



State of Wisconsin
2019 - 2020 LEGISLATURE

LRB-4529/1
KRP:cjs

2019 SENATE BILL 495

October 10, 2019 – Introduced by Senator OLSEN, cosponsored by Representative JAGLER. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 **AN ACT to amend** 115.7915 (2) (c), 118.60 (1) (ab), 118.60 (3) (ar) 1., 118.60 (3)
2 (ar) 2., 118.60 (3) (ar) 6. b., 118.60 (7) (em) 1., 119.23 (1) (ab) 1. and 119.23 (7)
3 (em) 1. of the statutes; **relating to:** application and reporting deadlines for the
4 statewide parental choice program and evidence of accreditation for a private
5 school participating in a parental choice program.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill makes the following changes to parental choice programs:

1. Under current law, a private school may accept applications from pupils to attend the private school under the statewide parental choice program for the following school year from February 1 to April 20. The bill changes the application period to begin on the first weekday in February and end on the third Thursday in April.

2. Under current law, a private school that receives applications from pupils for the statewide parental choice program must, no later than the May 1 immediately following the application period, report the number of applicants to the Department of Public Instruction so that DPI may determine whether a pupil participation limitation has been exceeded. The bill changes that reporting deadline to the first weekday in May.

3. Under current law, a private school participating in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, the Racine Parental Choice Program, or the statewide parental choice program must annually provide DPI with evidence that the private school

SENATE BILL 495

remains accredited for the current school year, including a letter from an accrediting entity that confirms that the private school is accredited by that entity as of the date of the letter. The bill requires that a private school must submit a “notice” from an accrediting entity, rather than a “letter.”

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

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

1 **SECTION 1.** 115.7915 (2) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

2 115.7915 (2) (c) The eligible school has been approved as a private school by the
3 state superintendent under s. 118.165 (2) or is accredited by AdvaneED Cognia, Inc.,
4 Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Accreditation, the Independent
5 Schools Association of the Central States, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
6 School Accreditation, Wisconsin Association of Christian Schools, National
7 Lutheran School Accreditation, Christian Schools International, Association of
8 Christian Schools International, the diocese or archdiocese within which the eligible
9 school is located, or any other organization recognized by the National Council for
10 Private School Accreditation, as of the August 1 preceding the school term for which
11 the scholarship is awarded.

12 **SECTION 2.** 118.60 (1) (ab) of the statutes is amended to read:

13 118.60 (1) (ab) “Accrediting entity” means AdvaneED Cognia, Inc., Wisconsin
14 Religious and Independent Schools Accreditation, Independent Schools Association
15 of the Central States, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation,
16 National Lutheran School Accreditation, Wisconsin Association of Christian
17 Schools, Christian Schools International, Association of Christian Schools
18 International, the diocese or archdiocese within which a private school is located, and

SENATE BILL 495

1 any other organization recognized by the National Council for Private School
2 Accreditation.

3 **SECTION 3.** 118.60 (3) (ar) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

4 118.60 (3) (ar) 1. A private school that has submitted a notice of intent to
5 participate under sub. (2) (a) 3. a. may accept applications for the following school
6 year between the first weekday in February ~~1~~ and the 3rd Thursday in April ~~20~~ from
7 pupils who reside in a school district, other than an eligible school district or a 1st
8 class city school district.

9 **SECTION 4.** 118.60 (3) (ar) 2. of the statutes is amended to read:

10 118.60 (3) (ar) 2. By the first weekday in May ~~1~~ immediately following the
11 application period under subd. 1., each private school that received applications
12 under subd. 1. shall report to the department the number of pupils who have applied
13 under subd. 1. to attend the private school under this section and the names of those
14 applicants ~~that~~ who have siblings who have also applied under subd. 1. to attend the
15 private school under this section.

16 **SECTION 5.** 118.60 (3) (ar) 6. b. of the statutes is amended to read:

17 118.60 (3) (ar) 6. b. The pupil's residence changed ~~between April 21~~ after the
18 end of the application period under subd. 1. and on or before the 3rd Friday in August
19 and the pupil continues to reside in a school district other than an eligible school
20 district or a 1st class city school district.

21 **SECTION 6.** 118.60 (7) (em) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

22 118.60 (7) (em) 1. The governing body of each private school participating in
23 the program under this section shall, subject to subd. 2., annually, by August 1,
24 provide the department with evidence demonstrating that the private school
25 remains accredited for the current school year as required under par. (ad), ~~except~~

SENATE BILL 495**SECTION 6**

1 ~~that in the 2017-18 school year the governing body shall submit the evidence by~~
2 ~~January 15, 2018.~~ The governing body shall include as evidence of accreditation a
3 letter notice prepared by an accrediting entity that confirms that the private school
4 is accredited by that entity as of the date of the letter notice.

5 **SECTION 7.** 119.23 (1) (ab) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

6 119.23 (1) (ab) 1. ~~AdvancED~~ Cognia, Inc., Wisconsin Religious and
7 Independent Schools Accreditation, Independent Schools Association of the Central
8 States, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation, National
9 Lutheran School Accreditation, Wisconsin Association of Christian Schools,
10 Christian Schools International, Association of Christian Schools International, the
11 diocese or archdiocese within which a private school is located, and any other
12 organization recognized by the National Council for Private School Accreditation.

13 **SECTION 8.** 119.23 (7) (em) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

14 119.23 (7) (em) 1. The governing body of each private school participating in
15 the program under this section shall, subject to subd. 2., annually, by August 1,
16 provide the department with evidence demonstrating that the private school
17 remains accredited for the current school year as required under par. (ad), ~~except~~
18 ~~that in the 2017-18 school year the governing body shall submit the evidence by~~
19 ~~January 15, 2018.~~ The governing body shall include as evidence of accreditation a
20 letter notice prepared by an accrediting entity that confirms that the private school
21 is accredited by that entity as of the date of the letter notice.

22 **SECTION 9. Initial applicability.**

23 (1) The treatment of s. 118.60 (3) (ar) 1. and 2. first applies to an application
24 to attend a private school under s. 118.60 submitted for the 2020-21 school year.

25 (END)