

Assembly passes bill expanding school voucher eligibility

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— The Assembly passed in a 60-36 vote a bill that would qualify more students for school vouchers.

The bill, now in the Senate, would change the income cap from 220 percent of the federal poverty level to 300 percent for families who want to enroll in the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program. That means the most that a family of four could earn would increase from \$57,640 to \$78,600 or \$85,600 for a married couple.

Rep. Barbara Dittrich, R-Oconomowoc, said families are looking for more school options now than ever before because the pandemic has highlighted existing issues within public schools. She said this bill would give them more options for their kids.

The bill would only affect the 2021-22 school year. According to a Department of Public Instruction, the fiscal impact cannot be determined because the number of students who will participate in open enrollment as a result of the bill could not be determined yet. There are currently 12,111 students in the state's open enrollment program, according to DPI.

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