

Date: November 14, 2016

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

From: Private School Choice Programs Staff

Re: PSCP 2017-18 Registration Forms and Information for New Schools

Please read the following information detailing the requirements for a private school to register to participate in the PSCP in the 2017-18 school year.

This letter will cover the following items required for registration:

- Notice of School's Intent to Participate in the PSCP for the 2017-18 School Year
- Voluntary Agreement for the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Approval of School's Random Selection Plan
- Letter and Acknowledgement Regarding Student Rights in the PSCP
- Auditor Fee and Form
- Student Application Designee Authorization Form
- School Registration Checklist
- Required Training for New Schools
- PSCP Intent to Offer Summer School Form (for schools interested in Summer School)
- Hours of Instruction Report

Additional information also included:

- Information on the New Schools Budget
- Information on PSCP Optional Open Application Periods
- Information on Accreditation Requirements
- Information on Insurance Requirements

**Please note, all of the school registration forms and the auditor fee are due to DPI by January 10, 2017 unless otherwise noted.** If a school fails to meet this deadline, the school will not be eligible to participate in the PSCP during the 2017-18 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 can be resolved well in advance of the January 10 deadline.

**Notice of School's Intent to Participate:** The school's Notice of Intent to Participate must be completed, signed and submitted electronically by the school's Choice administrator no later than January 10, 2017 in order for the school to be eligible to participate in the PSCP for the 2017-18 school year. The electronic form will be available through midnight on January 10, 2017.

Please read each section of the form 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. New schools may access the 2017-18 Notice of School's Intent to Participate form on the [school registration page](#).

In order to process state aid payments under the new state financial accounting system, STAR, all schools must provide the DPI with their school's Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN). This information must be provided on the Notice of School's Intent to Participate form. If the school does not yet have a FEIN, please indicate "TBD" on the form.

*Please note the administrator completing and signing the Notice of Intent to Participate 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.*

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. Stat. §§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.

**Random Selection Plan:** Each private school that intends to participate in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP) or the Racine Parental Choice Program (RPCP) shall submit its random selection plan and have the plan approved by the State Superintendent no later than January 10, 2017. State law requires the DPI to conduct the random selection for the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) for the 2017-18 school year, therefore, schools that will only participate in the WPCP in 2017-18 are not required to submit a random selection plan.

The "Agreement on Random Selection Process for Admissions into the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program and the Racine Parental Choice Program" is a description of the procedures that a school's random selection plan must follow to be approved by the State Superintendent. If a school **voluntarily** agrees to sign this document stating that the school will follow these rules for randomly selecting pupils for the MPCP and RPCP, the electronic submission of the signed document included with the School's Notice of Intent to Participate will signify the State Superintendent's approval of the school's plan. If a school wishes to construct its own random selection plan for the 2017-18 school year, the school may do so. However, the plan must be submitted to the DPI and approved by the State Superintendent prior to January 10, 2017. DPI staff will work with the school on any edits to its plan that may be necessary to receive departmental approval of the plan. These edits must be completed prior to January 10, 2017.

**Student Rights Acknowledgement:** The school's Choice administrator should read the letter from State Superintendent Tony Evers regarding student rights available on the [school registration page](#). This letter contains a list of student rights that formerly appeared in the Administrative Code PI 35. It was agreed to at the Legislature's Joint Committee on Administrative Rules meeting held July 30, 1998, that in exchange for the removal of the student rights list from the administrative rules, school administrators and principals would sign the letter of acknowledgement. The Choice administrator should complete the acknowledgement electronically and submit it along with the Notice of School's Intent to Participate, no later than January 10, 2017.

**Auditor Fee and Form:** Private schools that intend to participate in the PSCP must, no later than January 10, 2017, pay to the DPI a nonrefundable fee of **\$500**. Payment of the nonrefundable fee must be made in the form of a cashier's check payable to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Other forms of payment will not be accepted. **No refunds of the fee will be made, regardless of whether or not the school participates in the PSCP.** Schools must mail the cashier's check, along with the Auditor Fee Form to the DPI at the address listed on the form. The Auditor Fee Form can be downloaded from the [school registration page](#).

*Note: New schools that registered on August 1, 2016 paid an auditor fee at that time. The fee paid on August 1, 2016 for participation in the 2017-18 school year will be applied to the auditor fee requirement for the 2017-18 school year. If the amount due January 10, 2017 has increased from the fee paid on August 1, 2016, additional payment is required. If the amount due January 10, 2017 has decreased the DPI will refund the difference.*

**Student Application Designee Authorization Form:** This form shall be completed and submitted to the DPI when a school's Choice administrator wishes to designate one or more individuals to assist in processing Choice student applications. This form must be on file at DPI before an individual can begin processing Choice student applications. Choice administrators of schools that are new to the PSCP must submit this form if he/she wishes to designate individuals to assist him/her. The form, with original signatures of both the Choice administrator and designees, must be mailed to the DPI. This form may be submitted and designees added at any time throughout the year. The Designee Authorization Form can be downloaded from the [school registration page](#).

In order to process applications in the Online Application System (OAS), designees must complete pre-recorded online training modules. Designees must complete the form requesting access on the [school training page](#). If a designee would like to assist with processing applications at the start of the open application periods, which is February 1, 2017, please complete this form no later than November 28, 2016. All designees that complete this form by November 28, 2016 will be emailed the login information to access the online trainings in early December.

**School Registration Checklist:** This checklist was created to assist you in ensuring all registration forms are completed correctly and all required information has been submitted to the DPI by the deadline. We encourage all schools to use the registration checklist as a way to keep track of school registration requirements. The checklist can be downloaded from the [school registration page](#).

**New School Training Requirements:** The individual designated as the Choice administrator of a new school is required to participate in fiscal management training in order to be eligible to participate in any of the Choice programs. It is strongly advised that new schools have more than one representative who qualifies to serve as the school's Choice administrator complete the trainings. New schools are not permitted to change who will serve as the Choice administrator prior to August 1, 2017 unless the individual has completed Parts One and Two of the training.

Part One of the fiscal management training will be an online learning course. This training will include information on general program requirements, school registration, required reports, testing and other important requirements of the Choice programs. Part One of the fiscal management training must be completed no later than Friday, January 20, 2017. In order to obtain access to the required trainings, any individuals the school is considering having as the Choice administrator must complete the form requesting access on the [school training page](#). Please complete this form no later than November 28<sup>th</sup>. All Choice administrators who complete the form by November 28<sup>th</sup> will be emailed the login information to access the online trainings in early December.

Part Two of the fiscal management training course will cover, in-depth, the financial requirements of the Choice program and how to prepare the Choice program new schools budget. Part Two of the training is an in-person training that will be held at the DPI office in Madison. Attendance for the Choice administrator is required. In addition, the individual responsible for the school's accounting or bookkeeping is also strongly encouraged to attend. Part Two of the training will be held in late February and early March. Schools must register for Part Two of the training online at the [new schools training page](#).

**Hours of Instruction:** Private schools participating in the PSCP must provide 1,050 hours of direct pupil instruction in grades 1 to 6 and 1,137 hours of direct pupil instruction in grades 7-12. Hours can include recess and time for pupils to transfer between classes but do not include lunch periods.

Annually each private school participating in the PSCP must complete the Hours of Instruction report showing that the school's scheduled hours of instruction meet these minimum requirements. The Choice attendance requirements are that the students are either at the school on the count dates (3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in September and 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday in January) or any day before and any day after the count dates. Therefore, schools are encouraged to have a full day of instruction on the count dates. The Hours of Instruction report and examples of how to complete the report can be found on the following webpage: [school registration page](#). Once completed, the school's Choice administrator must sign and submit a copy of the Hours of Instruction report to the DPI. New schools must submit the Hours of Instruction report by January 10, 2017. This report may be submitted via email to [privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov).

**New Schools Budget and Cash Flow Form:** All new schools are required to submit the PSCP new schools budget and cash flow form by May 1, 2017. New schools must use the 2017-18 Budget and Cash Flow Report that will be posted to the following webpage [school submitted reports and forms](#) in January 2017. Once the form has been completed in Excel the school must print a copy and the school's Choice administrator that attended and completed the required trainings must sign the report. The signed report can either be mailed to the DPI or scanned and emailed as a PDF document to [dpichoicedauditreports@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:dpichoicedauditreports@dpi.wi.gov). The completed budget form is due by May 1, 2017.

**Accreditation and Preaccreditation Requirements:** Private schools first participating in a PSCP will need to be preaccredited or fully accredited prior to participation. In addition, all schools continuing in the program that are fully accredited must provide evidence of current accreditation annually to the DPI by January 15<sup>th</sup> of every year. Please see the [Accreditation Bulletin](#) for details on the requirements and due dates. Keep in mind there is significant advance planning needed especially if the school is new to the PSCP.

**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 have a fidelity bond. The insurance document posted on the [school registration page](#) lists the coverage requirements. New schools should have the required insurance coverage and the fidelity bond in effect by August 1, 2017. If the school is offering Choice summer school, the coverage should be in effect by May 1, 2017. The school should provide evidence that they have the required insurance, including the fidelity bond, by these dates. Failure to maintain the required insurance coverage may result in the withholding of Choice payments and/or termination from the Choice program.

**Open Application Periods Information:** The Open Application Period documents available on the [school registration page](#) provide additional 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 2017-18 school year. By law, schools participating in the WPCP may only accept student applications from February 1-April 20. If the school will participate in the WPCP, the school must participate in this open application period. After, January 10, 2017, 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.

**Summer School:** PSCP schools that are interested in offering summer school during the summer of 2017 should complete and submit the Intent to Offer Summer School Survey no later than January 10, 2017. New schools that intend to offer summer school must meet building occupancy, insurance and preaccreditation requirements, if applicable, by May 2, 2017. Schools can access the Intent to Offer Summer School Survey on the [school registration page](#).

**Student Information System (SIS):** All new schools are required to have a SIS vendor capable of exchanging data with the state WISEdata system that is operational by August 1. Private schools participating in Choice programs are required to have a commercially-available student information system (SIS) capable of exchanging data (interoperating) with the state WISEdata system. A list of SIS

vendors capable of exchanging data with the state WISEdata system is available at the [WISEdata page](#). All Choice schools must submit secure attendance, graduation and demographic data for Choice students, which along with student-level assessment data, will be used to create the annual school report cards mandated by the state legislature.

If you have questions concerning this information, please email [privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov) or call 888-245-2732 ext. 3.