

Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) Question and Answer Document

Q: If my child is enrolling at St. Matthew's and I hope to use the choice program, for which program am I eligible?

A: St. Matthew's will be part of the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program. This is for students who transfer to St. Matthew's from a public school or are entering grades 4K, Kindergarten, or Grade 1 for 2017-2018. There are two other choice programs in Wisconsin. However, they are confined to specific areas of the state (Milwaukee and Racine).

Q: How does someone qualify for the WPCP?

A: There are two qualifications:

Students may live in any county in the state other than in the city of Milwaukee or in the Racine Unified School District; and

The family's income must be 185% of the Federal Poverty Level. See the attached document for more details on that. Please note that income amount that the state is looking for corresponds to your adjusted gross income on your 1040 tax form for 2018.

Q: How does a student apply for the WPCP?

A: The application period is from February 1-April 20, 2018. Late applications will not be accepted for any reason. As we near that window, I will send out details with links to use for the online application process.

Q: What else do I need to provide in order to have my application accepted?

A: All applicant families must provide two pieces of information to St. Matthew's.

One is proof of residency. This may be a recent utility bill, a cable bill, a tax bill, or another government-issued mailing that proves that the family lives at the location that it claims.

Secondly, the family must document its financial eligibility. For those using the Department of Revenue (DOR) method, this means providing the Social Security number(s) of the parent(s) to St. Matthew's. For those using the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) method, this typically means providing their completed 2018 tax forms and W-2s to St. Matthew's.

Whichever method the family selects, the online application form informs parents what to provide to St. Matthew's.

Q: If my child qualifies for the Choice program, do I need to re-apply each year after that?

A: Yes, but only to prove residency. You do not have to provide income verification after the first year. In other words, if your child is a "Choice" student next year, that child can remain a Choice student all the way through high school (if the child attends Lakeside or Luther Prep), regardless of how your income might change.

Q: Is there a limit to the number of students who may attend St. Matthew’s through the WPCP in 2017-2018?

A: Yes. The Department of Public Instruction asks each participating school to select the number of seats that it wishes to open.

In addition, state law mandates that a maximum of 4% of the number of pupils in a public school district may participate in the WPCP. For this reason, it is possible that some students who apply to the WPCP may not be selected even if all open seats are not filled. Applying for St. Matthew’s financial aid is important as a backup to the WPCP.

Q: What if family income rises in subsequent years?

A: A “once in, always in” provision allows your child to keep his or her voucher even if family income rises above the income limits in subsequent years. Family income is determined for each child in the year they enter the WPCP. Therefore, families could have some children qualify and others not qualify for the WPCP depending on the amount of the family’s Adjusted Gross Income in the year in which each child sought entry into the program. The “once in, always in” provision applies only if a student continues to attend a school in the WPCP and does not voluntarily leave the program.

Q: What are the income limits for 2019-20?

A: For the 2019-20 school year, the family income of a student applying to the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) must be at or below the amount listed in the table below. If a student is continuing in the program or was on the Department of Public Instruction’s choice waiting list in the prior year, he or she is no longer required to meet the income limits. Family income includes the income of the student’s parent(s) or legal guardian(s) that reside in the same household as the student applicant. If the student’s parents/legal guardians are married their income is reduced by \$7,000 when determining income eligibility for the program. Family size includes parents/legal guardians and their children by birth, marriage or adoption that reside in the same household as the student applicant.

185% of the Federal Poverty Level for 2019-20

<u>Family Size</u>	<u>Maximum Yearly Income*</u>
2	\$36,212
3	\$45,716
4	\$55,220
5	\$64,724
6	\$74,228
7	\$83,732

For each additional member add \$9,504

*As determined by Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) on the federal income tax return for the prior calendar year (2018 for the 2019-20 school year).