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## DPI releases numbers on 2021-22 general school aids

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction today posted state general school aids that school districts will receive during the current school year. The information published includes certified general school aid amounts for each school district, as well as 2021-22 student enrollment numbers for independent charter schools and private schools participating in state parental choice programs. The enrollment numbers are used to determine the dollar amounts to be deducted or withheld from school districts' aid payments to fund state parental choice programs.

General school aids are the largest form of state support for PK-12 schools in Wisconsin and are based on prior year data. Private school choice and independent charter school programs are funded based on current year data.

The department is required by state law to release the certified aid figures by Oct. 15 of each year. The general school aid amounts for school districts are calculated using student counts and year-end financial data from the previous school year (2020-21), reflecting the impact of COVID-19 on district enrollments and costs. This finalized data replaces [preliminary aid estimates released in July](#).

Independent charter and private school choice enrollment counts come from schools' reporting the number of students enrolled on the third Friday of September 2021.

### General school aids

The 2021-2023 state biennial budget increased funding for general school aids for the 2021-22 school year by 2.2 percent (\$110.0 million) to a total of \$5.01 billion, which will go toward offsetting local property taxes. Statewide, the majority of general school aids is [equalization aid](#). Equalization aid is distributed according to a formula designed to help Wisconsin communities provide public education despite local differences in property wealth. The formula considers school district expenditures, property values, and resident student counts (called “membership”). The other, smaller elements of general school aids are [integration aid](#) (or “Chapter 220” aid) and [special adjustment aid](#). The latter, also known as “hold harmless” aid, generally prevents districts from seeing more than a 15 percent reduction in aid from one year to the next and will go to 62 districts this year.

(more)

Aid varies widely by district based on the equalization formula. Of 421 districts, 272 will receive more aid than last year (65 percent); 144 will receive less (34 percent). Aid amounts for each school district can be found on the department's [School Financial Services website](#), both alphabetically and by percent change. General school aids are paid in four installments during the school year.

By law, two kinds of reductions are made to general school aids to support private school choice and independent charter programs. Funding for the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program is deducted before school district aid eligibilities are certified. Newer independent charter schools and the expanded private school choice programs involve withholding aid from districts for participating resident students, resulting in a difference between aid eligibility announced today and actual aid payments to be made this year. Shown in the table below are the 2021-22 reductions to state general school aids:

2021-22 Reductions to State General School Aids			
Program	Impact	Method	Total Amount
Newer Independent Charter Schools	65 Districts	Withheld	\$13.6 million
Wisconsin Parental Choice Program	309 Districts	Withheld	\$116.2 million
Milwaukee Parental Choice Program	Milwaukee	Deducted	\$22.8 million
Racine Parental Choice Program	Racine	Withheld	\$27.9 million
Special Needs Scholarship Program	160 Districts	Withheld	\$22.2 million

#### Private school choice program and independent charter enrollments

Enrollment in Wisconsin's private school choice programs increased by 3,040 students and 14 schools over last school year (see table below). Voucher payments and independent charter payments are made to participating schools in four annual installments.

Program	Students	Schools*	Total Cost (2021-22)**
Milwaukee Parental Choice Program	28,770	129	\$237.7 million
Wisconsin Parental Choice Program	14,452	301	\$119.1 million
Racine Parental Choice Program	3,940	27	\$32.7 million
Special Needs Scholarship Program	1,757	134	\$22.2 million
<b>All Private School Choice Programs</b>	<b>48,919</b>	<b>357 ***</b>	<b>\$411.7 million</b>
Legacy Independent Charter Schools	9,132	23	\$81.9 million
Newer Independent Charter Schools	1,559	9	\$13.6 million
<b>Both Independent Charter Programs</b>	<b>10,691</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>\$95.5 million</b>

\*Private school systems are counted as a single school for all programs except the Special Needs Scholarship Program, in which individual schools are counted separately.

\*\*Differences between total program cost and total program aid deductions are funded with state general purpose revenue.

\*\*\*Schools may participate in multiple parental choice programs.

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**NOTE:** Data on the Wisconsin, Racine, and Milwaukee Parental Choice Programs can be found at <http://dpi.wi.gov/parental-education-options/choice-programs/data>. Data on the Special Needs Scholarship Program can be found at <https://dpi.wi.gov/parental-education-options/special-needs-scholarship/data>. Data on the Independent Charter Programs can be found at <https://dpi.wi.gov/parental-education-options/charter-schools/current/2r-membership>. This news release is available electronically at <https://dpi.wi.gov/news/releases/2021/general-school-aids-certified-wisconsin>.