

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First year figures for Special Needs Scholarship Program announced

MADISON — The Department of Public Instruction today announced 2016-17 school year enrollment figures for the newly created Special Needs Scholarship Program (SNSP).

Student enrollment in the SNSP is determined by counts that take place on the third Friday in September. In its first year, 206 students received vouchers to attend a private school, which is 202.4 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. In most cases, one student counts as one FTE. However, in certain cases, the FTE can be less. For example, depending on services provided, a 4-year-old kindergarten (K4) student may be counted as 0.5 FTE or 0.6 FTE. For the 2016-17 school year, each participating private school may receive a voucher payment of \$12,000 per FTE. The overall cost of the program is estimated at \$2.4 million for the first year.

To be eligible for a special needs voucher, a student must be enrolled in a public school district for the entire previous school year, have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or services plan that is in effect, and have been denied a seat through the Public School Open Enrollment program. Alternative eligibility criteria were written into the law for the first year of the SNSP. Those criteria allow students who were not attending a public school for the entire prior school year to be eligible for a special needs voucher only if the student had an IEP or services plan that was developed or implemented between July 1, 2011, and June 30, 2016, and met the open enrollment denial requirements between the 2011-12 and 2015-16 school years.

The SNSP is paid for through a deduction in state aid applied to the public school district where the student resides. Pupils in the SNSP are included in the resident public school district's membership for state general aid and revenue limit purposes. If the resident school district's general school aid payments are insufficient to cover the SNSP cost, the department will deduct the remaining amount from other state aid payments the district will receive.

Students who are enrolled in the SNSP are, by and large, treated as parentally placed private school students. Private schools accepting students are required to implement the IEP or services plan of SNSP students as modified by agreement between the private school and the student's parent or guardian, but the student is no longer entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) or the legal remedies provided by an IEP. Additionally, a participating private school may charge tuition and fees above and beyond the \$12,000 voucher payment that the school receives from the state.

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NOTES: A list of school districts that have students receiving Special Needs Scholarship Program vouchers to attend a private school is attached. More information about the SNSP can be found at <http://dpi.wi.gov/sms/special-needs-scholarship>. This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2016_104.pdf.

Special Needs Scholarship Program (SNSP)

2016-17 School Aid Deductions

District	FTE	School Aid Deduction
Arrowhead UHS District	7.0	\$84,000
Brown Deer School District	1.0	\$12,000
Cudahy School District	1.0	\$12,000
Elmbrook School District	1.0	\$12,000
Germantown School District	1.0	\$12,000
Greendale School District	1.0	\$12,000
Greenfield School District	1.0	\$12,000
Hamilton School District	1.0	\$12,000
Madison Metropolitan School District	6.8	\$81,600
Medford Area Public School District	1.0	\$12,000
Milwaukee Public Schools	151.6	\$1,819,200
Muskego-Norway School District	1.0	\$12,000
North Lake School District	1.0	\$12,000
Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District	1.0	\$12,000
Pewaukee School District	1.0	\$12,000
Racine Unified School District	13.0	\$156,000
Swallow School District	1.0	\$12,000
Watertown Unified School District	1.0	\$12,000
Waukesha School District	4.0	\$48,000
Wauwatosa School District	3.0	\$36,000
West Allis-West Milwaukee School District	2.0	\$24,000
Whitefish Bay School District	1.0	\$12,000
Totals	202.4	\$2,428,800

NOTE: Unaudited data as of October 2016. Based on 3rd Friday in September SNSP membership data.