

2023-2024 School Year

Special Needs Scholarship Program

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 private school that is located in Wisconsin and participating in the SNSP. The school receives a state aid payment for each eligible student.

Student Eligibility

A student with a disability may be eligible to participate in the SNSP for the 2023-24 school year if all of the following apply:

- **IEP or Services Plan:** The student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or services plan that meets one of the following:
 - The student's IEP or services plan is currently being implemented, or
 - The student's IEP or services plan was developed no earlier than September 15, 2020 and there has not been a more recent reevaluation that determined the student no longer had a disability.
- **Wisconsin Resident:** The student resides in Wisconsin.
- **Age:** Students must be at least the following age on or before September 1: 4 years old for K4, 5 years old for K5 and 6 years old for grade 1. Further, students may not be 21 as of the date they apply or September 1, whichever is later.

How to Apply

The SNSP student application is a paper application that must be submitted directly to the SNSP school that you would like your child to attend. SNSP student applications can be submitted to SNSP schools for the 2023-24 school year from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. A student application is not complete until all of the following documents have been given to the SNSP school:

- 1) SNSP student application.
- 2) A residency document with the family's current address.

SNSP schools must give student applicants a copy of the school's special education profile. The student application, list of SNSP schools, list of allowed residency documents, and school special education profiles are available on the SNSP website.

SNSP schools will accept SNSP students in the order that complete applications are received. If a school receives more applications than the number of available SNSP scholarships, the school will notify students of their place on a waiting list. Schools may choose to give preference to siblings of students who are already attending the school.

The process to determine if an application is eligible can take five (5) weeks. For additional information on this process, see the SNSP FAQ for parents available on the SNSP website.

The SNSP website (<https://dpi.wi.gov/parental-education-options/special-needs-scholarship/student-applications/23-24>) has a document comparing the rights of students with disabilities and their families under state and federal special education laws to their rights under the SNSP. The website also includes additional frequently asked questions and information about the SNSP.



IEP or Services Plan Requirements

IMPLEMENTATION

SNSP schools are required to implement the IEP or services plan of SNSP students as modified by agreement between the SNSP school and the student's parent/guardian (hereafter "parent"). The school and the parent must sign this agreement before the student will be eligible for SNSP payments.

QUARTERLY REPORTS

SNSP schools are required to provide SNSP parents with quarterly reports about the implementation and progress of their student's modified IEP or services plan and the student's academic progress.

REEVALUATION

In order for a student to be able to continue their participation in the SNSP, the student must be made available for an IEP team reevaluation by the school district within sixty (60) days of a reevaluation request being made. A school districts may only make a reevaluation request once every three (3) years for SNSP eligibility purposes.

If a SNSP student is determined to no longer have a disability during an IEP team reevaluation, the student will receive a partial scholarship beginning in the school year following the determination. A partial scholarship student is able to continue to participate in the SNSP at the same school, but the SNSP scholarship will be at a lower rate. However, a partial scholarship student will not be able to transfer to a different school and continue to participate in the SNSP.

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Continuing Student Eligibility

CONTINUING SNSP STUDENT STATUS

SNSP students do not need to submit SNSP applications every year. A student who has been accepted into the SNSP will continue to receive a scholarship until one of the following occurs: (a) the student graduates from high school; (b) the student turns 21; (c) the student no longer resides in Wisconsin; (d) the student enrolls in another school or a home-based educational program; (e) the student is not made available for a reevaluation every 3 years; or (f) a partial scholarship student leaves the SNSP school that the student is attending.

RESIDENCY REVERIFICATION

SNSP students are required, on an annual basis, to provide residency documentation to their SNSP school. SNSP students must be residents of Wisconsin.

TRANSFERS

A SNSP student may transfer from one SNSP school to another SNSP school and retain their scholarship if the student has been continuously enrolled in the SNSP and has not been determined to no longer be a child with a disability through an IEP team reevaluation. In order for a SNSP student to transfer and successfully retain their scholarship, the student must complete a Transfer Request Form and submit the Transfer Request Form and all required documentation to the school that the student is applying to transfer to. The Transfer Request Form is available on the SNSP website.

The SNSP student must remain at their current SNSP school until the transfer request is accepted by the new school.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q.1 - Is the private school required to implement the student's IEP or services plan?

A.1 - SNSP schools are required to implement the IEP or services plan of SNSP students as modified by agreement between the SNSP school and the student's parent.

Q.2 - Can a student attend any private school under the SNSP? How does an applicant know which schools are participating in the SNSP?

A.2 - Only schools that registered to participate in the SNSP for the 2023-24 school year may participate in the SNSP. A list of schools that have registered to participate for the 2023-24 school year is available on the SNSP website.

Q.3 - Can a private school charge a SNSP student tuition and fees?

A.3 - Yes. A SNSP school can charge a SNSP student tuition and fees.

Q.4 - Are there statutory procedures regarding student suspensions and expulsions that a private school participating in the SNSP is required to follow?

A.4 - No. State law does not require SNSP schools to have suspension or expulsion policies. Parents should ask the SNSP school if they have a suspension or expulsion policy, and obtain a copy of the policy if the school has one.

Q.5 - When can my student start attending the SNSP school?

A.5 - A student will not receive a SNSP scholarship until the student is accepted into the program and the parent and the school have agreed on the services that will be provided to the student. If a parent chooses to move their student to the private school before this time, the private school may choose to charge additional tuition and fees for that time period. Parents should discuss this with the school they are applying to in order to understand the school's process.

For other frequently asked questions, please see the Frequently Asked Questions for Parents document at <https://dpi.wi.gov/parental-education-options/special-needs-scholarship/student-applications>.

For More Information:

Special Needs Scholarship Program
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 7841

Madison, WI 53707-7841

Toll-free: 888-245-2732, ext. 4

snsp@dpi.wi.gov

SNSP Website: <https://dpi.wi.gov/parental-education-options/special-needs-scholarship>

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The requirements in this document are based on Wis. Stat. 115.7915 and Wis. Admin. Code PI 49.

