

Step-by-Step Guide for First-Time Applicants to the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP)

Step 1: Check Your Eligibility

Before applying, confirm your family meets the basic requirements for the program:

- **Residency:** For the statewide program, your student must reside in Wisconsin but outside the City of Milwaukee and the Racine Unified School District.
- **Age/Grade:** The student must be applying for K4, K5, 1st, or 9th grade **OR** have met at least one of the following prior-year attendance requirements: the student was enrolled in a public school in Wisconsin, attended school in another state, was not enrolled in school (homeschool), participated in the Milwaukee, Racine or Wisconsin Parental Choice Programs, was on a waiting list for the Milwaukee, Racine or Wisconsin Parental Choice Programs.
- **Income:** As a first-time voucher student, your family's income must be at or below 220% of the federal poverty level. The income limit increases for larger families, and \$7,000 can be subtracted from the limit for married couples. Each school year's income limits are posted on DPI's website annually.

Step 2: Find a Participating School

- Locate the participating school(s) you wish to apply to and verify their open application periods for the WPCP. Beginning in the 2026-27 school year, schools will select in which open application periods they want to accept applications. Available options schools can choose from are in February-September.
- You can find a list of schools, their contact information and their open application periods on the [School Lists and Contact Information](#) section of the DPI website each year.

Step 3: Complete the Online Application

- Fill out the [Online Parent Application](#) during the school's open application period. The application link is posted on DPI's website.
- Once you complete the application, you'll receive an email confirmation with instructions for providing supporting documentation below.

Step 4: Provide Supporting Documentation

- **Residency:** Parents must submit proof of residency (e.g., utility bill, lease, tax statement) directly to the school(s).
- **Income:** As a new student, you must show proof of income eligibility. There are two avenues to do this, which are included in the confirmation instructions.
- Provide supporting the documents directly to each school you applied to during the open application period. The confirmation email you receive after submitting the online application will provide detailed instructions.

Step 5: Await Notification

- If more eligible students apply than there are seats available, schools will conduct a random lottery to determine what students are accepted or put on the waiting list. State law does allow for preference to be given to students in the following order: prior year voucher same school, siblings of prior year voucher same school, prior year voucher different school, siblings of prior year voucher different school, siblings of new students with a seat at your school and other new students.
- If selected, you must confirm your acceptance with the school.

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