

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q.1 What fees can and cannot be charged Choice parents by the Choice school? Can the Choice school require fundraising and school service of the Choice parent?

A.1 A Choice student can be charged reasonable fees for personal items such as towels, gym clothes or uniforms, or social and extracurricular activities if not a required part of the curriculum. A Choice student cannot be charged fees for instruction, registration, tuition, books, teacher salaries, buildings, facilities maintenance or equipment, computers, or transportation if provided or reimbursed by Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS). A school may not impose any penalties on a parent or child in the Choice program for failure to engage in fundraising (which would include any required service to the school).

Q.2 Is transportation available in the Choice program?

A.2 A private Choice school is not required to provide transportation to Choice students. If the school chooses to provide transportation, a fee may be charged. In some cases, MPS will provide transportation or pay the parent a certain amount for their transportation costs through a contract. Check directly with the private school you plan to attend or MPS.

Q.3 Can I enroll my child in a Choice school after the school year begins? Can my child transfer to another Choice school in the middle of the school year?

A.3 A private Choice school may enroll new students into the Choice program if the school has a slot available and the school has established open application periods. Furthermore, a child may apply to the Choice program at more than one private school at the same time. A separate student application must be filled out (and submitted directly to the school) for each child for each Choice school, either to continue from one year to the next, transfer from one school to another or to enroll in the Choice program for the first time.

Q.4 How does the payment process work?

A.4 The state issues a check payable to the parent or guardian and sends it to the school where the child is enrolled in the Choice program (a check in September and November based on the 3rd Friday in September and a check in February and May based on the 2nd Friday in January). The parent or guardian must sign the check over to the school. The check is not for cash.

Q.5 Is a child in the Choice program at a private religious school required to participate in religious activities or instruction?

A.5 No. If a Choice student's parent or guardian submits to the student's teacher or the school's principal a written request that the student be excused from any religious activity, the teacher and school must honor that request.

Q.6 Are there statutory procedures regarding student suspensions and expulsions that a private Choice school is required to follow?

A.6 No. State law does not require private Choice schools to have any procedures in place regarding student suspensions or expulsions. Parents should check with the Choice school they are considering for their child regarding procedures the school has in place for imposition of or appeal of suspensions or expulsions.

For more information contact:

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The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program



Information for parents

THE MILWAUKEE PARENTAL CHOICE PROGRAM

allows students from low-income families who reside in the City of Milwaukee to attend any participating private school located in the city at no charge if certain eligibility criteria are met. Contact the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) for the list of schools participating in the program. You may also access the program's web page at: dpi.wi.gov/sms/choice.html

Payment of Allowable Fees

A Choice student may attend a Choice school at no charge for tuition. However, they may be required by the school to pay reasonable fees for social or extra-curricular activities or for personal use items such as uniforms, towels, or gym clothes. The student or their parents should check with the private school to determine what fees are charged to students attending under this program, if any.

Special Education Services

A Choice school may not discriminate against a child with special needs in the admission process or elsewhere. However, as a private school, the Choice school is only required to offer those services to assist students with special needs that it can provide with minor adjustments. **Parents should contact Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) for more information on the services provided to children with special needs enrolled in the public schools and the lesser services that MPS provides these children enrolled in private schools.**

Student Eligibility

Eligible students in grades kindergarten through 12 residing in the City of Milwaukee may apply for the Choice program at a participating private school during a period the school is accepting Choice applications. To qualify for the program in the 2009-10 school year, a student must reside in Milwaukee and live in a household with an income equal to or less than 175% of the federal poverty level (220% for students or siblings of students who participated in the MPCP in the school year immediately preceding the year he or she is applying to participate.) Income limits are shown below.

175% of the Federal Poverty Level (new students)	
2009-10 Maximum*	
Household Size	Yearly Income
1	\$18,729
2	\$25,211
3	\$31,693
4	\$38,175
For each additional member add \$6,482.	
220% of the Federal Poverty Level (continuing students and siblings)	
2009-10 Maximum*	
Household Size	Yearly Income
1	\$23,544
2	\$31,693
3	\$39,842
4	\$47,991
For each additional member add \$8,149.	

How To Apply

The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program Student Application Form, MPS-PCP-3A is used to apply to a private school participating under this program. This form may be obtained from the private school the pupil wishes to attend, downloaded from the program's web page at: dpi.wi.gov/sms/forms.html or by contacting DPI directly.

How To Apply (cont'd)

The student's parent or guardian must **submit an application directly to a participating private Choice school** during the school's open application period(s). Each Choice school decides which of the open application period(s) listed below it will accept Choice student applications. Applicants are required to

OPEN APPLICATION PERIODS

February 1 – February 20
 March 1 – March 20
 April 1 – April 20
 May 1 – May 20
 June 1 – June 20
 July 1 – July 20
 August 1 – August 20
 September 1 – September 14
 October 1 – October 20
 (for 2nd semester participation only)
 November 1 – November 20
 (for 2nd semester participation only)
 December 1 – January 7
 (for 2nd semester participation only)

submit the Choice application and proof of eligibility only during a school's open application period(s). Any application received outside a school's designated open application period(s) or not completed by the end of the specific application period will be considered ineligible. Parents are encouraged

to apply during the school's earliest open application period. A listing of the open application period(s) each school is participating in may be obtained from the program's website at: dpi.wi.gov/sms/choice.html or by contacting DPI directly.

If a private Choice school receives applications from more eligible students than it has Choice seats available, selection of students will be determined on a random basis. **In other words, the school cannot use grades, test scores, or other factors besides eligibility for the program in admitting Choice students.** However, preference may be given to Choice students at that school and their siblings.

It is recommended that parents keep in touch with the school to receive the latest information. Schools must notify parents within 60 days of receiving the application of admission or non-admission to the Choice program at the school.