



## **Initial Student Eligibility**

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. SNSP schools may accept SNSP applications from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> of each school year for that school year.

The following information is intended to assist SNSP schools in understanding the state law related to determining if a student with a disability meets the initial SNSP eligibility requirements. Additional information is available on the [Student Application & Transfer Request Processing webpage](#).

There is also a Continuing & Transfer Student Eligibility bulletin available on the [Student Application & Transfer Request Processing webpage](#) that explains the student eligibility requirements for continuing students.

Under Wis. Stat. § 115.7915, beginning with the 2018-19 school year, a student with a disability may be eligible to participate in the SNSP if the student meets all of the following eligibility requirements:

- IEP or Services Plan. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) or services plan that meets program requirements.
- Wisconsin Resident. The student resides in Wisconsin. Further information on the residency requirements is available in the [Residency Documentation Bulletin](#).

Students must be age eligible for four-year old and five-year old kindergarten (K4 and K5) and first grade. By September 1 of the school year the student is applying for, K4 students must be four (4) years old, K5 must be five (5) years old, and 1<sup>st</sup> graders must be six (6) years old. Additionally, student applicants may not be 21 as of the date they apply or September 1, whichever is later.

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### **IEP OR SERVICES PLAN**

To be eligible to participate in the SNSP, a student must have an IEP or services plan that meets program requirements. An IEP is a written statement that outlines an educational plan for a student with a disability who is enrolled in a public school. IEPs are developed, reviewed, and revised by a student's IEP team. A services plan is a written statement that describes the special education and related services a public school will provide to a student with a disability placed in a private school by his/her parent.

IEPs and services plans are developed by a Local Education Agency (LEA). LEAs include public school districts and independent charter schools. A plan developed by a private school that describes the services it will provide to students attending their school does not meet the SNSP eligibility requirements.

An IEP or services plan meets program requirements if either:

- The student's IEP or services plan is being implemented at the time the student applies for the SNSP, **or**
- The student's IEP or services plan was developed no earlier than 3 years prior to September 15<sup>th</sup> of the school term for which the student is submitting an application (for example, September 15, 2016 for the 2019-20 school year) **AND** there has not been a more recent reevaluation that determined the student no longer had a disability.

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **Q1. If a student applies for the SNSP and the Choice program, how should I proceed?**

First the parent/guardian must determine which program they will participate in. Once the parent makes this determination he or she should provide the school with a signed document or email indicating the program preference that includes the parent name, student name and student date of birth. If the parent/guardian chooses to withdraw from the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program or Racine Parental Choice Program, no communication to the department is required. If the parent/guardian chooses to withdraw from the SNSP, the school must send an email to [snsp@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:snsp@dpi.wi.gov) with the student name and student date of birth. If the parent/guardian chooses to withdraw from the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP), the school must send an email to [privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov) with the student name, student date of birth, and grade level that includes one of the following:

1. School form showing the student has withdrawn from the WPCP for the school year. The form must include the student name and be signed by the parent.
2. A letter or email from the parent sent to the school which includes the parent(s) name, the student name and the school name stating the student has withdrawn from the WPCP for the school year.

**Q2. Does a services plan that the private school developed meet the SNSP eligibility requirements?**

No. A plan developed by a private school that describes the services it will provide to students attending their school does not meet the SNSP eligibility requirements.