

LEGISLATIVE ISSUE, KEY TALKING POINTS AND CALL TO ACTION

Date: March 6, 2020

Legislative Issue

Expanding Part-Time Open Enrollment

[AB849](#) and [SB789](#)

(AB849 has already passed on the assembly floor)

Background Information

If adopted the legislation would:

1. Expand part-time open enrollment program and renames it the course choice program.
2. A pupil enrolled in an educational institution, as defined in the bill, in grades one to twelve may attend a course at another educational institution. A pupil may attend no more than a total of two courses at any one time under the current part-time open enrollment program or under the bill's course choice program.
3. The bill defines an educational institution as any of the following:
 - a. A public school under the control of a pupil's resident school board, including a charter school authorized by the resident school board.
 - b. A public school under the control of a pupil's nonresident school board, including a charter school authorized by the nonresident school board.
 - c. An independent charter school.
 - d. A private school.
 - e. A nonprofit organization approved by the Department of Public Instruction.
4. Under the bill, the educational institution that a pupil attends on a full-time basis must pay the educational institution offering a course the pupil takes under the course choice program an amount equal to the costs of providing the course to the pupil, as determined by DPI.

Additional Resources

[WASB Talking Points SB789](#)

[Assembly Education Hearing Testimony Materials](#)

SWSA Position

Opposes this bill

NOTE: Senator Olsen has scheduled a public hearing on March 11th. He may receive pressure to call for a vote to move this out of committee. Even if this bill doesn't receive a vote out of committee, it still can be brought forward to the Senate Floor for their final session in the next couple of weeks.

SWSA Key Talking Points

1. This bill expands open enrollment to include students from 1-12 grade allowing any child from a private or charter school to attend a course at another educational institution.
 - a. We believe this will be incredibly difficult to administer; especially at the elementary level.
 - b. How are courses defined?
 - c. How will young children be transported?
2. If the pupil is unable to pay the transportation fee (low income/free and reduced lunch), transportation financial assistance will be provided to cover the cost of transportation. (similar to current law).
 - a. Where are these transportation funds coming from? (local school district?)
 - b. This bill calls out a preference to "rural" schools; I'm unsure how they are defining rural.
 - c. One of our SWSA districts transports children in a 99 square mile area. Is this considered rural?
3. Student safety: The bill allows for traditional public school children to attend classes in other "educational institutions" in Wisconsin. There are no requirements for background checks for adults working in the Milwaukee, Racine and WI Parental Choice Programs.

Call to Action

- Districts should have conversation with their legislators; tell your story of how this bill may impact your district negatively.