

## **Tuition Options for Parents (or Legal Custodian), 9 Week & 18 Week Special Tuition and the PI-1563 Student Count Report**

### **Background**

Per Wis. Stat. § 121.77(1)(a), “every elementary school and high school shall be free to all pupils who reside in the school district.” If a nonresident pupil wishes to attend a public school district, the statutes provide for a number of tuition options, including tuition paid by parents, which can be found in Wis. Stat. § 121.81. There are two options for tuition payments by parents: general and special, both of which are explained below. In this bulletin, the term “parent” includes a child’s legal custodian.

**General** - This applies in cases where the pupil is anticipated to remain a nonresident. In these situations, the parent will generally pay the Open Enrollment rate found under Wis. Stat. § 118.51(16)(a)3. See Wis. Stat. § 121.81(1).

**Special** – This applies in cases where a family’s move into a new school district has not yet occurred but it is imminent and the family desires their student to begin attending the new district before residency is established. If the new school district’s facilities are adequate, the new school district may offer 9-week and 18-week special tuition.

### **Special Tuition**

Under Wis. Stat. § 121.81(2), a pupil whose parent is a resident of this state, but not a resident of the school district, may file with the school board of the district a written application for enrollment in the school district. The parent’s application must be accompanied by a written declaration of the parent that the parent will establish residence in the school district by a specified time. Receipt of the application can occur at any time during the school year.

**Tuition in the First Nine Week Period:** Once the school board has accepted the parent’s application and the non-resident student is in attendance under Wis. Stat. § 121.81(2), the pupil’s family is expected to become a resident within a nine-week period. In this situation, tuition payments are handled as follows:

- The board may elect to waive prepayment of tuition because the pupil is expected to achieve residency within the initial nine weeks.
- If the pupil does not achieve residency within the first nine weeks, the parent must pay tuition for the first 9-weeks.
- If tuition was collected and the pupil subsequently achieves residency within the first nine weeks, the school board shall refund the tuition.

**Tuition in the Second Nine Week period (total of 18 weeks):** If the initial nine-week period has expired and the non-resident pupil has not yet established residency, the tuition payments are handled as follows:

- The parent may submit a second written request for enrollment for the succeeding second nine week period under Wis. Stats. § 121.81(2).
- Parents must prepay tuition for the second nine weeks. They have already paid tuition to the district for the first nine weeks.

- The school board may permit the student to re-enroll. If within the second nine week period the pupil achieves residency, the school board shall refund the tuition fee for the second nine week period.

**Tuition at the conclusion of the first 18 weeks:** If the pupil does not achieve residency during the first 18 school weeks of enrolling at the school district, the district must review its public school open enrollment policies and determine if the district has either determined no space exists for non-resident students or the board has denied open enrollment applications for the current year. This review allows your district to determine if the student can continue to attend the non-resident school district under parent paid tuition. Please contact the Open Enrollment team at Email: [openenrollment@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:openenrollment@dpi.wi.gov) or call toll-free: 888-245-2732 for assistance.

If the pupil does not achieve residency during the first 18 school weeks of enrolling at the school district, the parent may apply for open enrolling using the Open Enrollment Alternative Application (PI-9241) to complete the current school year. This application will need to meet all of the criteria that any other pupil must meet to be granted their request.

### **Transportation During the 18-Week Process**

The parent or legal custodian is responsible for pupil transportation during the 18-week process per Wis. Stat. § 121.81(2)(c). The department is prohibited from providing transportation aid for pupils enrolled during the 18-week process. **If the pupil has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) it may require the non-resident school district to provide transportation during this time period.**

### **PI-1563 and Counting 9-18 Weeks Special Tuition for Membership**

In most cases, a pupil move under a 9-week special tuition will be taking place at the start of school in the fall. The following PI-1563 counting instructions apply to a pupil who enrolled and was receiving instruction on or before the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in September. If the student started after the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in September, contact a member of the School Financial Services team for counting instructions.

### **Counting for Membership in the First 9-Week Period:**

If the request for prepayment of tuition is waived for the first 9-week period:

- In the September PI-1563, the school district will count the pupil in Step 1 (Head Count) and will remove the pupil in Step 2.6 (Non-Resident Reduction – 9-week Waiver). The pupil is not yet considered a resident.
- If the pupil does achieve residency within the 9-week period, the school district will revise the September PI-1563, Step 2.6, removing the non-resident reduction in Step 2. The pupil becomes a part of their resident pupil count.

If the request for prepayment of tuition is not waived for the first 9-week period:

- In the September PI-1563, the school district will count the pupil in Step 1 (Head Count) and will remove the pupil in Step 2.5 (Non-Resident Reduction – Tuition). The pupil is not yet considered a resident.

- If the pupil does achieve residency within the 9-week period, the school district will revise the September PI 1563, Step 2.5, removing the non-resident reduction in Step 2. The pupil becomes a part of their resident pupil count.

**Counting for Membership in the Second Nine-week period (total of 18 weeks):**

If the parent establishes residence in the school district prior to the expiration of the first 18 school weeks of the school term and the pupil was enrolled in the school district on the 3rd Friday in September, the school district will revise September the PI-1563, removing the non-resident reduction in Step 2.

This pupil was included in the district's Head Count (Step 1) in the September PI-1563 and became a part of their resident pupil count with this adjustment.

**If residency is not established in the first nine-week period.**

The first nine week tuition must be paid if residency is not established within the first nine weeks, even if the pupil establishes residency in the second nine weeks. Wis. Stat. § 121.81(2)(a).

If residency is established in the second nine-week period, the school board must refund the tuition for the second nine-week period. The school board may not refund the tuition for the first nine weeks. Wis. Stat. § 121.81(2)(a).

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