

---

# Wisconsin Legislative Council

## ACT MEMO

---



**Prepared by:** Dan Schmidt, Deputy Director

March 8, 2024

**2023 Wisconsin Act 95**  
[2023 Senate Bill 367]

**Guaranteed Admission to UW  
System Institutions**

### CURRENT LAW

Current law does not require the University of Wisconsin System (UWS) to provide guaranteed admission.

### 2023 WISCONSIN ACT 95

2023 Wisconsin Act 95 requires school boards, charter school operators, and governing bodies of private schools and tribal schools that operate high schools to prepare a class ranking of pupils for the purposes of facilitating guaranteed admissions to the UWS, and requires the Board of Regents of the UWS to establish a guaranteed admissions program for applicants who achieve certain academic rankings.

#### Class Rankings

The act requires school boards, charter school operators, and governing bodies of private schools and tribal schools that operate high schools with at least 15 pupils in a given class to prepare a class ranking of pupils at the end of 11<sup>th</sup> grade. The class ranking must be made solely on the basis of a pupil's grade point average. Each class ranking must identify those pupils who rank in the top five percent of their high school class and those pupils who rank in the top 10 percent of their high school class. The school must then notify each pupil ranked in the top 10 percent of the pupil's high school class that the pupil is ranked, as applicable, in the top five percent or in the top 10 percent of the pupil's high school class and include the appropriate ranking on the pupil's high school transcript as of the pupil's completion of grade 11.

If a high school's class enrollment is at least 15, but less than 20 pupils, the school board, operator of the charter school, or governing body of the private school or tribal school shall identify the highest ranked and 2<sup>nd</sup> highest ranked pupils in the class using the aforementioned ranking method. For the purposes of the act, the highest ranked pupil must be considered to be in the top five percent of the pupil's high school class and the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest ranked pupil must be considered to be in the top 10 percent of the pupil's high school class.

#### Guaranteed Admission

The act requires UWS to guarantee admission to applicants in response to the required ranking system described above. Under the act, an applicant is guaranteed admission to the UW System school of the applicant's choice, except UW-Madison, provided one the following criteria apply:

- The applicant is enrolled in a public, private, or tribal high school in Wisconsin and is ranked in the top 10 percent of the applicant's high school class in the high school ranking system required under the act;

- The applicant is homeschooled or enrolled in a virtual private school and achieves an ACT examination score that places the applicant in the national 90<sup>th</sup> percentile ranking or higher; or
- The applicant is a National Merit Scholarship finalist.

The act guarantees admission to UW-Madison applicants, provided one the following criteria apply:

- The applicant is enrolled in a public, private, or tribal high school in Wisconsin and is ranked in the top five percent of the applicant's high school class in the high school ranking system required under the act;
- The applicant is homeschooled or enrolled in a virtual private school and achieves an ACT examination score that places the applicant in the national 98<sup>th</sup> percentile ranking or higher; or
- The applicant is a National Merit Scholarship finalist.

**Effective date:** February 22, 2024. (The class ranking provisions first apply to the 2024-25 school year and the guaranteed admissions provisions first apply to admissions for the 2025-26 academic year.)

For a full history of the bill, visit the Legislature's [bill history page](#).

DWS:ksm