



## 1999 ASSEMBLY BILL 229

March 23, 1999 – Introduced by Representative WILLIAMS. Referred to Committee on Education Reform.

1     **AN ACT to amend** 119.23 (2) (a) 1., 2. and 3. and 119.23 (4); and **to create** 119.23  
2             (10) of the statutes; **relating to:** the Milwaukee parental choice program and  
3             making an appropriation.

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### *Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau*

This bill makes a number of changes to the statutes governing the Milwaukee parental choice program (MPCP), which allows certain pupils to attend participating private schools in Milwaukee at state expense. The changes include the following:

1. Currently, the pupil must be a member of a family with a total family income of no more than 1.75 times the federal poverty level in order to participate in the MPCP. This bill raises that limit to 2.2 times the federal poverty level.

2. Currently, in order to participate in the MPCP, in the previous school year the pupil had to be enrolled in the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS); attending a private school under the MPCP; enrolled in grades kindergarten to three in a private school located in Milwaukee other than under the MPCP; or not enrolled in school. This bill allows all pupils who, in the previous school year, were enrolled in MPS or who were attending a private school located in Milwaukee to participate.

3. Currently, a private school must notify the department of public instruction (DPI) of its intent to participate in the MPCP by May 1 of the previous school year. This bill changes the date to February 1.

4. State payment for a pupil attending a private school under the MPCP is an amount equal to the per pupil aid amount received by MPS or an amount equal to the private school's operating and debt service cost per pupil, whichever is less. DPI

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sends the check, which is made out to the pupil's parent or guardian, to the private school. The parent or guardian must endorse the check for the use of the private school.

This bill retains this payment procedure for pupils attending sectarian private schools. For pupils attending nonsectarian private schools, the bill provides for the payment to be made directly to the school.

5. This bill directs DPI, in cooperation with the pupil assignment council (which consists of one representative from each private school participating in the MPCP), to establish a public information campaign to inform the parents of all pupils who are eligible to participate in the MPCP, and the eligible pupils, about the MPCP.

For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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*The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:*

1           **SECTION 1.** 119.23 (2) (a) 1., 2. and 3. of the statutes are amended to read:

2           119.23 (2) (a) 1. The pupil is a member of a family that has a total family income  
3 that does not exceed an amount equal to ~~1.75~~ 2.2 times the poverty level determined  
4 in accordance with criteria established by the director of the federal office of  
5 management and budget.

6           2. In the previous school year the pupil was enrolled in the school district  
7 operating under this chapter, was attending a private school ~~under this section,~~ was  
8 ~~enrolled in grades kindergarten to 3 in a private school located in the city other than~~  
9 ~~under this section~~ or was not enrolled in school.

10          3. The private school notified the state superintendent of its intent to  
11 participate in the program under this section by ~~May~~ February 1 of the previous  
12 school year. The notice shall specify the number of pupils participating in the  
13 program under this section for which the school has space.

14          **SECTION 2.** 119.23 (4) of the statutes is amended to read:

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1           119.23 (4) Upon receipt from the pupil's parent or guardian of proof of the  
2 pupil's enrollment in the private school, the state superintendent shall pay to the  
3 private school if the private school is nonsectarian, or to the parent or guardian if the  
4 private school is sectarian, from the appropriation under s. 20.255 (2) (fu), an amount  
5 equal to the total amount to which the school district is entitled under s. 121.08  
6 divided by the school district membership, or an amount equal to the private school's  
7 operating and debt service cost per pupil that is related to educational programming,  
8 as determined by the department, whichever is less. The state superintendent shall  
9 pay 25% of the total amount in September, 25% in November, 25% in February and  
10 25% in May. The department shall send the check to the private school. ~~The~~ If the  
11 check is paid to the parent or guardian, the parent or guardian shall restrictively  
12 endorse the check for the use of the private school.

13           **SECTION 3.** 119.23 (10) of the statutes is created to read:

14           119.23 (10) The department, in cooperation with the pupil assignment council  
15 under sub. (8), shall establish a public information campaign to inform the parents  
16 of all pupils who are eligible to attend a private school under this section, and the  
17 eligible pupils, about the program under this section.

18           **SECTION 4. Appropriation changes; public instruction.**

19           (1) MILWAUKEE PARENTAL CHOICE PROGRAM. In the schedule under section  
20 20.005 (3) of the statutes for the appropriation to the department of public  
21 instruction under section 20.255 (1) (a) of the statutes, as affected by the acts of 1999,  
22 the dollar amount is increased by \$30,000 for fiscal year 1999-00 for the public  
23 information campaign under section 119.23 (10) of the statutes, as created by this  
24 act.

25           **SECTION 5. Initial applicability.**

