the same school district. If the student does not reside in the same school district, the parent must provide the student's current resident school district. The current resident school district must then be reflected on the 3rd Friday in September Pupil Count Report.
  - ii. If a student who did not previously participate in the Safe at Home program joins the program, the parent should provide the Safe at Home card to the school. The school must confirm that the parent's first and last name on the card match the parent's first and last name identified in the 3rd Friday in September Pupil Count Report. If the card meets the requirements, the school must indicate the student changed addresses in the 3rd Friday in September Pupil Count Report. The school must then provide the Safe at Home address and identify the current resident school district based on the district provided by the parent in the 3rd Friday in September Pupil Count Report. The school does not need to obtain a school district verification document for the address.

Required Matching Address Components

The address on the residency documentation must match the school district verification document obtained in STEP 2 – SCHOOL DISTRICT VERIFICATION. Additionally, the address on the application or transfer request must be the student's address at the time the student applied. If the address on the SNSP student application or transfer request form does not match the address on the provided residency documentation, and the residency documentation has the correct address, then the address on the SNSP student application or transfer request form must be corrected. In order to correct the address, the incorrect information must be struck through, the correct information written in, and the SNSP administrator or designee must initial the change. The application or transfer request form cannot have any white-out.

If the address on the residency documentation is not correct, new residency documentation with the correct address must be obtained. The following chart outlines which address elements are required to match.

Required if element below is listed on the School District Verification Document in Step 2	**Match Required?**
Street Number	Yes
Street Direction (North, South, etc.)	Yes (abbreviations are allowed)
Street Name	Yes
Street Suffix (Lane, Road, Avenue, etc.)	Yes (abbreviations are allowed)
Unit/Apartment Number or Description (Upper, Lower, Unit E10, Apt 207, Lot 7, etc.)	No
City	Yes
State	Yes
Zip Code	No

Parent Name Match

The first and last name of the parent on the residency documentation must match the name of one of the parents on the application or transfer request form. The middle initial and suffix do not need to match. If the parent name on the application or transfer request form is incorrect, the SNSP student application or transfer request form must be corrected. In order to correct the parent name, the incorrect information must be struck through, the correct information written in, and the SNSP administrator or designee must initial the change.

Legal Name Change
If the parent has residency documentation with the current, legal name, it should be provided to the school. If the parent does not have residency documentation with the parent's current, legal name, then the school should obtain additional documentation to verify the parent's legal name. Examples of acceptable additional documentation include a birth certificate, marriage certificate, divorce decree, certificate of naturalization, certificate of citizenship, etc. Either a copy of the document or the information explained in Appendix C must be maintained in the student file. Appendix C explains the documentation that must be included in the student file for a birth certificate, marriage certificate, certificate of naturalization, or certificate of citizenship, since these documents cannot be copied.

Name Misspellings
If the parent has other residency documentation with the name correctly spelled, they should provide the other documentation to the school. If the parent does not have other documentation that correctly spells the parent's name, then the parent can email or provide a signed letter to the school stating:

> "My correct legal name is (correct name). The name on my residency documentation is (name on residency documentation). My name is incorrectly spelled on the documentation."

> Some examples of these cases include:
> - Name misspelled (i.e. Jennifr vs Jennifer, Joseph vs Josaph, Theresa vs. Teresa)
> - Name abbreviated (Dan vs Daniel, Suzie vs Susan, Mike vs Michael)
> - Multiple last names (Maria Gonzalez-Dominquez vs Maria Gonzalez)

> A letter would not be sufficient for differences if there are different names. Some examples where a letter or email would not be sufficient include:
> - Ralph Smith vs Ralph Weber
> - Maria Gonzalez vs Maria Dominquez
> - Ronald McGregory vs Thomas McGregory

Additional Documentation for Legal Name Changes or Name Misspellings (Applications and Transfer Requests)
The additional documentation must be obtained within the twenty-one (21) day verification period. If the additional documentation is obtained outside of the twenty-one (21) day verification period, then the application or transfer request form must be determined ineligible and a new application or transfer request form with the required documentation must be provided.

STEP 2 – SCHOOL DISTRICT VERIFICATION

Overview

Applications & Transfer Requests

For applications and transfer requests, the school must determine if the applicant's home is located in the school district listed on the SNSP application or transfer request form. If the school determines that the incorrect resident school district is listed on the application or transfer request form, then the name of the resident school district on the SNSP student application or transfer request form must be corrected. In order to correct the school district, the incorrect information must be struck through, the correct information written in, and the SNSP administrator or designee must initial the change.

Continuing Student Residency Verification

For continuing students, the school must determine the resident school district for the student's current address. If the address has not changed from the previous year, the prior year school district verification documentation may be used for the verification.

School District Verification Options

For students who reside in Milwaukee or Racine, see the specific school district verification guidance section below pertaining to the specific city/region. Schools should maintain a screen print or printout that includes the address and school district for their auditor review. Please also see the frequently asked questions in Appendix A for answers to commonly asked questions.

If a school is not able to determine a student's resident school district using the methods provided below, then the school should contact the county clerk, city clerk, or public school district and request an email from them or a letter on their official letterhead stating the school district in which the address is located.

Milwaukee: If a SNSP student applicant or continuing student lives in Milwaukee, schools may use one of the following school district verification methods:
- [Map It](): Addresses that are included in Map It are in the City of Milwaukee.
- [Milwaukee Election Commission](): If the address is in the City of Milwaukee, a voting location and office holder report will be displayed.
- One of the general options listed below under "Wisconsin."

Racine: If a SNSP student applicant or continuing student lives in Racine, schools may use one of the following school district verification methods:
- [RUSD transportation website](). Addresses that are in the RUSD transportation website are in the RUSD.
- One of the general options listed below under "Wisconsin."

Wisconsin: Schools may use any of the below methods to determine the school district in which an address is located.

- Copy of the property tax bill. Please note that certain individuals (such as those who rent) may not have a copy of the property tax bill.
- My Vote Wisconsin can be used for addresses where the school district is shown for school board elections. Click "What's on my Ballot". Enter address and click search. Scroll down to see if there is a school board election with the school district name.
- County Clerk or County Assessor Web Sites:
     o Wisconsin County Clerks Profiles. Click on your county on the map.
     o Wisconsin Land Information Parcel Initiative County Contacts. Click on your county under the Real Property Lister Link column.
- City Clerk or City Assessor web sites: Search to see if there is an online site for the city that contains property tax bills with the school district identified.
- Statewide Parcel Map: See Appendix C for detailed instructions.
- Public School District Online Interactive Boundary Map Websites: A public school district website can be used by schools to verify the school district if it has an online interactive map that displays the parent's address and has a notation on the map (pin, flag, dot, etc.) showing the address is located within the school district. Examples of these sites are:
     o Kenosha Unified School District (KUSD) Boundary Interactive Map Addresses that are displayed with a pinpoint on the map are within the district. The message "That location is outside the district boundaries." is displayed for addresses outside the district.
     o West Allis-West Milwaukee School Attendance Area Site See directions provided by school district at the link. Addresses displayed with a pinpoint on the map located in one of the colored school district boundary areas are within the district. Addresses outside the school district will not be displayed within one of the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District boundary areas.

Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions

School District Verification

1. **What should schools do if they cannot find the resident school district for an address using the methods provided?**

If a school is not able to determine a student's resident school district using the methods provided in Step 2, then the school should contact the county clerk, city clerk, or school district and request an email from them or a letter on their official letterhead stating the school district in which the address is located.

2. **What if the verification method only shows the public school district number and not the public school district name?**

If only the public school district number is identified, cross reference the public school district name on the Public School District Directory and write the public school district name on the printout.

3. **What parts of the parent's address must match the address on the school district verification document?**

The parts of the address that must match are the same as those that must match for the residency documentation. See the table in Step 1 for the parts of the address that must match.

4. **Does the address on the residency document, school district verification documentation and student application or transfer request form need to match?**

Yes, except for the unit or apartment number and zip code.

5. **What if the apartment number, unit, lot number, etc. is not available from the documentation sources to verify which public school district an address is located in?**

For some properties (i.e. trailer parks, apartment buildings, etc.), the apartment number, unit number or trailer park lot number may not be available from the verification methods. It is not required that the apartment number, unit number or trailer park lot number be on the school district verification document.

6. **What if the parcel contains multiple properties and a different address comes up when you enter the student's address?**

For parcels that contain multiple properties (i.e. duplex, townhome complex, trailer parks, etc.), the address may have multiple street numbers in one parcel or have a main address with sub addresses. Schools should look at the county and city assessor websites to try and connect the main parcel address to the student's address. Some sites call these sub parcels or child parcels. Schools should keep documentation showing the main parcel address with the public school district and the documentation connecting the sub or child parcel to the main parcel.

7. **Does the parent's name have to match the owner's name on the document used to verify the school district?**

The name on the school district verification document does not need to match the parent name. The purpose of the school district verification is to verify the school district in which an address is located. Because some individuals do not own their residence, their name may not be on the document used to verify the school district.

Residency Documentation

8. What date should be used for utility bills?

If the utility bill does not indicate a billing date, the school should use the last meter reading date or the amount due as of date on the utility bill to determine that the bill meets the date requirements explained above. If the utility bill only includes the date the bill is due, the school should try to find another document that meets the requirements. The bill must be for services at the student's address and have a mailing address that matches the student's address.

9. What date should be used for property tax bills?

A year end property tax bill for the previous year can be used for applications and transfer requests received from January through April. For applications and transfer requests not received from January to April, the property tax bill must include a billing date that meets the residency date requirement or the parent must be able to provide documentation showing when the bill was sent out so that the school can confirm it is meets the date requirements.

10. Is a pay check or pay check stub acceptable residency documentation?

Yes, a pay check or pay check stub would be considered a wage statement. The pay check or pay check stub is sufficient for residency documentation as long as it is from the parent's employer and meets all of the residency requirements including having the parent's name, address, and date that meets the residency documentation requirements.

11. Can 1099s be accepted for residency documentation?

1099s from the previous calendar year are only acceptable if they are from a government agency and can only be accepted for applications and transfer requests received from January through April.

12. Is a natural gas bill an acceptable form of residency documentation?

Yes, the bill is acceptable since it is considered a "gas" bill, which is one of the allowed residency documents.

13. Can a bill with only internet services be accepted for residency documentation if the provider has cable and satellite services available as well?

No, the bill provided for residency documentation must include cable or satellite services for it to be an acceptable residency document. If the bill is only for internet services, it is not acceptable residency documentation.

14. Is a USPS Change of Address Confirmation Letter acceptable as proof of residency?

Yes, this falls under government correspondence so it would be sufficient residency documentation if the address where the student is residing is the new address listed on the USPS Change of Address Confirmation Letter.

15. Can mortgage statements be accepted for residency documentation?

No, mortgage statements cannot be accepted for residency documentation.

16. Can an envelope be used as residency documentation?

No. An envelope cannot be accepted for residency documentation.

17. Can schools accept residency documents that are not on the allowed list (i.e. are there any exceptions)?

No. The residency documentation must be one of the documents on the allowed list of acceptable proof of residency documents.

18. If the parent's middle initial/name or suffix on the residency documentation does not match the application, transfer request, or the parent name in the 3rd Friday in September Pupil Count Report, how should the school proceed?

The middle initial/name and suffix do not need to match. Further, these fields are not required fields for DPI, so no change to DPI's data is required for them.

19. If the punctuation, spacing, or capitalization in a parent's name on the residency documentation does not match the application, transfer request, or the parent name in the 3rd Friday in September Pupil Count Report, how should the school proceed?

Differences due to punctuation, spacing or capitalization do not need to be corrected. New residency documentation is not required. These fields are not required fields for DPI, so no change to DPI's data is required for them. This would include any differences due to hyphens or apostrophes. See the Parent Name Match section for additional information.

Other

20. If a SNSP student moves, when should the address be updated in DPI's records?

The school does not need to separately email address and/or district changes to the department when a student changes addresses. Schools annually obtain residency documentation from continuing SNSP students at their school identifying where the student resides on the 3rd Friday in September. Any address and/or district changes identified through this annual requirement are included in the 3rd Friday in September Pupil Count Report.
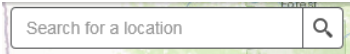
21. If a continuing SNSP student does not change addresses, do I need to obtain new residency documentation for the student?
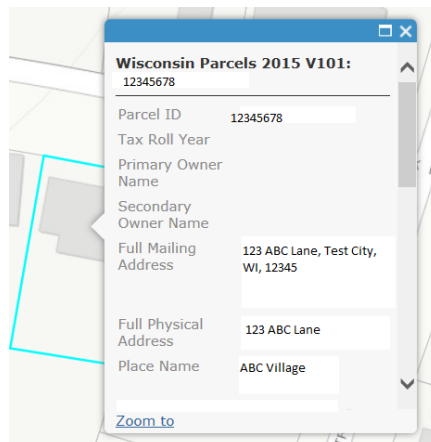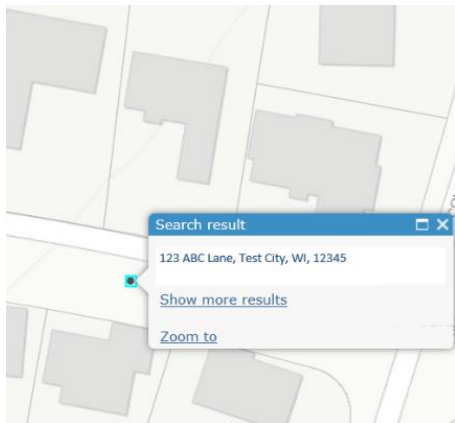
Yes, schools are required to obtain residency documentation for all continuing SNSP students that has the students' addresses as of the 3rd Friday in September.

Appendix B: Statewide Parcel Map Directions

The Statewide Parcel Map Initiative is a multi-year collaborative effort of the Department of Administration, State Cartographer's Office, and local governments.

Directions:

1. Go to: Statewide Parcel Map

2. Click OK .

3. Before completing verifications, read the Search Tips, including the information on using the wildcard search options of % and _ under the General Search Tips.

4. Enter the address in the Search for a location bar. Start typing the street number, direction and street name. The address options will display below the box. Click on the address you are searching for.

5. The parcel map will display with a dot near the address (left picture below).

6. Click on the **parcel close to the dot** to find the parcel for the specific address. The middle picture below will then be displayed.

7. Click (maximize) in the **middle box** below to display the full screen view. Print the full Parcel information for your records if the school district name or school district number are identified. If the school district number only is identified, cross reference the school district name on the Public School District Directory and write the school district name on the printout. If neither the school district name nor number are displayed, the school must use an alternative school district verification option in Step 1.

Appendix C: Vital Record Verification

If a birth certificate, marriage certificate, certificate of naturalization, or certificate of citizenship is provided for a name change, the school should not make a copy of the document. Instead, the school should do one of the following and maintain the document in the student file:

1) Birth certificate: Complete a copy of the [Annotation of Birth Record/Facts Form](#).

2) Marriage certificate: The school should draft a letter that includes the following: (1) the first and last name of both spouses; (2) the date of the marriage; (3) the government entity that issued the marriage license (e.g., state registrar, local registrar, U.S. Dept. of State, or other foreign country); and (4) the signature and signature date of the school employee drafting the letter.

3) Certificate of naturalization or certificate of citizenship: The school should draft a letter that includes the following: (1) the individual's legal name; (2) the date the document was issued; (3) the government entity that issued the document (e.g., state registrar, local registrar, U.S. Dept. of State, or other foreign country); and (4) the signature and signature date of the school employee drafting the letter.