



SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

Bulletin 01-02

Revised June 2018

Student Application & Transfer Request Information

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. The following information is intended to assist the SNSP administrators and designees with processing a student's application and transfer request form. The SNSP applications and transfer requests cannot be accepted by anyone other than the SNSP administrator or designee.

The official application and transfer request forms must be filled out completely, accurately and legibly with required signatures. Parents must complete the paper student application form or transfer request available on the [SNSP Student Applications webpage](#). Further information on student eligibility is available in the Initial Student Eligibility Bulletin, Continuing & Transfer Student Eligibility Bulletin, and Residency Bulletin on the [SNSP School Application & Transfer Request Processing webpage](#), as well as on the [SNSP School Training webpage](#).

To ensure that each student application or transfer request form includes all required information, the Department strongly recommends that schools use the Student Application checklist and Transfer Request checklist on the [SNSP School Application Processing webpage](#).

Application & Transfer Request Processing

Application & Transfer Request Receipt: Applications and transfer requests may be accepted at any time during a school year. Applications and transfer requests must be accepted in the order that they are received.

- An application is considered to be "received" when the SNSP administrator or designee obtains all of the following: (1) the student's SNSP application; and (2) the required residency documentation.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Tony Evers, State Superintendent
125 S. Webster Street, P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841

School Management Services
Tricia Collins, Director
(608) 266-7475
Tricia.Collins@dpi.wi.gov

Special Needs Scholarship Program
1-888-245-2732 ext. 3
snsp@dpi.wi.gov
<http://dpi.wi.gov/sms/special-needs-scholarship>

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

- A transfer request is considered to be “received” when the SNSP administrator or designee obtains all of the following: (a) a Transfer Request Form; (b) residency documentation; and (c) the student’s most recent IEP or services plan.

If a school receives a SNSP student application or transfer request from a sibling of a current student at the school, the school may give the sibling preference over another student applicant. Preference may only be given if:

- The sibling’s application or transfer request is determined eligible prior to the date that the eligibility determination must be made for any student who submitted an earlier application or transfer request; and
- The school has not (a) sent the IEP/services plan verification email or notification email to the student’s resident school district for any student applicants who submitted an application earlier; or (b) sent the acceptance letter to any applicants who submitted a transfer request earlier.

Eligibility Review

- Applications:
 - Within twenty-one (21) days of receiving an application (21 day verification period) the SNSP administrator or designee must determine if the student is eligible using the application checklist items 1-21 and 27, including determining that the parent/guardian provided the correct residency documentation.
- Transfer Requests:
 - Within the 21 day verification period the SNSP administrator or designee must determine if the student is eligible using the transfer checklist items 1-26 and 28, including determining that the parent/guardian provided the correct residency documentation and a copy of the current IEP/services plan.
 - In addition, within the 21 day verification period, schools must send an email to the DPI to verify that the student was counted on the previous SNSP count report.

If any documentation provided is not correct, the school may obtain the correct documentation within the 21 day verification period.

Eligibility Notifications and Verifications: The school must then complete one of the following within the 21 day verification period based on the eligibility determination that is made and if there is space available at the school.

Eligibility Determination	Steps to be Completed During the 21 Day Verification Period After Eligibility is Determined
Ineligible	Send written notification to the parent. The notification must indicate that the student is not eligible for the program and the reason(s) for the ineligibility determination.

<p>Eligible but the school does not have space available</p>	<p>Send written notification to the parent/guardian. The notification must indicate that the student has an eligible transfer request or eligible application pending the IEP/services plan verification, but the school does not have space available and indicate the student’s place on the waiting list.</p>
<p>Eligible and the school has space available</p>	<p><u>Transfer Request:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send the letter of acceptance to the applicant. <p><u>Application:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send an email to the Local Education Agency (LEA) that developed the IEP or services plan requesting the following within five (5) business days: (a) verification that the student has an IEP or services plan that meets program requirements and (b) a copy of the IEP or services plan if the student has one that meets program requirements. See Appendix A for a sample email that can be sent to the LEA. The list of the public school district special education contacts is available on the WI Special Education Leadership Directory. • Send an email to the student’s resident school district notifying them that, pending the verification that an IEP or services plan is in effect, the student will receive a SNSP scholarship. This can be in the same email as the verification if the LEA and resident school district is the same. See Appendix B for a sample email if the LEA and school district are different.

Application Processing After IEP/Services Plan Verification (Applications Only): The LEA must send written notification indicating whether or not the student had an IEP or services plan that met the SNSP requirements. If the LEA only sends a copy of an IEP or services plan, the private school must follow up with the LEA to obtain the written notification of whether or not the student met the IEP or services plan requirement and, if so, if the student had an IEP or services plan.

The private school must complete the following within 7 days of the private school receiving the IEP or services plan verification from the LEA:

- Check the box on the application identifying the LEA’s response to the IEP/services plan verification.
- The SNSP administrator or designee must sign and date the application, as well as insert their printed name.
- Notify the student applicant whether or not they are eligible for the program. If the student is not eligible for the SNSP, the notification must indicate that the student is not eligible for the program and the reason(s) for the ineligibility determination.

If the LEA determines the student does not have an IEP or services plan that meets program requirements but the parent has documentation indicating that the student does, the parent should contact the LEA directly regarding the discrepancy. If the LEA determines the verification was completed incorrectly prior to the time the letter of denial is required to be sent, the LEA should send a revised verification email with the corrected information. If a revised email is not sent by the LEA to the private school within the 7 days, a letter of denial must be sent out by the private school based on the original email indicating the student is not eligible. If the LEA determines the verification was completed incorrectly after the letter of denial is sent to the student applicant, then the student applicant must submit a new SNSP application to the private school.

Application & Transfer Request Submission: The school must submit all eligible applications and transfer request forms to the DPI by the next upcoming submission deadline using the submission links emailed to SNSP administrators and designees. The submission deadlines are the 2nd Friday in August, the last weekday in August, the 3rd Friday in September, and the 2nd Friday in January. If possible, the applications and transfer requests should not be submitted until the school has determined if the applicant accepted or declined the seat.

Agreement of Services to be Provided: The school and the parent/guardian must agree to the services that will be provided to each SNSP student. The document must be signed by the parent/guardian and a representative of the school. The document must indicate the date the agreement was made.

The school will indicate if the parent/guardian and school have agreed to the services that will be provided on the pupil count report. If the school and parent/guardian have not agreed to the services that will be provided, the school will not be eligible for payment for the student. The agreement of services to be provided will be reviewed by the auditor as part of the Enrollment Audit. Once the school and the parent have agreed upon the services to be provided a new agreement is not required unless there is a change in the agreed upon services.

Documentation Retention: Schools are required to retain all of the following for at least five (5) years from the end of the school year in which the pupil applies or five (5) years after the pupil no longer attends the school, whichever occurs later:

- a. A copy of all letters accepting or denying any applications or transfer requests,
- b. All applications,
- c. All transfer request forms, and
- d. All supporting documentation received, including a copy of the IEP/services plan verification from the LEA for applications.

The school must retain this documentation even if the application or transfer request is not accepted or if the pupil declines a seat when offered. The *Comparison of Rights of Students with Disabilities and their Families under State and Federal Special Education Law and under the Wisconsin Special Needs Scholarship Program*, which is included with the application and transfer request does not need to be retained.

Corrections to Application & Transfer Request Information

1. Form Corrections: 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. The school must have written documentation to support the change. Any applications or transfer requests corrected with “white-out” will be ineligible for payment. **The SNSP administrator/designee and parent may not make the following changes to an application after the school sends the IEP/services plan verification email to the LEA or to a transfer request after the school sends a letter of acceptance or denial to the parent:**
 - Adding the parent signature and/or date signed to the application, transfer request form, or Alternative Residency Form.
 - Adding the date received.
 - Any changes that result in:
 - The application being ineligible due to residency or status of the IEP or services plan, or
 - The transfer request being ineligible due to residency, the student not being continuously enrolled in the SNSP, or the student having been determined to longer have a disability through an IEP reevaluation.
2. Grade Changes: Grade changes must be done by the school while completing the Preliminary Enrollment Report, the 3rd Friday in September Count report, or the 2nd Friday in January Count report. If any grade changes are missed in the count reports, the school must notify the auditor of the required change. The auditor will include the correction in the September or January Enrollment Audit.
3. Other Application or Transfer Request Information Changes: If the school determines that any other information submitted to the department was incorrect, the school must notify the school’s independent auditor of the required change. The auditor will include the correction in the September or January Enrollment Audit.

APPENDIX A
IEP/Services Plan LEA Verification Request Email

The following is a sample email that can be sent to the LEA that developed the IEP or services plan requesting verification that an applicant had an IEP or services plan in effect at the time the student applied to the SNSP.

Dear <LEA contact first name> < LEA contact last name>,

This email is to notify you that the following student has been found eligible by <private school name> to participate in the Special Needs Scholarship Program (SNSP), pending verification that the student has an individualized services program (IEP) or services plan that meets program requirements. The student must either have: (1) an IEP or services plan that was being implemented on <date application received> or (2) an IEP or services plan that was developed no earlier than September 15, 2015 AND have not subsequently been determined to no longer have a disability.

Student Name: <student first name> <student last name>

Student Date of Birth: <student date of birth>

The SNSP application indicates that he/she <“resides in your district” or “does not reside in your district, but that your LEA developed the IEP or services plan”>.

Please reply to this email and include the following within five (5) business days of receiving this email:

- 1) Indicate which of the following is true:
 - a. The student had an IEP that was either:
 - Being implemented as of <date application received>; or
 - Developed no earlier than September 15, 2015 AND the student has not had a more recent reevaluation since the plan was developed that determined that he or she no longer had a disability.
 - b. The student had a services plan that was either:
 - Being implemented as of <date application received>; or
 - Developed no earlier than September 15, 2015 AND the student has not had a more recent reevaluation since the plan was developed that determined that he or she no longer had a disability.
 - c. The LEA has no record that the student meets the requirement in a or b.
- 2) If the student had an IEP or services plan that meets the requirement, send a copy of the IEP or services plan.

If you have any questions, please reply to this email or call < school phone number>.

Thank you,

<Private School SNSP Administrator or Designee>

Appendix B

Resident School District Notification of Eligible SNSP Student

SNSP schools are required to send an email to the resident school district notifying them that, pending the verification that an IEP or services plan is in effect, a student will receive a SNSP scholarship. If the LEA that developed the IEP or services plan is the resident school district, only the email in Appendix A needs to be sent. If a different LEA developed the IEP or services plan, the email below or a similar communication must be sent to the resident school district.

Dear <resident school district contact first name> <resident school district contact last name>,

This email is to notify you that the following student has been found eligible by <private school name> to participate in the Special Needs Scholarship Program (SNSP), pending verification that the student has an individualized education program (IEP) or services plan that meets program requirements. The student must either have: (1) an IEP or services plan that was being implemented on <date application received> or (2) an IEP or services plan that was developed no earlier than September 15, 2015 AND have not subsequently been determined to no longer have a disability.

Student Name: <student first name> <student last name>

Student Date of Birth: <student date of birth>

Based on the SNSP application, a different Local Education Agency (LEA) developed the student's IEP or services plan. The email requesting verification that the student has an IEP or services plan that meets the SNSP requirement has been sent to this LEA.

If you have any questions, please reply to this email or call <school phone number>.

Thank you,

<Private School SNSP Administrator or Designee>