

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DPI 10/15/2021

LRB Number	21-4673/1	Introduction Number	AB-0617	Estimate Type	Original
Description early admission to kindergarten and first grade at a private school participating in a parental choice program					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

Under current law, a child may not be admitted to four-year-old kindergarten (4K), five-year-old kindergarten (5K), or first grade, unless the child is four years old, five years old, or six years old, respectively, on or before September 1 of the school year. However, current law also requires school boards to prescribe procedures, conditions, and standards for early admission (early admission policy) to 4K, 5K and first grade, and provides an exception to the minimum age requirements for children admitted in accordance with a school board's early admission policy.

Current law also specifies that for purposes of counting pupils enrolled in schools or school districts, a pupil enrolled in 4K, 5K, or first grade may only be counted if the pupil satisfies the minimum age set by law or an age allowed under a school board's early admission policy.

This bill creates an exception to the minimum age requirements for admission to 4K, 5K, or first grade for private schools participating in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, Racine Parental Choice Program, or the Wisconsin Statewide Parental Choice Program (collectively, private school choice programs). The bill authorizes the governing body of a private choice school to establish an early admission policy for 4K, 5K, and first grade. Under the bill, a child who is admitted in accordance with a governing body's early admission policy may be counted as a pupil enrolled in the private school.

State Impact: Indeterminate

The bill could impact the number of students who participate in a private school choice program via an early admissions policy, which would impact state payments made to private choice schools. For the RPCP and WPCP, those state's costs for the students who are admitted early would be offset by a reduction to the state aid payments of the school districts of residence of the students (so a net cost of zero to the state).

For the MPCP, the state is covering an increasing share of the costs of the program, such that by 2024-25, the state will fully cover the costs of all MPCP students. To the extent that the bill results in more student enrolled into the MPCP than otherwise would be the case, the state's costs associated with the MPCP could increase (depending on total MPCP enrollments). DPI cannot project the number of early admissions likely to occur within any of the state's three choice programs; thus, the fiscal impact on the state is indeterminate.

Local: Indeterminate

The bill could impact the number of students who participate in a private school choice program via an early admissions policy.

For the RPCP & WPCP, the state's costs for the students who are admitted early would be offset by a reduction to the state aid payments of the school districts of residence of the students, but the school districts receive an adjustment to their revenue limit (can raise tax levy) to make up for the loss in state aid. Thus, the impact of additional enrollments in the RPCP & WPCP (due to early admissions) would be borne by taxpayers. DPI cannot project the potential impact on taxpayers due to early admissions in the RPCP & WPCP.

For the MPCP, the aid reduction is specific to the Milwaukee Public School (MPS) district and MPS is permitted to levy for that aid reduction; however, the MPS aid reduction is a portion of the total cost for MPCP students, and that portion is decreasing each year until it reaches zero percent in the 2024-25 school year. Thus, for the MPCP, the state is covering an increasing share of the costs for the program, until it is paid for entirely with state resources by the 2024-25 school year. To the extent that the bill results in more students enrolled in an MPCP private school (due to early admissions policy) the base costs of the MPCP could increase; but because the MPS share of the MPCP cost via the reduction to MPS' state aid is diminishing (to zero by the 2024-25 school year), the cost of the MPCP that is borne by taxpayers (due to backfilling the aid reduction with tax levy) would offset the additional costs associated with early admissions. By 2024-25, the costs associated with early

admissions to the MPCP would be fully borne by the state.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications