



Wisconsin Chapter 220 Interdistrict Transfer Program OVERVIEW

Background: The Wisconsin Chapter 220-Interdistrict Transfer Program is the oldest of Milwaukee's parental choice programs. The program was established in 1976 to promote racial integration of Milwaukee and its surrounding suburban districts. In the 2011-2012 school year, 2,025 Milwaukee students attended suburban schools in the 24 participating school districts and about 341 suburban students attend Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS).

The program coincided with a federal court order for desegregation in Milwaukee. At its beginning (1976), twelve suburban school districts participated. From 1976 to 1987 minority students were able to transfer to schools in up to 17 suburban schools. In 1984 the growing level of segregation in Milwaukee and the surrounding suburbs led to a lawsuit (filed by the NAACP and Milwaukee Public Schools) against suburban school districts. That settlement expired in 1993 at which time MPS and the suburban districts extended the agreement for two years. Since 1995, MPS has entered into individual contracts with each of the 24 suburbs. Under current law a school district qualifying for the Chapter 220 Program with less than 30% minority population also qualifies for state aid to support minority students transferring in from a district with 30% or higher minority population. Brown Deer, Glendale and Nicolet School Districts no longer qualify as 220 aid districts since their resident minority population exceeds 30%. The contracts also work in the opposite direction allowing suburban students to attend schools in Milwaukee.

The Chapter 220 Program is funded with state aid and was intended to voluntarily draw minority students into low-minority districts for the purpose of improving racial balance and thereby fostering understanding and appreciation of cultural differences. The state aid for each pupil transferred into a district is equal to the district's annual cost of educating the student. MPS is responsible, with state funding, for transporting all students participating in the program.

Status: The Shorewood School District has participated in the Chapter 220 Program since its initial year of existence (1976). The district enrolled nonresident Chapter 220 students gradually, starting small and then growing to full classes. The peak was 1994-1995 at 430 students. Since the 1995-96 school year the district has maintained a high level of participating in the Chapter 220 program. About 146 students currently attend the Shorewood Schools through this program.

These students bring a diverse population to our school classrooms and enrich the lives and understanding of our resident students. The program is mutually beneficial. The

non-resident students gain the advantage of a well-established and successful educational program.

The Shorewood School District utilizes a local Chapter 220 Planning Council to establish the number of seats provided through the program. A main goal for this planning council is to make seats available while preserving the integrity and quality of our programs at all levels. The Shorewood School District has been very careful to make seats available that do not require additional staffing at any grade level.

The Chapter 220 Program is funded by the state at our full average cost per student, which is over \$11,000, but this money cannot increase the District's total budget. Like other state aid, it can only be used to lower property taxes. That is to say, no matter how many Chapter 220 students the District serves, the revenue cap stays the same, though the property taxes in Shorewood may go up or down.

Each year interest groups outside the Milwaukee metro area propose abandonment of the 220 program to recapture the program support funds for other purposes. The Shorewood School District has consistently opposed such efforts and has supported legislation to sustain the current program.

Probable Impact over the Next Three to Five Years: There has been speculation for a number of years that, in the near future, major changes might occur in the Chapter 220 Program. Any significant change impacting the number of students who participate would have a variety of effects on the educational opportunities and operation of our schools.

Some of the speculation regarding the demise of the program is the result of some suburban districts experiencing changing populations. As a result, these school districts have changed their views on Chapter 220. Years ago the legislature reduced the amount of sender aid paid to the Milwaukee Public Schools from 1.0 to 0.75 per full time equivalent (F.T.E.) student. This change reduced MPS sender aid by one-quarter and has had the impact of limiting MPS's transportation of students.

While the tightening of budgets has caused some strain on the program, it is important to understand the full impact should this program ever be lost. Beyond the educational impact for the students who may have attended Shorewood Schools and the social and cultural impact to our resident student population, the financial impact also would be dramatic to the Shorewood community. Estimated 2010-11 property taxes in the Shorewood School District would increase by approximately 8.6% per household as a result of the loss of \$1,566,067 in state support. This estimate is based on actual information used in the calculation of state aid for the 2008-09 school year. Further, the amount of expenditure reduction that could be made without significant changes to class size would be about 6-8 teacher F.T.E. or \$360,000 - \$480,000. The impact would be similar for most districts that participate in this program. With declining resources at the state level the Shorewood School District will need to carefully monitor any future proposed changes.